



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

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan  
Speaker*



Vol. XLIV No. 18 - 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 14, 1995

ISSN 0542-5492

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

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 14, 1995

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**Physical Education in Schools**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present a petition of John Klassen, Laura Miller, Barbara Hjelte and others urging the Minister responsible for Education (Mr. Manness) to consider reinstating physical education as a compulsory core subject area.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Martin Riley, Joan L. Swaffer, R. Rohringer and others requesting the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) to consider maintaining physical education as part of the core curriculum from kindergarten to senior high.

**READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

**Physical Education in Schools**

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

*The petition of the undersigned residents of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:*

*THAT in July 1994, the Minister of Education introduced an action plan entitled Renewing Education: New Directions;*

*THAT this report will make physical education an optional course in Grades 9 to 12;*

*THAT the physical education curriculum should be regularly reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of students;*

*THAT the government is failing to recognize the benefits of physical education such as improved physical fitness, more active lifestyles, health promotion, self-discipline, skill development, stress reduction, strengthened peer relationships, weight regulation, stronger bones, reduced risk of health diseases and improved self-confidence.*

*WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Minister responsible for Education to consider reinstating physical education as a compulsory core subject area.*

**Communities' Public Education**

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

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Yes. The Clerk will read.

**Mr. Clerk (William Remnant):** The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS funding for public schools by the provincial government has been cut twice in the past three years; and

WHEREAS provincial funding for the school district of Mystery Lake has dropped by nearly

\$2 million over the same period, more than 10 percent; and

WHEREAS funding for private schools has increased by over 110 percent under the same provincial government; and

WHEREAS Thompson was faced with a 48 percent increase in the education support levy tax as a result of reassessment in 1993, resulting in \$500,000 leaving our community; and

WHEREAS the Thompson school district is also now faced with a massive \$1.8-million deficit equivalent to a 48 percent increase in local school taxes; and

WHEREAS unless the minister reviews this funding the Thompson school district will be forced to consider both a \$500,000 tax increase and severe program cuts totalling over \$1.3 million.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly request the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Manness) to reconsider the funding model to ensure that Thompson and other communities in this province are able to maintain quality public education.

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I am pleased to table today the Twenty-third Annual Report of the Law Reform Commission 1993-94 and the Annual Report 1992-93 of the Department of Justice.

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have with us this afternoon from the White Horse Plains Hutterite Schools twenty-five Grade 9 students under the direction of Mrs. Cindy Chabot. This school is located in

the constituency of the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns).

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

\* (1335)

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Federal Budget Impact on Agriculture Industry

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, last week we asked a number of questions about the government's projections and the fact that they had not built into their own projections the loss of revenues in terms of cutbacks on the post-secondary education, health care and social services amounting to over \$200 million in the next two years.

Mr. Speaker, we have further information dealing with agriculture, a memo I would like to table dealing with agriculture and its impact on Manitoba's specific agricultural economy. It appears to us that agriculture in Manitoba is going to receive, in essence, four hits on this federal budget in terms of the actual income level and economy of Manitoba. The publicized reductions in the Western Grain Transportation Act of some \$85 million are in the budget, and also some loss of about \$10 million in direct payrolls here in the province of Manitoba with a reduction of research jobs in the province in terms of swine research and canola research and other vital research to the province of Manitoba.

I would like to ask the Premier: Given that agriculture is a billion-dollar industry in this province and given that we have had considerable challenges in agriculture on prices--a little bit of improvement last year but a slight potential reduction in some products for next year--did the provincial government in their three-year projection build in these drastic cuts in agricultural support that were released in the federal budget just recently?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for raising the issue of the cuts to the Western Grain Transportation Act and impacts that will be felt to Manitoba farmers and farm producers throughout our province.

Last Friday, he may be aware that a coalition on transportation reform who refer to themselves as After The Crow, Approaching 2000 met. There were representations not only from our side of the House but from his caucus, the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), a representative of the Liberal Party as well, the provincial Liberal Party there.

These are all farm producer groups, a coalition that included representation from all of the various sectors in the farm economy. They came up with a statement of condemnation of the federal government, a joint statement in which they lay out what they believe should take place in the future.

I understand that his representative, the member for Swan River, refused to support this statement, that from a party who is mouthing its concerns about the effects of the WGTA cut on farmers. They will not even sign on to the statement that all the farm groups want support on.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier did not answer the question. I asked the Premier, given the fact that last week they did not build the health and post-secondary cuts into the budget, did they build the cuts in agriculture into their three-year projections, or do they have a contingency plan to fight the federal government on agriculture like post-secondary education?

I have a further question to the Premier. Given the fact that 40 percent of farmers in Manitoba--and according to the government's own internal documents, their land is rented--may be disenfranchised by the so-called transition payment, and given the fact that the federal budget also contains a \$32-million reduction in the pooling provisions, which will

cost Manitoba farmers about \$14 extra a tonne by reducing \$32 million of the pooling provisions in Manitoba in terms of the province, did they build those into the projections for the '96 year, Mr. Speaker, or do they have another contingency plan on that, like they do with health and post-secondary education?

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, this statement begins: Manitoba farmers and the provincial government are disappointed that the federal government did not deal with the issues of the WGTA and Canadian Wheat Board pooling in the February 27 budget in a fashion which had been recommended to them by the Manitoba WGTA coalition.

It goes on to say: The coalition believes that if the buy-out funds were directed to producers instead of landowners, more of the money would stay in the agricultural community to aid in the making of the transition to a nonsubsidized freight reality.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that the NDP refused to support this because they still are clinging to the old pay-the-railroad position of the New Democrats and the Farmers Union of Manitoba, and they are the ones who are not trying to be positive in helping farmers with the very serious situation they face. That is the crime of all of this, that the NDP are full of rhetoric and not full of any concern for the farm community.

\* (1340)

**Mr. Doer:** The Premier did not answer the question again. Our Agriculture critic has raised this question before and raised it last year and raised it when Mazankowski cut the freight payments, and this Premier did the hallelujah chorus for Kim Campbell and Brian Mulroney when they started cutting back in western Canada.

The Premier did not answer the first question on the Western Grain Transportation asked. He

did not answer the second question on the pooling impact on Manitoba. I would like him to try to answer the third question.

The internal document of the provincial government indicates two things. One is that the safety net funding will drop by 30 percent in the subsequent years of this federal budget and that Manitoba's share will be disproportionate to other provinces.

Secondly, the internal documents also indicate that the federal government is proposing a \$100 administrative fee per farmer to be involved in crop insurance and revenue insurance contracts, a provision that would give money to both the province and the federal government.

I would like to ask the Premier whether this hundred dollars is going to be implemented. It is not fair to the producers. What will be the impact? Has that been built in to the provincial budget of a 30 percent reduction in the safety net provisions in Manitoba?

**Mr. Filmon:** He might ask the federal government who are proposing that \$100 fee, Mr. Speaker. We are not proposing it. He might ask the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards), who supports it and says it is fair. He says it is fair and says that he will go to the polls supporting all those elements. He might ask his own member about this. He might find out why it is that the Province of Saskatchewan got out of the GRIP program entirely and transferred \$180 million into their deficit reduction fund.

That is what he might do about those kinds of things, but this is the statement of the Coalition of Manitoba Producers, people who represent all elements of the farm community, that expresses concern about each and every one of these, a statement that has been refused to be signed by the New Democratic Party in this Legislature or the representative of the Liberal Party in this Legislature.

That is the crime of all of this, that the Leader of the Opposition and his party are full of rhetoric when it comes to supporting farmers and do not do anything for the farmers when they have an opportunity.

### **Sustainable Development Legislation Public Consultation**

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Mr. Speaker, last year the government released a discussion document about a proposed sustainable development act that talked in terms of conservation and stewardship of the environment. The document highlighted the important role of co-operation and public participation in creating the act.

Given this professed commitment to our role as stewards and to including all Manitobans in the legislative process, would the minister advise Manitobans whether they will have any input into the development of the draft legislation, and if so, when?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I missed the last sentence of the member's question, but I believe he was asking about the opportunity that is associated with the introduction of a sustainable development act and all of the impacts that flow with this.

If there is one thing that this administration has been well known for, especially in the initiatives around sustainable development, is there is always ample opportunity for public input and consultation.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Would the minister then explain to Manitobans why only members of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce get special status allowing them to examine and to comment on the draft legislation? I will table the minutes of the sustainable development advisory panel of the Chamber of Commerce for January 9.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, I think it might be much the same as the heads of a number of environment groups who meet in my office at least quarterly, or more often, and very often sit and discuss principles and concerns around various initiatives that the government is taking, including sustainable development and the consequences or implications of moving towards an overarching sustainable development act.

So the member is entirely wrong in his conclusions. I suspect that he is probably a little envious that this is one jurisdiction, the only jurisdiction in Canada, probably the only one in North America, that is now contemplating the real effects that can come with a properly instituted approach to sustainable development and is now moving it forward into the legislative agenda. That, Mr. Speaker, is probably making him a little envious.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, my question was about the review of draft legislation.

#### **Mandate**

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Given that Manitobans have heard over and over again about how this government has a commitment to the environment, only to be disappointed time and time again, would the minister now tell Manitobans if he endorses assurances made to the Chamber by Mr. Robert Sopuck, the executive director of the government's Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit, that the sustainable development act is to be, and I quote: unabashedly prodevelopment?

Will he admit that the government is going to gut environmental assessment?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Mr. Speaker, the comment made by the member certainly reflects his bias, which is antidevelopment, and probably the bias of almost every member across the floor, given the debate we have had over the last number of years, considering the attacks they have made on

very appropriate and useful initiatives made by this government.

Let me be very clear, Mr. Speaker. Sustainable development speaks to the balance between development and the environment. It speaks to the fact that in many cases we have a multiplicity of approvals, a multiplicity of a very complex approach that in some cases, from the outside casual observer and to those who wish to participate, is very often totally confusing and quite biased. We need to make sure that, in developing a better approach, it is clear and definable, and I am pretty sure that is the reference the member is making.

#### **Crisis Centres Funding**

**Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Family Services.

Today, Ms. Waltrud Grieger, president of the women's shelter association publicly communicated information gathered from a year's worth of intake forms at women's shelters around the province which asks clients to respond to whether a drug, alcohol or gambling addiction was involved in their problems. Some shelters, quite shockingly, found that 40 to 50 percent of their clients cited gambling as a contributor to family violence and breakdown. Clearly, the public is becoming more and more aware of the problems associated with gambling addiction and more and more concerned about them, in particular, in the wake of the recent budget which relies so heavily on the government's use of lotteries revenues.

My question for the minister: Given that women are sometimes saying that, where they do not have the means to leave an abusive relationship, they are even desperately gambling in the hopes of winning enough money to get out of those relationships and given that the northern region is one of the highest areas for gambling problems in families, will the minister reconsider

the decision to in fact cut funding from the Flin Flon/Creighton crisis shelter in northern Manitoba, where family problems with gambling are known to be some of the worst in the province?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Mr. Speaker, we have, I think, recognized from the outset that there may well be some Manitobans who have difficulties with respect to gambling. As a result, we were the first province in Canada to establish treatment programs for people with problem areas with respect to lotteries and gaming.

We are the first province in Canada to go into the schools and take a proactive approach, through the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, to recognize that an addiction is an addiction regardless of the format that demonstrates itself. We are the first in Canada to do a follow-up study with respect to these difficulties.

The Addictions Foundation of Manitoba has been in contact with Ms. Grieger's group, Mr. Speaker, has talked to them about these issues and has offered their support and all of the additional programs that are being provided by the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba respecting this issue.

\* (1350)

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, clearly the minister's statement that there may well be some problems is a substantial understatement of the problem as he has consistently attempted to do.

My supplementary question to the minister: Will he reconsider his statement of last April when he said that there had not been adequate research into the connection between family violence and gambling addiction?

He seems to be acknowledging now that that connection is there, at least in part, in his mind. Is he now prepared to say that in fact there is a

link, given this evidence which seems to be compelling and substantial over the last year, a significant study? Will he reconsider the funding to the crisis shelters in the wake of this increased evidence, that there is a very clear link between gambling and family abuse and in particular violence against women in this province?

**Mr. Ernst:** Mr. Speaker, I want to paraphrase the words of Mr. Herb Thompson, who is the acting director of the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba. Addiction is a dysfunctional activity. It takes many forms. No one form necessarily creates or contributes more or less to a particular problem.

Certainly substance abuse, alcoholism, addiction to gambling, addiction to a whole host of other societal problems creates a dysfunctional activity that creates some difficulties within certain families. We understand that. The whole question then is why we are the first to deal with treatment programs. That is why we are today, through the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, going out, reaching out to the community, through the schools, through various organizations, through the corporate community to talk to their employees, to see if we cannot head off potential problems that are related to gambling. We are taking a very extremely proactive approach, including dealing with the question of women's shelters and what assistance the AFM can provide to them.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about various forms of addiction being dysfunctional activities. There is a difference between the situation with alcohol and the situation with gambling. The difference is that this government owns and promotes gambling across this province. With respect to tobacco, with respect to liquor, they control advertising. They work to pare it down. In this case, because they own it, they are out there promoting it themselves. There is a difference and the responsibility is higher.



My final question for the minister: Will he reassess the funding decisions to women's shelters, and, in particular, with respect to the Flin Flon/Creighton which is in a high problem area for gambling? Will he make that reassessment at least until the committee that he has structured reports?--because we now have compelling evidence, again, from a number of sources, and credible sources, that it is a much more serious problem than he or the AFM appear to recognize.

**Mr. Ernst:** Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to make light at all of the problems associated with family breakdown related to any kind of dysfunctional activity, or for that matter, any form of addiction, but the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) comes in here and calls empirical evidence, calls all kinds of activities.

Let me refer to December 7, 1994. We had the member for St. James: "We have had confirmed by the Addictions Foundation this morning that fully 20 percent of their clientele have admitted to committing a criminal act to support their gambling addictions."

The public would believe by that that this was a total clientele of 400, but, Mr. Speaker, it was 8.1 percent of a sample of 68. It was five people--five people, not 200, as the member would come forward and have everyone believe. Let him be a little honest in coming into this Chamber and presenting information to the public of Manitoba and the members of this House. Let him be a little honest in what he brings to this Chamber.

\* (1355)

### **Gambling Policy Review Terms of Reference**

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, I hope that the responses of the Minister responsible for Lotteries as made to the Leader of the second opposition party are not saying in any way, shape or form that he does not consider

the one year of studies done by all 10 Manitoba shelters on the linkage between domestic violence and gambling addiction not serious and sufficient in and of itself to require additional support in many ways.

I would like to ask the minister if this demonstrated link, which we believe is a clear demonstrated link that needs to be responded to is now going to be made part of the terms of reference of the lottery review that he recently announced.

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Mr. Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear to the member for Wellington that in no way--and I prefaced my last statement with that--in no way did I wish to detract at all from the problems that have been experienced by a manifestation of dysfunctional activity, particularly through the experience of women's shelters.

The working group that will be examining issues related to the lotteries in Manitoba has a very wide scope. They will be able to deal with every issue that presents itself, either through the public or through the work of the committee itself in wishing to look and seek out any kind of activity that is related to the question of lottery and gaming in the province of Manitoba, to study those issues and to bring forward recommendations.

**Ms. Barrett:** Will, for example, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Vodrey) ensure that the lotteries review is represented in its composition by members of women's groups so that this issue and other issues that deal directly and specifically with the concerns of women are brought to this review's attention, that there are representatives of the women's groups in this province on the lotteries review? Will the Minister responsible for the Status of Women ensure that her discussions with the Lotteries minister ensure that women are represented on that review?

**Mr. Ernst:** I can assure the member for Wellington that women will be represented on that working group.

**Ms. Barrett:** Women who represent women's groups?

### **Gambling Addiction Programs Domestic Violence Segment**

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** I would like to ask the minister responsible for the lotteries review and for Lotteries if the programs on gambling addictions that are now being developed by the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba will specifically take into account the issues of the relationship between domestic violence and gambling addiction. They are similar to but have different components than alcohol or other addictions that are connected with domestic violence. Will he ensure that those courses and those programs have the component that relates specifically to gambling addiction and domestic violence?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Mr. Speaker, I do not for a minute profess to be an expert in the field of treatment of dysfunctional behaviour related to gambling, but certainly the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba is. They will, when the new additional funding I announced last week kicks in, have 16 dedicated staff to deal with those issues. They have in fact already, I am told, met with the Association of Women's Shelters, had a seminar to try and deal with issues surrounding the problems that they were experiencing and what the Addictions Foundation could do to assist them.

So, Mr. Speaker, I suspect that the Addictions Foundation and for that matter the Association of Women's Shelters are probably way ahead on this issue of both the member for Wellington or myself.

\* (1400)

### **SmartHealth Information Tabling Request**

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker, at a major speaking event on March 9, the Deputy Minister of Health stated that SmartHealth cards, the \$150-million deal with the Royal Bank, would include information from Family Services as part of its data system.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister outline how it is now that this health card will include information from Family Services, and will the minister finally table information, including the contract on this card so the public can finally know what it is paying \$150 million to the Royal Bank for? Will the minister outline that information for us, please?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I guess I can only correct the honourable member so many times before he gives up and maybe he never will, but \$150 million is not in the cards. The people of Manitoba will be paying approximately \$100 million. If there are any cost overruns, they will be borne by SmartHealth. That has been made very, very clear many, many times.

As for what Dr. Wade, Deputy Minister of Health, said recently, I will review all of his comments and respond at a later time to the honourable member's question.

### **Confidentiality**

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the public is very much assured now that they know it is only \$118 million that they are going to pay for this deal with the Royal Bank.

My supplementary to the minister is: Will he now at least table in this House the government's studies and its plans as to how they are going to ensure confidentiality of this information, and what mechanisms they are going to put in place prior to the system being up and running, so the

public of Manitoba can have assurances about the confidentiality of this system?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** As I said to the honourable member, the falsehood of \$150 million can be floated as many times as the honourable member wants to float it. I tell him, that is a falsehood. I do not know why the honourable member insists on putting falsehoods on the record.

With respect to confidentiality, which is a very key concern of all of the stakeholders in the public health information system, as well as the government, the honourable member needs to be reminded that this is a multimodular project. There are many go or no-go points along the way where decision points are arrived at.

If at any point the privacy committee, the membership of which I read out to the honourable member the other day, has concerns which outweigh moving forward, it is stop, no go.

#### **Information Tabling Request**

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker, we have the deal. We do not have the contract. We do not have any studies. We do not have any information other than the press release of the minister and its comments to just trust us; this \$118-million or \$150-million or \$100-million contract will be good for you.

Will the minister finally do the right thing and allow the public of Manitoba to know what they are buying from the Royal Bank, that great health care institution? Can he please let us know, table that information so we know what the public is buying for the \$100 million or the \$118 million or the \$150 million? Will he at least table the information, Mr. Speaker?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is not accustomed to taking my word for anything, virtually, in this House or anywhere else.

I would refer him to some of the partners involved in the project. If he does not think the answers that he is getting from me are appropriate to his particular needs, then he might check with all of the stakeholders with whom we work who are partners in this project and by whom we must pass each and every module of this project. I refer the honourable member, for example, to the Assembly of Chiefs, to the Cadham Lab, the whole list I went through the other day, the Manitoba Society of Seniors, the Consumers' Association of Manitoba.

If he does not want to take my word for these things, let him consult with those organizations. I am sure they will sort these matters out for the honourable member.

#### **Victims Assistance Programs Rural Funding**

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice and concerns the rural victims services program.

Through the efforts of a local co-ordinator and a number of volunteers in Portage la Prairie, this program has been rated by most as being very successful in Portage and I understand from comments from other members, also in other rural communities.

Can the minister today inform the House as to whether the province will be continuing its funding support for this very important program?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to inform the member, this House and the people of Manitoba that our government has committed additional resources, \$225,000, to see the continuation of this program to those seven rural communities in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the financial resources which have been committed by this government for the continuation of the program,

we are also undertaking a study to see how we can look after the needs of victims across this whole province, not just in the seven communities.

### Government Initiatives

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie):** My question for the minister: In keeping with the consistent concern for the victims of crime that this government has demonstrated in its programs, are there other initiatives which the department will be implementing which will enhance the plight of the victims of crime in Manitoba?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, we certainly recognize that victims are vulnerable people, that they should not be retraumatized again for the purposes of court appearances, which is why we are extending the victims services. In addition, through the budget we have increased the support to the criminal injuries area which deals in counselling of victims. We have had quite an increase of victims who require counselling in the area of sexual abuse. We use victim impact statements in youth cases.

We have been pressing the federal government to deal with antistalking victims, and we are awaiting the federal Liberal minister's decision as to whether or not he will look after victims and allow them some support in the federal legislation of the Criminal Code. Also, this government took a very bold and courageous step when we became the first government across Canada to announce a process to identify publicly those sexual predators or pedophiles who are within the community, in the interests of public safety.

### Health Care System Pediatric Service Reviews

**Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

One of the government's many committees that began doing some work in early 1991 through the Urban Hospital Council was a committee that was set up to review all pediatric services in urban areas in the city of Winnipeg, and that particular committee was chaired by Dr. John Wade who is now, of course, the Deputy Minister of Health. I have a copy of the status reports from 1991.

Can the minister tell us: Does he have the results of the working committee that looked at pediatric services in Winnipeg? In that review of those reports, were there any problems or concerns identified about the pediatric cardiac program at Health Sciences Centre?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, as I said to the honourable member the other day, over the years there have been numerous reports and recommendations and comments, and the honourable member really is asking questions today that go to the heart of what will be the subject of the inquest when it begins. I think that it is not going to do the honourable member or me any good to debate whether this should have been done or that should have been done, by this party or that party or the other party.

The obvious thing that we need to do is to make sure that all of these questions that are being raised do indeed get answered in the appropriate form. Hopefully recommendations flow therefrom, and we can all work together to make decisions to ensure the safety of the children in the future.

**Ms. Gray:** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the minister. Surely the minister, as Minister of Health, is not going to wait till an inquest to ensure that he has all of the possible information about what has been going on in his department since at least 1990.

In the provincial surgical services committee, another committee which was established in the early '90s, can he tell us if in fact any problems

were identified at the Health Sciences Centre in regard to the pediatric cardiac program?--because one of the terms of reference in this committee was to specifically ensure that a sufficient number of trained staff were available to ensure safe care. What did that particular committee come up with?

**Mr. McCrae:** I would like to assure the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, that while the inquest is an important thing for us to be engaged in, we indeed would not wait for such a thing to carry on with the necessary work that needs to be done to ensure the highest standards and the highest level of care and safety for everyone in our health system. I want it clear no one is waiting around for something else to be completed before other measures are taken.

Dr. Wade, as deputy Health minister, is engaged in discussions with colleagues from across the country and engaged with medical people and hospital people. We are pleased that Dr. Bill Lindsay has returned to Manitoba from his work in Minneapolis to head up our cardiac program in Manitoba. With his leadership, and the work of Dr. Wade and all of the others involved, we will no doubt be addressing many issues while we await the results of an inquest.

It is not a question of standing still until that process is through at all, Mr. Speaker. It never has been thought to be the appropriate way to go and is not being done now.

\* (1410)

**Ms. Gray:** Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary to the Minister of Health: Can the minister tell us, with these two committees that were specifically reviewing urban pediatric services, has the department been made aware of any problems or concerns about the pediatric cardiac program at the Health Sciences Centre from these working groups and committees composed of doctors and people who work in the system? Was the Department of Health, and this minister or former minister, made aware of any

concerns and problems? If so, what then happened? What did the department do to address those concerns?

**Mr. McCrae:** Well, certainly in addition to the questions being raised by the honourable member, we were aware of and responded to a letter written by a number of doctors back in 1991, addressed to the president of the Health Sciences Centre and copied to the government. Following that letter, the hospital, the government and the doctors worked together to address some of the concerns relating to equipment and other matters as well, including recruitment, Mr. Speaker.

Since that time, too, there have been pretty significant negotiations and discussions between the Health Sciences Centre, St. Boniface Hospital, the University of Manitoba and the government relating to tertiary care services. There was the striking of the Bell-Wade Report on tertiary care services in Manitoba. Flowing from the Bell-Wade Report was--[interjection] I hope members of the New Democratic Party want to hear these answers.

Flowing from the Bell-Wade Report was a Memorandum of Understanding between the two tertiary hospitals and the recruitment of Dr. Bill Lindsay, which is about where I was when I finished up my last question.

### **Children's Advocate Report Recommendations**

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Mr. Speaker, in December of last year, the Children's Advocate handed in his report to the Minister of Family Services. It is a damning report. It condemns many policies of this government, including their fiscal policies.

One of the questions that the Children's Advocate asked, one of the concerns he raised, was how many bruises or child deaths does it take for government to acknowledge that the Child and Family Services system is under

tremendous strain; agencies should not have to be forced to pick and choose which children they can protect; our obligations towards all children must be fulfilled.

The minister has had three or four months to study this report. I wonder if she could tell the House which of the 41 recommendations has she already started to act on. Which of the priorities has she started to act on on behalf of her department? What is she going to implement, and when, of the Children's Advocate's report?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my honourable friend for that question. The report was tabled with all members of the House and made public back in December. Indeed, there were a lot of issues and recommendations that the Child Advocate did make.

I want to go back and indicate to my honourable friend that it was this government that put in place the Child Advocate, so we could get first-hand information on what needed to be fixed in the system.

Mr. Speaker, there is not anyone in the opposition ranks or within this government that would indicate that we have a perfect child welfare system out there. We have looked towards implementing and looking at new ways of delivery of service in child welfare with a new vision that talks about family support, family preservation and family responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, in last year's budget, we put in place the Family Support Innovations Fund, which has developed support for front-line workers to keep children in their families rather than removing them from their families.

### **Social Policies Impact on Child Abuse Rate**

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Mr. Speaker, the problem with the minister's policy

is that it is not new money, it is only reallocated money.

I would like to ask this minister if she understands the relationship between the mean-spirited policies of her government which has closed parent-child centres, which has increased parent fees in child care centres, cut foster parent rates, has had no increases in social assistance rates for two years and three months and the amount of abuse in the province of Manitoba which is the highest per capita in Canada.

Does the minister understand the relationship between her policies and child abuse?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, I totally reject the presumption in the preamble to that question that is there, because I do not think there is a member of this House who wants to take credit for any abuse that has happened over the last many years, much before we were in government. We know that abuse happens in families. I have indicated before that there probably is not a person in this Legislature if they were responsible for Family Services who would not lose sleep over the circumstances and the situations that exist in our community.

Mr. Speaker, what we have to realize and recognize is that the reason we need a child welfare system and a Child and Family Services is because children are being neglected and abused in their own households. We have a system that is in place that has to pick up the pieces after the fact. It is not a perfect system, but there are children who are damaged out there in our society and we have to look at ways and means of trying to support those children to ensure that they move ahead. We know that it is not a perfect system but we will continue to do everything within our power to try to support families, ensure that families are looking after their children so they do not need to be taken into care and provided with taxpayers' support after the fact.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### BUDGET DEBATE (Fourth Day of Debate)

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

**Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, in the final few minutes remaining, I wanted to deal with a couple of other issues arising out of the budget.

I hope to spend a few moments on some concerns around the four new provincial parks which were announced in February. During the flurry of media attention which surrounded these announcements, there were some commitments made to consultation with local and First Nations communities about the kinds of activities which were to take place in these parks, but the budget document reflects no money to achieve this--money for beginning the pro-management studies, the negotiation of pro-management agreements with local and native communities.

First Nations communities are understandably concerned as lines have been drawn on an area which is currently the subject of land claims. Where are the guarantees that these traditional activities will be allowed to continue in these parks?

On February 6 the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Praznik) wrote to the chief,

stating that he understood that First Nations communities were concerned about protecting these areas for traditional activities. He stated that no agreements will be negotiated with third parties. I presume this means no mining claims or no logging permits issued, but then what happened? Three days later the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) takes the unilateral step of designating the four new parks without bothering to consult the native community or to advise them in advance what would be the impact of these designations on traditional activity.

It is actions like these that make it even more important to resource and encourage the co-management and consultation process. The government has the beginning of a successful co-management process evolving in Churchill, a process which has been resourced, but it then designated four new parks and decreased the appropriation for Resource Programs in the Natural Resources budget.

I am also concerned about the consultations for the new Parks Act. In his press conference on February 9, the Minister of Natural Resources announced a far-reaching consultation to review the status of these existing parks in the fall of 1995 with a view to raising protection standards. If the money is not there in the budget, does this mean that the government is not going to hold consultations, or is it not going to proclaim The Parks Act?

Finally, the remaining area I wish to turn to is the matter of the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. We note that the operating line has disappeared from the budget, but The Loan Act schedule still allows for several million dollars to be forthcoming.

I expressed my concern yesterday that the corporation is now moving into areas which will take it to operate outside of its mandate. There have been a number of concerns expressed by the community which has traditionally served the private hazardous waste management area that

the presence of the government in this area is creating an unlevel playing field.

As well, concern has been expressed, as the corporation moves into the sale of industrial chemicals, that it is importing recycled waste product from a company in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and now introducing these chemicals into the Manitoba marketplace at about 55 percent of the going rate for the equivalent product.

It is rather unusual for a government which holds itself to be committed to private enterprise to be competing in the private marketplace outside of the area of a mandate of a Crown corporation. I believe that the government needs to be better accountable for these kinds of activities than is presently the case.

\* (1420)

Yesterday, when I asked the question of the minister, his flippant answer was, well, do you not want lower rates for business for the treatment of hazardous waste? I think that begs the issue. The issue is, should a government be competing with business in an area? If the government is in fact stepping into an area of public protection, if a government is securing the public's interest in some way, then it could be justified, but this is a market area which has traditionally been very well served by the private sector. We have now got a suspicion that the gouging will continue until the private sector walks away from the Manitoba market.

The question that also has to be asked is what is the level of subsidization. The current indebtedness to the public is about between, some say \$18 million, some say \$20 million, for the process of siting the facility in the Montcalm municipality, but the--[interjection] Twenty million? [interjection] Two million.

The member for that area is putting on the record that the cost of siting the facility to date is \$2 million. I suspect that that is a somewhat

underestimation, but if he wants to go out with that information as fact, then who is to argue, although I must quote the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) yesterday who said a very wise thing. She said you are entitled to your own opinion, but you are not entitled to your own facts.

So I think the facts dictate that the expenditure to date on the part of the provincial government to establish this presence in the marketplace is about \$20 million, so the question has to be asked: Why would a government, ostensibly committed to free market enterprise, be competing in the marketplace with the private sector community?

We need to question what is the legitimate role of government. The government's role is certainly to regulate hazardous waste to ensure strong enforcement of its laws and regulations, but to be a deliverer of service, to be competing in the marketplace, I do not think so.

The final statement then is to support the amendments introduced by my Leader to the budget resolution, and thank you for your attention.

**Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to rise and speak to this budget, and I say that for two main reasons. First, it is my last opportunity to wish best wishes to my colleagues on this side of the House who are leaving, first of all, the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose).

I remember the first time I met him and was introduced to him. I thought, there has been some kind of mistake. That is the name of my Liberal opponent. Some of you will remember that the person who sat in this seat before me, his name was also Bob Rose. However, I soon learned that the member for Turtle Mountain was the real Bob Rose. And who is the real Bob Rose? Well, he is a quiet, unassuming individual with a sharp wit. The member for Turtle Mountain and I co-chaired a committee



together. He was an easy person to work with, and most importantly, he is a conscientious MLA. I will miss him.

The member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme)—other than the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the member for Riel was the only other MLA that I knew very well. He was my insurance agent, my school trustee, city councillor, my MLA. I helped in a very small way in his election campaign, and he always helped me in a very big way with many of the things that I was involved with.

When I was asked to run, he was one of the people I went to for advice, and once elected, he was generous to me in his help. His knowledge of St. Vital was enormous, and he shared it with me graciously. I will miss him.

The member for Morris (Mr. Manness), I met him for the first time during the 1990 election. He, along with some of the other ministers, were slated to walk with me in St. Vital one evening. I can tell he remembers that. I will never forget that evening, and I do not think one of my constituents in St. Vital will forget it either.

What happened was that the minister and I were walking up the driveway and the lady of the house was on the lawn watering her grass and I called to her just so I would not startle her. She turned with the hose and hosed down the minister.

Seriously, as the Minister of Finance of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, he was the best. Along with the Premier and, of course, the rest of our colleagues here in government, he brought back responsible fiscal management to government. He laid the groundwork for the budget our present Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) tabled last week. I learned a great deal from the Minister of Finance. I will miss him.

The member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), I found him to be an individual with one of the most inquiring and analytical minds that I have

ever met. He was also someone with the imagination and courage to do things differently, as he did when he brought in the blueprint for health reform. He set this province on the path of renewal and change in the way we will be delivering health care. As with the other three members that I just referred to, I learned a great deal from him. I will miss him too.

To all of you, I wish you all the best in your next set of careers.

Now, when I began I said I was really pleased to speak on this budget for two reasons. The second reason is simply, what person in their right mind in this day and age would not want to support a budget, this budget, compliment the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), and speak to a budget that is a balanced budget, a budget balanced a full year ahead of schedule, a budget which has a \$48-million surplus, and all of this without an increase in major taxes? I support this budget. What a privilege it is to be a part of the government which has brought this budget in.

When I seconded the throne speech a few months ago, I stressed that, yes, there were new themes being introduced, but what I also stress is that it was not a throne speech full of rhetoric and flashy promises. Rather, it was a throne speech that continued a continuing theme that this government has been enunciating since it was elected.

What is that theme? Well, we need financial integrity. We need good fiscal management. We need a good, competitive economic climate. These are all necessary so that we can have the vital health, education and social programs that Manitobans expect.

When we were elected in 1988 we said, we need to cut government spending. We need to get a handle on debt and deficit. We cannot continue to borrow and spend irresponsibly as was done by the previous administration and elsewhere in Canada.

Regretfully, many of the public right here in Manitoba did not agree and they accused us of fearmongering, but we quietly held to our principles that government must be financially responsible. Manitobans and indeed the country began to understand what we were trying to accomplish.

I think it is fair to say that all governments, whatever political stripe, now realize that we must get spending under control. Interestingly, only now do the two Leaders of the opposition parties finally say, elect us and we will not raise your taxes.

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

Can they be believed? Well, people know that when we say that we can be believed because we have a record. We have a track record, eight budgets now with no increase in major taxes. This government is the only government in Canada to have frozen major taxes for eight consecutive budgets.

\* (1430)

Other provinces have taken notice of what we have been doing. About a month ago I was in Vancouver on a speaking engagement. I was there not as an MLA, not as a politician. When I was introduced I was introduced as part of the Filmon team. At that particular moment the audience interrupted the person who was introducing me and applauded. They applauded the fact that I was part of the Filmon team.

They have read, as all of us have read, that the Dominion Bond Rating Service has stated that Manitoba is one of the most fiscally responsible provinces since 1988. Why do they say that, Mr. Acting Speaker? When we came to power in 1988 this province had the second-highest combined federal and provincial tax rates in Canada. Under this government we have improved to the third lowest. Now our personal income tax is the third lowest in Canada. As for sales tax, we are tied for the lowest. Payroll tax,

we have wiped it out for over 90 percent of the businesses.

I remember when this tax was introduced. My husband and I had just started a small business and it just about wiped us out. Diesel fuel and gasoline taxes, they are now the lowest.

Listen to what the investment dealers of Canada say about us in their March newsletter. I am quoting. Manitoba has made good progress in reducing its budget deficit over the past two years. The deficit has fallen from a peak of \$566 million or 2.4 percent of the GDP in 1992-93 to \$218 million or 1 percent of the GDP in 1994-95.

It goes on to say that deficit reduction in Manitoba has been achieved through expenditure restraint while holding the line on taxes. Manitoba was one of the first governments to reign in spending focusing on controlling public wage costs, streamlining government operations and increased efficiencies in the delivery of public services. The province has remained committed to spending restraint and deficit reductions despite a weak recovery.

It goes on to say Manitoba has resisted major tax increases over the past seven years. Finally, it sums up by saying Manitoba has done a good job of controlling its finances.

Nobody has to take our word for it. It is here in print from outside sources.

Now I want to be a little bit more specific about this budget. One of the key points in this budget is the elimination of the budgeted deficit. It is the first time this has happened since 1972. I have a lot of seniors in St. Vital. They have been through the depression of the Dirty Thirties. They know what it is like to have little money. They know how to tighten the belt and to do without. Right from the start, right from the time I was elected, they told me that one of the things that they wanted government to do was to reign in government spending and get rid of the deficit. Well, we have done that now.

However, while they know that we have kept our promise to bring back a fiscally responsible government, they have asked me: What happens if in the future another party gets into power and they do not have the courage to make the tough decisions? Is all your hard work going to be for nothing?

Now we know, Mr. Acting Speaker, the answer is no, because we will be introducing North America's strongest balanced budget legislation. As you know, that legislation will chop 20 or 30 percent of ministers' salaries if they allow a deficit to occur.

It is not only seniors who are pleased with these initiatives. Young people are also pleased because it is their generation and their children that will be paying for the mistakes made by those in power in the early '80s. They are pleased with the upcoming legislation on balanced budgets.

I think all of us can remember that it really was not that long ago. I do not remember the number now, but certainly hundreds and hundreds of residents of Winnipeg marched on City Hall to protest tax increases.

Well, I say again, this government has kept its promise not to increase taxes, and it will be safeguarding future generations.

In addition, that legislation also states that a referendum must be held before major taxes can be increased. The act also establishes a 30-year plan to pay off our \$7 billion debt.

Regretfully, Mr. Acting Speaker, there are still people who do not understand why these measures are so important. They do not understand that over the past decade interest costs on the debt have taken an ever-increasing share of our tax dollars. If the deficit was allowed to remain at the current levels for the next seven years, interest payments alone would consume an additional \$5 billion and annual interest costs would reach \$800 million.

The second key point that I would like to make and the second key point really which, I think, highlights this budget is the fact that it extends Canada's longest running tax freeze for the eighth consecutive budget. When this government was elected in 1988, we had a vision. We worked out the first steps of a plan to ensure that vision happened. Each throne speech, each budget has expanded that plan and made that vision concrete reality. We have been consistent with our objectives, and this budget proves that point again.

In addition to the tax freeze, the budget provides strategic tax reductions to bolster investment and job creation--for instance, eliminating the tax on drill bits and explosives used in mining exploration.

Big deal, some of you may say, particularly those who live in the city. Do you know that mining is Manitoba's second largest primary resource sector, accounting for 2 percent of the provincial real GDP in 1993?

Last year's budget introduced sales tax relief on electricity used by the industry, a doubling of the processing allowance and a 7 percent capital investment tax credit on new mine investments. Remember also that in 1992 we introduced the Mineral Exploration Incentive Program and in 1993 the provincial mining tax holiday for new mines. All of these increased exploration activity. This budget is continuing the plan laid out in earlier years. This is just simply one example.

There are also tax measures which include expanding the aviation fuel tax exemption to include the cargo component of intercontinental passenger flights. We have stated countless times in this Chamber that Winnipeg is ideally situated to become the hub of intercontinental cargo and passenger services. We are very fortunate that we have an international airport that is open 24 hours a day, and we must continue to provide incentives so that international carriers, commuter airlines, jet

freight carriers, fixed base operators and various charter operations continue to come and land here and use this airport.

Now another measure in this budget was the extension of the Home Renovation Program to December 31, 1995. It is interesting, just before this budget came down I received phone calls from three constituents all asking if this program was going to be continued. They felt it was a good program. They are pleased that it is still on.

We have also highlighted economic development and job creation. Fifteen thousand jobs were created last year and above-average performances in economic growth, retail sales, foreign exports and housing starts in 1994. These are all examples of what our good budgeting over the past number of years has resulted in.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Capital investment is expected to increase 11.8 percent. That is four times, Mr. Acting Speaker, the national increase and the best record among any of the provinces. Manufacturing investment will increase 48 percent. That is a record high.

To ensure that Manitobans have a strong foundation to build on, the budget also announced a record \$342 million will be dedicated to capital investments designed to improve infrastructure and provide jobs for Manitobans.

Another \$96.9 million will be allocated for provincial capital investment in highway construction and upgrading. That is an increase of \$3 million. The capital program for public schools will increase \$5.4 million to \$23.7 million. I will just give you one more example. A \$679 million capital program has been outlined for Manitoba hospitals and personal care homes.

The budget also noted the strong growth in the information and telecommunications industry. We have been targeting that particular sector for a number of years. That targeting has now resulted in the creation of over 1,200 jobs in 1994 and is expected to add another 1,600 jobs in the coming years.

Just the other day, another set of stats came over my desk from the Manitoba Bureau and here is what they say. Manitoba exports to the United States grew faster in 1994 than those of any other province. Our exports to the American market totalled \$3.3 billion last year. That is a gain of more than \$800 million. It works out, Mr. Acting Speaker, to a gain of over 32 percent. That was over 1993. Manitoba's 1994 growth rate of 32.32 percent was higher, in fact much higher than the national average gain of 22.1 percent.

\* (1440)

I found it interesting to note that two-thirds of Manitoba's \$800-million increase was in manufactured goods with big gains in machinery, transportation equipment, food products and paper products, again, all areas that we have been targeting.

Manitoba's performance in non-American markets was also strong last year, and sales to countries other than the United States also rose. Major gains included China up \$61 million, Belgium up \$44 million, Japan up \$38 million, South Korea up \$31 million, Mexico up \$18 million. Currently, Manitoba is also outpacing the national average in terms of total world trade. What we are doing is working. The numbers do not lie.

Mr. Acting Speaker, to sum up, this budget is a budget with guarantees. This is a budget with a continuing tax freeze. This budget means jobs. It means more jobs. It means higher productivity and a growing confidence in this province. This budget means social programs are being maintained. Once again we have shown where

our priorities are: health, education, child and family services.

I think one of the most important things about this budget is the fact that for the first time in a long time we can look forward to the day when our children will be free of public debt. Paying off that dead weight of debt which has been accumulating in the past will free up some \$650 million now used each year to pay interest costs. A debt-free province can now, really for the first time, think about removing the provincial sales tax or cutting personal income taxes in half. That is good news, Mr. Acting Speaker.

As the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) said in his conclusion, and I am quoting from the Minister of Finance, "... this budget continues our efforts to make Manitoba the best place in Canada to live, to work and to raise a family," and "Together we are achieving that goal." Thank you.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Mr. Acting Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to make a few comments on the record of this government and particularly with reference to this budget.

The previous member who spoke, the member for St. Vital, has a background in history, has written a book and I am sure in the future she may at some point in time want to write the history of the Conservative years in Manitoba, what the real legacy of the Conservatives in Manitoba is. I think she will be unable to write that book unless she deals with the true legacy of this government.

The true legacy of this government, Mr. Acting Speaker, is one of debt. This government, as much as they have campaigned and have talked over the years about doing something about the debt problems of this province, they have added on, year after year, deficits that are mind-boggling. I think most Conservatives in this House would and should be embarrassed when they stop and think about

what they are leaving the children of this province.

Their legacy is around \$2.7 billion being added on to the total debt load of this province, and they have the nerve to introduce a smoke-and-mirrors budget at the 11th hour, pretending that they and they alone have this newfound interest in doing something about the debt.

When I look back at the years of Tory mismanagement and Tory years in government, I see a deficit in the \$566-million range. That deficit was delivered by Mr. Fiscal Prudence himself, the member for Morris (Mr. Manness), when he was the Minister of Finance, and he too talked about how the Tories were going to be good managers, prudent managers and would deal with the debt in Manitoba, and boy did they ever deal with the debt in Manitoba. They added on the biggest deficit that one year. That \$566 million was the biggest to date, and they have consistently run deficits while going around the province campaigning and claiming to be fiscally responsible, and that is absolutely the opposite of what they really have been.

Much like many other parties and governments in this era, they have been big spenders, and they should recognize that, but now, just hours, days before an election, as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is getting his canoe ready to launch, they have all of a sudden become born-again fiscal conservatives.

They are talking about surplus budgets and they are talking about doing something about the debt. Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, it will take more than 30 years to pay off this legacy of debt that these Conservatives have placed on the shoulders of Manitobans over the last years that they have been in office.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I wanted to deal with several issues today. I want to deal with the budget and the whole question of the role of gambling and the VLTs' role in the fiscal situation. My colleague the member for

Burrows (Mr. Martindale) last night spent considerable time, as I recall, dealing with the morality of gambling.

I have never believed in lotteries and gambling, but I also believe in tolerating a certain level and degree of that type of activity, and so while I do not buy lottery tickets myself--I believe they are a tax on the poor, and I do not gamble, and I do not like to promote gambling--I still recognize that gambling is a fact of life and that people do want to involve themselves in this kind of activity.

But, Mr. Acting Speaker, there has to be some sort of limit put on the gambling, because what we are seeing right now is that in Manitoba we now have, I believe, the largest per capita number of VLTs in Canada.

Now, after a couple of years, we are seeing some of the negative effects. We are seeing people who are addicted to gambling, gambling away the family resources and putting people, families into very difficult straits. This is very little difference I guess from what happened years ago when the bars had to be closed over the dinner hour at six o'clock so people would be forced to take a break from their drinking and go home and tried to stop people spending the money that was required to feed the children, on alcohol.

What we have done is basically legalize and organize another vice by doing this with gambling. The fact of the matter is that it is here, but the whole fiscal image, the whole fiscal position of the government rests largely on this gambling revenue that they have managed to put aside for the last couple of years.

The government with a certain degree of I guess something that they deserve is going to be faced with 35 days now of attack, not only in their own constituencies in southern Manitoba but in other constituencies. They are going to have to answer those questions as to the responsibility for the big rise in gambling. They

know that may not play too well in some of the constituencies.

They made their bed, Mr. Acting Speaker. They made a decision to make Manitoba the No. 1 VLT per capita jurisdiction. They have done it. They have done it knowingly, and they feel they are reaping the rewards financially now to do something about the deficit. They also have to recognize that there is a backlash that they have to deal with as well.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it will be very interesting to see how that issue develops on the campaign trail, because I know there are a lot of people that are interested in that particular issue.

\* (1450)

I want to deal with some of the issues involving the federal Liberals. It is important that we take a good solid look at what the new--at the time--federal government was going to change, how it was going to change and remake the face of Canada, the things they promised in their red book and what in fact has happened with these promises from the red book.

What they did was promise to make changes to NAFTA, the free trade deal. Within weeks of winning office they had turned around and signed the NAFTA agreement. Not only that, they have been exuberant in their support of the free trade deal to the extent that the Prime Minister has been actively encouraging more partners to join that agreement. So there is a classic example of a Liberal flip-flop, and that one is one of their first major ones.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, the GST. How many times did we have to tolerate the Liberals pontificating about the GST and how they were going to scrap the GST when they were in power? The Liberals have been in power now going on two years. Do we have any indication that the GST will be scrapped?

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Maloway:** No, none whatsoever. [interjection] The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says wait for it. We will be waiting a long time before we see the federal Liberals scrapping the GST, or any government for that matter. [interjection]

Now the member wants to talk about the red book. I mean, when are the Liberals going to figure it out that they are going to hang by this red book?

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, no, we are going to get re-elected by it.

**Mr. Maloway:** They are quite comical. They feel that they are going to get re-elected by using the red book.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have drug patent legislation that they promised to change. We see now they are highly supportive of the drug companies. No surprise. We have the infrastructure program announced with great fanfare last year. Now they have backed off on that program and they are going to run it over, I believe it is five years now rather than three or three rather than two. It has been used as a patronage tool by the federal government. We have evidently--this should interest the Premier (Mr. Filmon)--there is a canoe museum in Jean Chretien's riding, among other terrific projects they have been funding.

Mr. Acting Speaker, just yesterday it was revealed in this House that there is \$270 million less to be spent on public housing. Funds have been cut from the federal government, and that is going to affect the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). He has a lot of people in Gilbert Park in his constituency, and those people have to be told, those people have to know what the federal Liberal government has done. Well, we will tell them too. The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), I am sure as we speak, is telling the people in her housing projects what the member for Inkster's federal Liberal government is up to. I am sure all the members in this House

are out getting the message through. We plan to do that in the next 35 days.

The member for Inkster is uncomfortable with this federal government for more reasons than just the public housing fund cuts. We have the head tax on new immigrants. In his area he has to deal with that issue, and people are not happy with that issue at all. I do not understand why he is saying that the red book is so great and he is going to follow the red book to re-election, because I would think he would want to run from the red book, burn the red book and get as far away from it as possible but--

**An Honourable Member:** He will learn.

**Mr. Maloway:** He will learn. That is right. Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, the federal government has done some very serious negative things to Manitoba in this budget. They have eliminated the Crow rate, which is going to alienate every farmer in this province and drive the price of land down. The federal government has moved Air Command and its 700 jobs from Winnipeg. Now, do not ever kid yourself that the loss of those 700 jobs--and to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux)--the loss of those 700 jobs is going to go a long way to re-electing one or two Conservatives on the other side of the House. The member probably, if he does not know that, is going to find that out pretty soon. So, some friends. If I had friends like the member for Inkster has, I do not need any friends like that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we really have to look at the patronage issue, because remember how holy the Liberals were in opposition talking about the Tory patronage? The patronage was almost a daily occurrence, but so was the whining on the part of the Liberals. You could sense that they were unhappy because they were not making the patronage appointments any more. Well, the eight years passed into history and the Liberals came to government, and it did not take long before the same old gang was back. The Prime Minister himself was interviewed in Maclean's

magazine December 1994, and he was asked about patronage.

**An Honourable Member:** What did he say?

**Mr. Maloway:** The Prime Minister--this is the Prime Minister of Canada--said it is very difficult for me to find somebody who is competent whom I do not know. He said, guys you do not know, you do not know. Guys you know, you know, and that is competence. That is the Prime Minister's definition of competence.

So what has he done? He has appointed the former Liberal Leader to the Senate. I seem to recall her making speeches, great speeches of never--and she wants an elected Senate, and yet she was the first one with her snout in the trough, packing her bags heading--she could not even wait till the election was over. She had to resign her seat and leave. Left the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) to take care of all the daily duties, and she is off. [interjection]

That is right. The member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) quotes another line of the former leader where she describes her appointment as good patronage as opposed to bad patronage. If the member for Inkster seriously thinks that the public can accept this kind of behaviour from a Liberal government, well, they really are shortchanging the intelligence of the electorate.

Seriously, the Liberal pork barrel machine is operating full bore, and they do not have an opposition to deal with it anymore, so they do not have to deal with the whining that the Tories did. Now they can just with impunity go out and make these appointments. We have many, many more patronage appointments to come, and I think we will have a very interesting time tracking the record of the federal Liberal government over the next three years that it is in office and watching how its patronage appointments bear out.

I wanted also to make note that Manitoba has not done well in some classifications. According

to Statistics Canada, it has Manitoba ranked very poorly. Manitoba has the highest child poverty in the country. As I had indicated before, it has the most VLTs per capita, which is hardly a statistic that I would find to be something you would want to trumpet. In fact, it had the worst economic record in the country twice in the last three years.

\* (1500)

The provincial budget that we are dealing with today leaves out the \$240 million in federal cuts that we are going to see in Manitoba next year. While at this point it is hard to see exactly how this is going to affect the average individual, one year from now we are going to the Liberals and this government, if it is around, will be digging in, hiding in bunkers, because the public will be outraged when they find the extent of the Paul Martin budget cuts as they unload themselves down to the province.

The average person, of course, may not relate that well to \$340 million, but when it actually comes down to cuts, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) knows full well that these cuts are going to be devastating over the long haul.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, this government took advantage of some one-time revenues to produce the budget that it has. It sold the \$30 million from the sale of the Crown assets, McKenzie Seeds, Manitoba Mineral Resources, Manitoba Development Corporation, plus draining the two-year supply of lottery revenues that they built up, all with the view to presenting as good a picture, a smoke-and-mirrors picture to the electorate on the eve of an election.

I have been out, Mr. Acting Speaker, knocking on doors and, quite frankly, I do not hear any talk of the budget. Now, I do not know, maybe other members are knocking on different doors than I am, but, no, not one person is--I do not know that people even realize there was a provincial budget brought down. So I think that puts us on an even keel at this point, because I



see the Conservatives have their billboards up and so on.

So we now have 35 days, each party, to get out there and get our interpretations, selective or otherwise, across to the voters, across to the undecided voters, and the party that does it best is going to be back here in greater numbers.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this government has done a lot of negative things in this province over the last few years. One issue that is of great interest to people, and the members know it, is the Winnipeg Jets deal. This is another great example of these captains of industry over here who have been running the government for the last seven years.

They signed an agreement in 1991 to pay the losses of the Jets. Now, that agreement is going to cost the taxpayers \$43 million, and the people do not like it. Clearly, when you go to the doors and you talk about the Jets, the one thing people can get quite upset about is the fact that \$43 million committed by this government is going to subsidize this hockey team, this hockey team of millionaires. That is another major cross for this government to bear during this 35 days.

The \$150-million deal with the Royal Bank, that is another issue that we will be asking about during the campaign. We would also like to get the five-year lottery plan, which we feel will be calling for more gambling expansion, and that was not in the budget.

So there are a number of issues that I have identified that I think are going to become major election issues; and, no matter how much the government spends on polling and ad personalities and focus groups and so on, trying to work their way around in canoes, the fact of the matter is, Mr. Acting Speaker, that these issues have a life of their own.

These issues have a great propensity to jump up and grab you from behind when you least expect it, and so we are talking about a

government that is taking a real chance here, but that is what politics is all about.

Another major issue that we have dealt with over the last couple of years is the issue of government advertising, and this government has shamelessly touted its programs in advertising. Many times I have talked to people about the ads on the home repair program, where they set criteria for a \$10 million home repair program. You know, nobody applies for this thing, and they spend millions advertising it. That is why their popularity increased last summer. I mean, it was using taxpayers' money to run few good advertisements week after week, month after month, and something has to be done.

The Provincial Auditor has asked them for guidelines. They promised to come up with guidelines. There are no guidelines. Do you think we are going to see guidelines before an election call? [interjection] Well, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says no, and I have to agree with him there. There will be no guidelines before the election. [interjection] I think I have gone too far already.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, this is a tired government. I look across and I see the member from Reston. I remember him eight years ago with his bye-bye Pawley licence plate that he used to hide under his desk, and he would pull it out and wave it whenever the Speaker was not watching. He had a lot of fun doing that.

But, as the member knows, seven years is about the lifespan of a government and they are at the seven years, and the public, while they may not be clamouring in huge numbers at the moment for a change, it is out there. It is out there. It is unmistakable, and it will be developed, I am sure, by the Liberals and by ourselves over the next 35 days. I am sure a lot more people in 35 days will be convinced of the tiredness of this government and the bankruptcy of this government when we have had a chance to confront them on the streets and door to door over the next 35 days.

Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker.

\* (1510)

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Acting Speaker, I have a great opportunity here to rise and respond to this year's budget. Also, before I begin my comments, if I may, I would like to wish the very best to our departing members on this side of the House. The members for Riel (Mr. Ducharme), Pembina (Mr. Orchard), Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) and Morris (Mr. Manness) have all announced their departure from this arena, and I wish them the very best. I appreciate their leadership. I appreciate their work ethic. I appreciate their principled approach to issues. I thank them, and I wish them the best of health in their retirement from active political life at this juncture.

I think at this stage it is very important to ask ourselves, what kind of government is this government? I think the best way to evaluate that is perhaps to take note of what some others have said about this government, about the Filmon government over the last seven years.

The resident senator of this House is Harry Enns--well, the member for Lakeside--who, along with Douglas Campbell, is, I believe, the only serving member of that constituency for the last 70 years or so. When I asked the member for Lakeside what he thought about this government's performance, he said that he felt--and as a student of Manitoba history as well, he is quite aware of the performance of previous governments, not just governments that he has served under as a minister, such as the governments of Duff Roblin, of Walter Weir, of Sterling Lyon and the present Premier, the member for Tuxedo--and the member for Lakeside says that in his estimation this government could well be the best government he has ever served under, and perhaps the best government in the history of this province.

That is high praise. We could say that is biased praise, but that is all right. It is praise based on information, based on knowledge. The member for Lakeside certainly has that.

**An Honourable Member:** And integrity.

**Mr. Pallister:** And integrity as well.

What other agencies have praised this government? Well, The Globe and Mail. The Globe and Mail says our Premier is the most respected premier in the country. The Fraser Institute says that this is one of the best governments in the last quarter century in this nation. It rates it in the top three. Rates, by the way, the Pawley government of the NDP as one of the bottom three. The Dominion Bond Rating Service says that this government is the best fiscally managed government in Canada since 1987. That is high praise, and the NDP government of Saskatchewan, believe it or not.

What an unlikely source of praise. They said in their budget data that we were the government that left the most money after basic taxes and utilities and basic expenditures, that we left the most money overall with families in this province of any government in Canada.

So we have been praised from various corners of this country, from people who have a knowledge of what other governments are doing. It is understandable that opposition parties would choose not to praise us. I suppose that with the self-serving nature of government as it is that is not going to happen. Certainly, outside of this House where logic and common sense prevail, there is a growing awareness of the power and the integrity and the capability of this particular government.

There are a number of reasons why this government would receive such praise, but I think one of them is that we recognize here the common sense truth of the statement that the surest way to fail is to try to please everyone. Certainly, we have failed to try to please everyone, because by so doing we would not be effectively governing. Parents understand that they do not effectively parent by doing everything their children ask of them. Good

teachers understand in the classroom that they do not effectively create a positive learning environment for all students by catering to every single need or demand of the student body. Good business owners understand that they do not cater to every need of every single client and successfully operate a focused and organized and positive and profitable business, and so good governments are the same.

We recognize we cannot please everyone. We are not trying to please everyone, and that is as a consequence the reason I suggest that public sector unions are going to spend in the next few weeks literally millions of dollars of their union members' hard-earned funds in political gamesmanship, because we have not catered to public sector unions and their demands.

However, someone has, someone who is very capable of catering to special interest groups in an effort to buy popularity, someone who is pictured on the front of union magazines this last month. That is the Leader of the NDP in this province, touted as our next Premier by that particular union and, I know, admired by many in the upper echelons of public sector unions for his willingness and ability to cater to their every need, for his willingness to ask them how much they want to make and then give them that, at the expense of all nonunion members in the province, at the expense of the children of this province who cannot afford to pay excessive wage settlements and benefits packages as the NDP have repeatedly negotiated. I hesitate to call it negotiation. It is not negotiation except perhaps with a mirror when one holds hands with those people they are negotiating with in an effort to buy their votes.

That is certainly what this government has not done. It is not willing to do it. It will not do it, and that is something that I think this government deserves to be proud of. In fact, public sector unions spending millions of dollars of their members' funds, misappropriating them for political ads, are a sign that this government is in fact leading properly and rightly and in the

best interests of all Manitobans, not just a select few.

Why else is this government respected among those who observe governments and their performance? We understand here that you cannot hand children excessive debt, that that is phoney compassion. Spending excessively today to try to gain popularity today creates greater problems tomorrow. We understand that. Numerous comments have been made by members opposite that that approach that we are taking of balancing the budget and of requiring future governments to do the same is one that is somehow not honourable. I do not think that is a fair accusation. I would ask the opposition parties to come forward with full and honest disclosures of their policies on the issue of balanced budgets. I would like to hear those proposals. I know what the NDP in Saskatchewan view as a proper approach to balanced budgets, and I wonder if the NDP in Manitoba share their view, that closing 52 rural hospitals and putting a 10 percent income surtax on every citizen of Manitoba would be a good way to achieve a balanced budget. I wonder if that is what the NDP believe.

I wonder if the Liberals believe that the approach taken by Frank McKenna and the Liberals in New Brunswick is an intelligent and honourable approach. That is an approach where they have changed the definition of a balanced budget so that they could achieve one. They say a balanced budget is one where, well, you spend less than you bring in, except for interest, which we will not count. That is kind of like the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) saying he is balancing his budget by excluding the interest on his mortgage payment from the equation. That is not honest. That is not straightforward. That is not what people in Manitoba consider a balanced budget. Saying you are balancing it when you are not, that is just misleading and that is garbage.

The way you raise revenue in New Brunswick is that you raise the sales tax to 11

percent, and you get a lot more money out of the well-worn pockets of taxpayers. Now is that the Liberal approach to balancing the budget? I would be interested to know. I think that, despite the smoke and mirrors we have seen and heard thus far, the people of Manitoba want to know too. Why else do you suppose this government is respected by those who have the intelligence to observe good performance by governments? It is because we understand that the best social programming is no social program at all, but employment opportunities for people, jobs for people. The No. 1 social program is a job. We have created an environment here, and that is our job as government.

My dad farmed for 50 years. He was a good farmer. He understood what good farmers do understand. I never once heard him claim to create a crop, because he understood that farmers do not create crops, they create an environment. Their responsibility is to create an environment where good crops might grow. Good governments understand that their responsibility is not to create jobs, not to try to buy short-term jobs, as the Jobs Fund approach did and failed miserably at doing, but to create an environment where Workers Compensation rates are held level, where payroll taxes do not apply to small business and do not penalize them for creating jobs.

You create an environment of stability, of good fiscal management, where small business people feel confident in putting funds at risk. That is how you create jobs, and that is precisely what this government has been doing, cutting the red tape that small business people do not want to deal with excessively, because small businesses want to deal with their customer and serve their customer. That is what they do best. We want to see on this side of the House an environment where small businesses can make a profit because, unlike the members opposite, profit is not a dirty word to us here.

Howard Pawley said that the members in the New Democratic Party and that party in general

suffer from a lack of people with business acumen, and the evidence presents itself on a regular basis in this Chamber that he was dead right. The fact of the matter is that these particular members do not understand that profit is necessary for private business to sustain itself, that profit is necessary for private businesses to grow and expand, that profit is a forerunner to employment, that without profit private businesses, as opposed to government, go out of business, and when they are out of business, so does employment opportunity get lost in the process.

I think it is important to recognize that our responsibility as a government, and this government does recognize it, is to create an environment where good jobs can be created by the private sector of this province, and it is working.

What about rural Manitoba? There is a strong commitment to rural Manitoba on this side of the House, a strong commitment, as revealed through the very successful REDI programs, the Grow Bond programs, which have created over 2,000 jobs in rural Manitoba. There is a strong commitment, as revealed by the commitment to decentralize government positions, to take those positions outside of the Perimeter Highway and move them closer to the people of rural Manitoba, who pay for those jobs and deserve to be closer to those services. This decentralization initiative was opposed aggressively by the members of the Liberal and New Democratic parties in this House. Today they are the friends of rural Manitoba, when it is expedient, convenient to be such. But when their opportunity arose to show their commitment to the people of rural Manitoba, they failed to show it and they failed to do that miserably.

\* (1520)

What about agriculture? As I listened to the comments in the recent debate around the Western Grain Transportation changes and other

changes, I cannot help but feel that the NDP in this province is perpetuating a view of farmers that is a backward view, a view that some urban people have of farmers as people with peaked ball caps crowding into mail boxes looking for subsidy checks. That is not the view that I have of rural Manitoba and of those who practise agriculture here. Subsistence farmers gathered around waiting for the government to support them is not an accurate or fair view of farmers, but that seems to be the view perpetuated by the NDP.

What do the Liberals think about rural Manitobans? Well, not much I guess. I read from a quote by the former leader, who said in reference to the Grow Bond program, and I quote now: You usually do not find people in rural Manitoba with broad experience in evaluating these kinds of things. These people tend to gravitate to the city. There are people who specialize in these kinds of things, and they usually do not live in rural Manitoba.

That particular quote came from Senator Sharon Carstairs, the lady in red, now truly in red, in the red Chamber, the opponent of patronage from within. There is no indication that the Liberal Party's attitude toward rural Manitoba has changed one iota since that statement was made, no indication whatsoever that there is an understanding of the needs and the gifts of the people of rural Manitoba within that caucus. That is something that should concern all of us who understand the history of this province.

You see, this province is an agriculturally-based province. At the turn of the century there was something that happened here; it was called the first prairie wave. That prairie wave signified the great migration of people from all over the world to western Canada--pioneers, people who came here leaving behind the things they knew, the people they knew and coming to a new land with virtually no guarantees whatsoever, with only their skills and their energy and their enthusiasm and their courage to

bring with them.

What happened in Manitoba as a consequence of the first prairie wave was this: wealth was created. The people who came here from Europe, from the British Isles, from all over the world settled here and created wealth. Did that benefit the city of Winnipeg? Well, yes, it did, because the city of Winnipeg became a distribution point for agricultural production, a processing point for agricultural production. It became a stepping stone to the rest of the world for the Great Plains. So we saw the first prairie wave see an acceleration in the development of this great province that was never seen before.

Agriculture was the basis for that prairie wave. Agriculture, not personified by the Liberal view of agriculture, which is one that I think, when I say farmer I believe the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) thinks of probably Ma and Pa Kettle, but by people with entrepreneurial drive and skills and courage, we created a wealthy and thriving province.

Now, over the years that great prairie wave has resulted in the province we have today, and we have upon us the second great prairie wave today as the momentous changes in agriculture that we see in this nation have caused us to develop. Like a cocoon we are in the process of emerging into the second great prairie wave in agriculture. Manitoba stands to gain tremendously from this second great prairie wave as we recapture that pioneer heritage that saw us achieve great growth at the turn of the century and in the early years of this century. We will see it happen again with the right kind of government that understands that we must work together in partnership with rural entrepreneurs to tap that potential for the benefit of our children and our grandchildren.

What is this second great prairie wave I am talking about? Well, it is people, and that is all it ever has been. It is people. It is small business people and farmers and farm families working together. It is individual people.

It is people like Shaun Moran. Shaun Moran was a young farmer with a young family just west of Portage la Prairie, whom I believe the former Minister of Agriculture has met. Shaun Moran is a person who with the partnership of this provincial Department of Agriculture looked to develop new crops. He started to grow a crop called coriander. Maybe some of you have heard of it.

Coriander smells beautiful and it is used in cooking. Coriander can be grown in Manitoba's climate and it is grown effectively by Shaun Moran, and now he contracts with other farmers to grow it. He markets it. He markets it to New York and Chicago and all over the world--coriander.

He makes wealth for his family. He creates wealth for this province and for the region I represent, and he creates wealth for the farmers he comes into contact with, all because of a solid partnership with this provincial government because we understand the potential that exists in agriculture and the need to unlock that potential.

What about Johnson Seeds? Well, I take a special interest in Johnson Seeds because my wife is a Johnson from Arborg and her grandfather started a small farm in Arborg many years ago.

**An Honourable Member:** She is Icelandic too, eh?

**Mr. Pallister:** She is Icelandic, too.

**An Honourable Member:** From the land of tall.

**Mr. Pallister:** She is tall and her family is tall. I will never forget the first time I went to Arborg and was introduced to her dad, her uncle and her two cousins and her brother. I thought I was meeting the Icelandic national basketball team. These guys were large. I stayed on the good side of my girlfriend, and I try to stay on the good side of her now too, because it is intimidating not to.

In any case, Johnson Seeds is a very interesting success story, and if you are interested I will tell you all kinds of things about my wife's other family, including their success as entrepreneurs. I am very proud of their success.

What they have done, in short, is they have taken a family farm and they have developed a seed plant and they have built a seed lab. They do testing and development of varieties right there in Arborg, Manitoba, a community of less than a thousand people. Now they produce a golf grass green called 18th green, and they market in partnership with the University of Manitoba, and they market that grass all around the world, out of Arborg, Manitoba--ladies and gentlemen, Arborg. You can do anything from anywhere in this province, if you have the guts to try.

Ladies and gentlemen, they employ over 35 people at Johnson Seeds in Arborg now. They put money into the community because they have the guts to try. We have the guts as a government to support the people who try in rural Manitoba and we will continue to do it. What did this government do to help them? Johnson Seeds also makes money for the farmers of this province and its region. They have got them producing a crop called canary seed. Now you may not have heard of canary seed. It is an interesting crop. You know what canary seed is? Bird seed, that is exactly what it is, and they market cargo carriers of bird seed to Hong Kong out of Arborg, Manitoba, and they do it because we have a highway between Arborg and here now. That is a tremendous highway.

What about Brent Wright? Brent Wright is a research entrepreneur who works with other farmers. He is from my constituency of Portage la Prairie. He develops farm practices and farm varieties that add value to the farmer of our region and our province. A tremendous entrepreneur. We need more of this kind of person. Brent Wright is able to be in daily and regular contact, immediate contact, through the capabilities that this minister, the Minister from

Springfield helped introduce through his Service for the Future package. This gentleman, Brent Wright, no longer has to try to communicate by way of carrier pigeon and rotary dial phone.

Ma and Pa Kettle do not like it because they cannot listen in on the conversations of the neighbours anymore, but the fact is Brent Wright likes it because he is in contact with the world. We can do anything we want in Portage la Prairie, and we are doing good things in Portage and in agriculture in this province.

Marketing, opportunities for young farmers, opportunities for families to stay closer to their homes, new pioneers. That is what this second great prairie wave is all about. It is an exciting thing, but I do not think the Liberal Party understands it. In fact, I do not think they know the difference between canola and granola.

I do not think they know the difference between a sugar beet and a turnip. I do not think the Liberal Party has an ag policy. I think agricultural policy is an oxymoron like plastic glass and jumbo shrimp when it comes to the Liberal Party. There is no concept of rural Manitoba and its potential. No concept. In fact, the Liberal Party has elevated opportunism, part of its basic platform now. Opportunism, a pretend allegiance with rural Manitoba that is not real and does not exist.

When we had an emergency debate in this Chamber last year on the most profound and most important issue that affects farmers across this province, the WGTA, the Liberal Leader--and I hesitate to call him a Leader, in fact I will try not to, because he is not.

He is a fawning follower of the federal government. What did he do? He stood in his place and he walked from this Chamber, not contributing a word, not contributing an idea, not contributing a single, solitary statement on the greatest issue that impacts on our province, WGTA.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Acting Speaker, in fairness, on a point of order, the member knows it is improper for him to refer that the Leader of the Liberal Party walked out. I could equally have said the Premier of the province walked out.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner):** Order, please, the honourable member does not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Pallister:** I realize the member for Inkster is sensitive to this issue and should be because the fact of the matter is there is no policy for agriculture in the Liberal Party.

\* (1530)

### Point of Order

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Speaker, on a point of order, I would like clarification. Is it now the policy of this particular Acting Speaker that it is okay to indicate that people are absent from this Chamber?

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader):** Just on a point of order. I believe the Liberal House leader may request of the Speaker a ruling. Mr. Acting Speaker, in your case, I believe it was a ruling he did not have a point of order. He may then challenge that ruling, but I would suggest it is not in order for the Liberal House leader to talk about the Acting Speaker's policies. A Speaker in this House, or an Acting Speaker, makes rulings, not policies, and if the Liberal Leader wishes to challenge those rulings, he has that opportunity, but not in this way.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner):** Thank you for the advice. I will take your suggestion under advisement, and I will report back to the House after I have consulted with staff on the matter.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Pallister:** Mr. Acting Speaker, in terms of the Liberal policies on agriculture, once again we have had the opportunity to observe how truly thin they are when we hear, in response to the recent federal budget which has reduced immediately WGTA funding to this province, we hear the response of the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). No we do not, because we did not hear a response. There was no response.

How about on the issue of the federal government's reductions in the allowable amount of wheat to be exported from, specifically, western Canada, a federal government move designed to cater to the special interests of commodity management groups in eastern Canada. What did we hear from the member for St. James on that issue? The echoes of silence. That is what we heard.

When the federal government in its recent budget reduced funding support for food inspectors and research, what did we hear? Once again, what did we hear? We heard not a sound, not a sound, and I believe that this is reflective of the Liberal Party's approach in promoting their Leader.

When we listen to the Liberal Party advertisements, what do we hear the Liberal Party advertisements having the Liberal Leader say? Nothing--which, Mr. Acting Speaker, reminds me of the old adage: Rather one should remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and forever remove any doubt.

The member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) leads a party which has so shallow a view of rural Manitoba and of agriculture that it is shameful. The fact of the matter is that until we recognize the importance of unlocking that potential, and this government does recognize such, we will not capture the potential that exists in this province.

The reality is that we understand that on this side of the House. This government has partnered with farmers. This government has partnered with rural Manitoba because that is what rural Manitobans deserve. They deserve a government that appreciates them, that appreciates and will aggressively promote the benefits of rural Manitoba and the life that is there.

We deserve to have as Manitobans a government that will work to pursue opportunities, and there are many opportunities waiting to be developed in rural Manitoba. We deserve a government that will work to establish value-added opportunities throughout this province. That is precisely what we will do when we continue our mandate for the benefit of all the people of Manitoba, and specifically when we continue to serve agriculture and rural development in this province.

What else do people like about this government? Well, there are a number of things, but I think that seven years of no increase in the major taxes is something a lot of people mention to me at the door.

Seven years--why do we like that? People tell me they like that because it shows a faith in them. You see, when we leave money in the hands of people, we are saying, you are good managers of the money. I know, as all of you know, that that is not always true, but the fact of the matter is that most Manitobans understand what their priorities are and are capable of deciding where they will spend their money.

The reality is, in Portage la Prairie, that they are spending it there, and that pleases me. It pleases the small-business community that I come from, because that means that together in our community we have effectively created over 300 new jobs in the last two and a half years. That is recovery. That could only happen if there was a government in power that had the understanding that people can manage their



money very well and very capably and create jobs in so doing.

One of the nicest things about living in Manitoba I think is the seasons. We have stark contrasts between our seasons. We have just come through a very difficult season, not one of my favourites, but we are entering into a season I like very much. I am looking forward to getting out there and walking around the constituency and making some new friends. I am looking forward to it, because I like spring.

Society goes through changes too. Society goes through seasons as well. The difference is, we cannot control nature's seasons, but together, collectively, we can control society's seasons.

We can do that. Never doubt that a few thoughtful, committed people can change the world, because that is the only thing that ever has. The reality is, we have thoughtful, committed people on this side of the House that are willing to try and do just that. I think we have an opportunity to change in the new season that is coming to us in Manitoba in a positive way.

There are four things I would like to refer to quickly that I would like to see in the new spring season that we are entering into. These are not new things. These are a rediscovery, like spring is, a rediscovery of things from the past, a rediscovery of, No. 1, thrift. Our savings rate in this nation has dropped tremendously, and that is a sad thing. I think it reflects a lack of belief in the future perhaps.

When I think of thrift, I think of the old days, I guess, when my mother brought my brother and me into town on a Saturday afternoon so that she could go shopping. She would drop us off downtown on Portage, and she would reach into her purse and pull out a crisp one-dollar bill, hand it to me as the older of the two boys and say, Brian, meet me at such and such a spot at five or whatever. I would take that one-dollar bill and my brother and I would go to a movie,

get some popcorn and a drink and a bar and have a little change left over. With a dollar. That is amazing.

**An Honourable Member:** Are you that old, Brian?

**Mr. Pallister:** Yes, I am that old.

I know what you are thinking. You are thinking, that is just inflation, but that is not my point.

My point is, when my mother dipped into her purse and pulled out that one-dollar bill and handed it to me, my brother and I knew something about that dollar. We knew that that dollar had value. We knew that that dollar was the result of work. It was work that caused us to have that dollar.

The reason we knew, of course, for the benefit of members opposite who have never been on a farm, was because we were the people who milked the cows, who took the pails of milk into the house, where we had our separator and separated the cream off, and who waited anxiously for our father or mother to come back from town to find out how much the cream cheque was, because we lived on the cream cheque.

We knew what a dollar was because we worked for that dollar. We were part of earning it. That is something we need to rediscover in the new Manitoba, the value and understanding that dollars come from work, nothing more than that.

What else do we need to rediscover? We need to rediscover respect for people, respect for law and order, respect for property. Aristotle said, before Christ was born, that liberalism will grow and flourish until chaos reigns supreme. In the last quarter century in this country, as we have been less and less willing to enforce and take firm and strong stands on law enforcement, which this government is now trying to do, as we

have listened to the bleeding hearts in our society, as we have shown less of a willingness to stand up for what it is that we believe in and respect for our value systems, we have seen a growing amount of crime and of disrespect for the law. An inverse relationship exists. When one does not stand for something, one will fall for anything. I think there are many members opposite who will fall for anything.

\* (1540)

When I was a boy growing up we were told, Brian, I was told, if you get in trouble at school, you are going to get in twice as much trouble at home. By golly, I got in twice as much trouble at home a lot, because I was no saint. The reality is that when my parents were disciplining me, when I got home, because I had been a bad guy, they were doing it because they had enough respect for their neighbours and their friends and the other people in the community to know that I should be reflecting respectful values in the community.

They had enough respect for them and for me to care to discipline me, but discipline is something members opposite all too often fail to understand, or at least do not portray an understanding of in their comments. Never for a moment, when I was being disciplined in the home, did I think that my parents did not care for me, did I think that they did not care for me deeply. They had the courage to stand up for what they believed in, and they had the courage to lead by example and to make me a better human being, as parents should try to do. I respect that, and I have grown to be a respectful person as a consequence of that.

The reality at Agassiz Centre in Portage la Prairie is that it is a boot camp now, and it was not a boot camp before. Before, it had pool tables; before, it had colour TVs; before, it was a nice place to visit and stay. There are people, young men who, when their term was nearing its completion, would walk out, go downtown, steal something and get caught so they could go back.

That is not happening, and if you would go and talk to the people who work there, you would find out that is not happening.

If your concern is about recidivism--and it should be--if your concern is about having young people that do not want to go and be incarcerated in a summer camp, then you should support the boot camp effort of that minister, and you should continue to realize that it should not be pleasant to be incarcerated. The reality of the new Manitoba is that we must rediscover that.

What about self-reliance? That is something else we need to rediscover--self-reliance. When the word self-reliance comes up, I think of my mother. When my mother was 11 years old, her mom died. My mom raised her brothers and sisters and looked after cooking and cleaning and choring and taking care of her dad and her siblings from the time she was 11 years old.

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

When she was 16, she left her home near Roblin, near the Rural Development minister's riding, and she came to Winnipeg to further her education. She was employed as a nanny, as was done in that time, looking after a household, two children, and cooking and cleaning for a family, and she put herself through high school. Then she put herself through, upon graduation, Normal School and got her teacher's certificate, and she taught in rural Manitoba one-room and two-room schools all around the province. Then in 1952, she came to Portage la Prairie, got a job and met my dad, and well, things just happened from there and she quit teaching to raise three kids.

A few years later, she decided to go back and teach, because at that time, as is the case on many farms in rural Manitoba today, it takes two incomes to keep it going, so my mother decided to go back and teach. A friend of hers, who she had met in Edwin, the area I come from, said, you know, Anne, it is going to be really tough.

You are going to have to cook and clean and look after the home and have a job. Mom told me this the other day. She said, I did not have the heart to tell her, Brian, I had been doing that since I was 11 years old.

All without a government grant. Is that not unbelievable? Never for a moment feeling sorry for herself, never for a moment going and asking or expecting that someone else should do it for her. She put herself ahead in life. She advanced her own life. She improved her own skills. She took her life and she said, I will make it better. I will do it; it is not your job.

In the new Manitoba, perhaps we should bear self-reliance in mind a little more often and quit catering to those who would like to lay the guilt on us that it is our job to live their life for them, because it is not. It is everybody's responsibility. My mother taught me that.

We have a raft of social programs. You know, life is kind of like walking on a tightrope. When you are born, you are put here with no guarantees and you get on the tightrope and you start walking, and by golly, you might fall off. So we develop these social programs so that when you fell off you would get caught in these safety nets, but the idea of the original safety net was it would be a trampoline so that when you landed in it it would bounce you back up. You would get back up on the tightrope and you would start walking again, taking more chances, get back in there, keep fighting.

What we have got now is a layer and another layer and a bunch of social safety net programs that exist that act like a hammock so that when you fall off you stick and you lie there and you rest. What we have to do is get back to a social program that is much more like a trampoline and much less like a hammock.

Interdependence is something that many people will never understand. Most people go through three stages in life, psychologists will tell you. They are born and they are dependent.

Then they get independent. Then they get dependent again when they get older--three stages.

There is a fourth stage, interdependence. Interdependence, when you are independent and you might get interdependent. What that means is you understand that other people matter, and you make other people matter in your life. That is a very important thing to understand, because if you really understand that you can have a more fulfilled and more meaningful life, you can have a real purpose in your life.

Why is that important? It is important because in the new Manitoba we have to increase our emphasis on volunteerism. We have to increase our emphasis on families because families are the university of teaching interdependence, the university of love and caring.

We have to take an enlightened approach to community teamwork. That is what I see happening in Portage la Prairie right now. I see it working. I see it working very well. In fact, the same kind of teamwork that existed in our previous generations that rebuilt a burned house in a week with volunteer labour, or put a church up with volunteer labour in a couple of weeks, or put our crop in on our farm in 1961 when my dad was too sick to do it, the neighbours came over and did it and they never asked for money. They just did it because that is what neighbours do. That same kind of teamwork is at work right now in Portage la Prairie.

I will tell you what is happening. What is happening is that we are working together much better than we ever have before. That gives me a great deal of pleasure. I see us standing on the threshold of a lot of opportunity in Portage la Prairie, opportunity for social betterment as we enrich our traditions of volunteerism. We are the leading volunteer province in this nation. We have the opportunity to enrich ourselves, opportunities to improve our institutions, health care, education, make them more responsive to

the communities where those services should be delivered more effectively to the people by involving parent councils, by involving community consultation groups, as the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) has done, opportunities for economic growth in so many ways.

The principal reason I got into politics and the reason I will stay is because I want to see families have the chance to grow up and live together and work together in their own communities and not have to leave and grow apart but stay together and get to know each other better. That is the opportunity my family had when we lost my dad a couple of years ago, because my brother and sister and I all live and are able to make our livings in Portage la Prairie and area. I know there are a lot of other families that need that kind of support that my mother needed at that time.

In Manitoba I think it is achievable. I think it is something we should work together to achieve. We have begun to do just that. What we have begun to do as a government is working. It is working, and it will continue to work for Manitobans in the next four years. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere):** Mr. Acting Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to respond to the Budget Debate.

I would like to begin with a personal note. Since being elected to the Legislature in the by-elections one and a half years ago, I found this time quite exciting. I have enjoyed the work in the Legislature as well as my work in the constituency. Much of the work as an MLA is quite similar to teaching. My work as an MLA and the work of a teacher are people related. If you are a people person you will enjoy the work of an MLA and the work of a teacher.

I must say a few words about the members right in this Chamber. We have various personalities here and generally members of both sides of the Chamber have been quite

personable. I have appreciated the many speeches and the spirited debates. I hope my new career here will continue to be as enjoyable and successful as my long teaching career. There are times when I miss the students, teachers and parents, but my mind is usually fully occupied with my present work here.

I am also looking to the next provincial election where I will have an opportunity to meet the people of my constituency and discuss the issues of the day. I do think that people in my constituency, just like people in other constituencies, are waiting for the members in the Legislature to show leadership, and generally people still have faith in our system of government, despite what one hears.

\*(1550)

Before I comment on the present budget, I would like to reflect upon what the people of Rossmere are saying. Whatever we do or say in this Legislature, we should keep in mind the concerns of the people in our constituencies.

I would like to begin the discussion of the present budget in the context of the concerns expressed by the people of Rossmere, which I assume are similar to all Manitobans. As I go door to door, concerns about health care, education, jobs, safety and general insecurity about the future are expressed. Special insecurity about the future of our youth is expressed concerning jobs. There seems to be a general belief that the youth of our province or country will not live as well as their parents. They think their children are going to face great difficulty as they go out into the world.

I would like to give you a few examples of the concerns I refer to. I met a family from Dejong Crescent who had three children in their 20s living at home who all had university degrees. They were living at home because they had part-time jobs or only seasonal work. The parents in this case were concerned about their children. All the university education had not

given them the economic security that their parents had.

Despite the reports from government and the media, there are few permanent jobs for youth. Jobs, along with health care, are probably the greatest concern of the people I talk to in my constituency.

I receive phone calls and letters about home care on a continuous basis, and I am certain that other members get these calls as well. The long lineups at the Concordia Hospital and having to have their bed in the hall was a common complaint. There is great fear of Americanization or privatization of our health care. They have great fear of losing their health care system as they know it today.

One of the most recent phone calls was about pensions. The constituent was wondering if pensions would be cut off right now, seeing it is being reviewed, or in a few years down the road.

These are some of the many concerns that are passed on to me on a daily basis. This indicates that there is a real insecurity about the future, and we should discuss the recent budget in this context.

What is the present budget doing to correct some of these concerns, is what we should be asking ourselves. Another concern is, the cost of personal care homes is a major issue to people. People are concerned about paying for their personal care homes up to \$46 a day. This is a real major issue to many of our seniors.

Let us get closer to the budget as we have been discussing recently. The government has made a lot of fanfare about the balanced budget for '95-96. We must remember, this is just a projected budget, and the real outcome could be quite different. The predictions of most budgets have been way off base in the last several years.

This budget is, in a way, wishful thinking. I think how they made this budget is, they just

pulled numbers out of the air, and all those federal cuts that are going to come the next few years have not been built in to the budget.

Before we go on looking at the present budget, we should remind everyone of deficits in the last six years or so. In '90-91, for instance, we had a deficit of \$358 million; '91-92, \$334 million; '92-93, \$748 million; '93-94, \$458 million; and in '94-95, a predicted \$218 million. These figures are from the Public Accounts. If you add up these figures for the last six or seven years, you get a deficit of over \$2 billion for operations.

This deficit, over the last six or seven years, makes me question why the government wants to bring in a balanced-budget legislation. It seems as if they want to set standards for others. A government that has created such a deficit now wants to tell the public that they now have good intentions. This whole exercise concerning balanced-budget legislation seems phoney.

Also, the government likes to tell the public that only they know how to handle tax money while they have had no control over the economy or their deficit spending over the last six, seven years. The track record of this government is one of the worst across Canada. A government that has created these deficits now wants to pass legislation to have a balanced budget. They do not walk their own talk. There seems to be a real mismanagement.

Another statement, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) keeps saying is that there has been a seven-year tax freeze. Well, this is a false statement. There has been no tax freeze. The sales tax base has been extended. For instance, the 7 percent sales tax now includes newspapers, snacks, meals under \$6, school supplies, baby expenses and other things. This extension of sales tax has given them \$48 million of revenue per year.

The tax credit changes to property tax raised another \$53 million, the income and gasoline tax

raised \$13 million, which gives a total of \$114 million of taxes per year. This was and is equivalent to 5 percent increase on income tax, and yet the government says that they have had a tax freeze. So the whole concept of tax freeze is not a true statement.

Well, we will have to have a look at the VLTs. VLT revenue is another issue that needs some attention. Manitoba has the most VLTs per capita in Canada. I wonder which minister will take responsibility for all of these lotteries? Will it be the present minister responsible for lotteries or the previous ones? The VLT revenue is about the only real revenue increase the government depends on. I must give the media credit for calling it, in so many words, the VLT budget. This VLT slush fund will not be there next year, so all of these false figures are built into the budget.

The whole social and human deficit of gambling must also be considered. The government should consider the social deficit of the gambling addiction when it promotes VLTs into every corner of society. Also, many communities lose money through VLTs, and it hurts local businesses such as restaurants.

\* (1600)

We should think of the people before profits. The people of Rossmere are certainly concerned about the VLT policies, and I assume it will become an election issue.

When we discuss this budget, we must examine the impact of this budget on municipal government and school boards. Basically, this budget offloads its deficit on the city and the school boards. The city and school boards are forced to raise property tax, and by offloading you have not really gained anything. What you have really done is passed on your problems to someone else.

The municipal government and school boards are very hard-pressed today because they are

asked to carry really the provincial deficit. The budget really does nothing for the municipal government and school boards.

The River East School Division is raising its local levy by about 3.5 percent, and they are going into the reserve fund for \$1 million. They are reducing their teaching staff by \$450,000, they are reducing their auxiliary staff by \$111,000, and they are reducing their central office by \$200,000.

So you can see school boards are hard-pressed. Also, New Careers, the ACCESS program, student social assistance are all being cut to some extent.

The City of Winnipeg has a debt of \$1 billion, so you can see what position our city is in economically. It also indicates how this budget, as well as the last six budgets, have undermined the city financially. For instance, Handi-Transit, which is a very important service for our city, has been cut back by the provincial government.

The city once had a 50-50 shared-cost program with the provincial government on Handi-Transit. The provincial government has gone to block funding, which leaves the city carrying a larger burden each year, because there are more users of Handi-Transit. I get many phone calls on the Handi-Transit matter, and the province shares a responsibility on the cutback of service.

The issue of urban sprawl is another issue that has not been addressed by this government. Plan Winnipeg should be followed, and the provincial government allows development to go in all directions. Wherever the bulldozer goes that is where new urban development begins. There is no capital region plan being followed. There are satellite communities growing all around Winnipeg. Every time a new urban community begins, tax money must be used to develop the new infrastructure. This takes away tax money from the city and creates all kinds of

problems for the whole city. Without a capital region plan, our city will continue to have problems.

The inner city has suffered as a result of our urban sprawl. I appreciate the Winnipeg Development Agreement which will help to revitalize the inner city, but it is not enough to have a real impact on the inner city. What the inner city needs is a strategy or plan to improve the quality of life of people. This budget does not affect the people of the inner city. What people want is housing, safety, jobs and education and training, and this government has no focused view or strategy to revitalize the inner city. These people do not want unemployment and welfare. They want training and job opportunities.

I have already mentioned urban sprawl, but I think we can talk about the new municipality of Headingley in the context of urban sprawl. Just recently, Mayor Thompson wrote a letter to all the MLAs explaining that Winnipeg is forced to pick up some of Headingley's debt. As we know, the assets such as a community centre and land green were transferred to Headingley as it separated from Winnipeg. Well, over a \$600,000 debt was left as a result of these improvements. These assets were transferred to Headingley, but debts have not been totally transferred.

The City of Winnipeg's position is that all the debt as a result of these improvements should be transferred to Headingley. The provincial government has forced the city to pick up half of this debt which amounts to over \$300,000. The city is seeking support to have the problems corrected. I appreciate Mayor Thompson's efforts to have this corrected. I have also been contacted by several councillors on this matter. I do not know why the province would favour Headingley over the City of Winnipeg. If they allowed Headingley to leave, at least let them take their debts with them. I personally think this is unfair, and I strongly support Winnipeg's

position concerning this matter.

The direction of education in Manitoba needs some discussion. The concept of parental involvement is appreciated, but the advisory councils should include staff as well. The whole composition of advisory councils are a serious concern to parents. Parents want to develop a partnership with all stakeholders in education.

Another concern is the removal of Canadian history in Grade 11 from the compulsory category. Why would knowledge of our country not be important to our students? How can we understand and appreciate the present when we do not know the past? These are just a few of the concerns parents are discussing. More consultation is needed with all stakeholders in education, but some of the problems could be ironed out. The reform package was done in haste so that it would be ready for the election.

In conclusion, I must say that a balanced budget does not mean society's problems are all solved. You might have the numbers balanced on a piece of paper, but there is a human and social deficit in our society which is greater than ever. The budget does not deal with the human and social deficit. Welfare, Winnipeg Harvest, poverty, unemployment and crime continue to increase. The budget does not deal with jobs and training for our youth. The budget does not give our youth, seniors and the working men and women any security. If anything, they are afraid about the future as far as employment, or youth being able to attend college or university. Seniors are afraid of losing their pensions and health care. There is great fear about the economic future in Manitoba and Canada. Thank you.

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa):** Mr. Acting Speaker, it is indeed a great pleasure to stand before the House here and speak on a tremendous achievement, a highlight of my short career here in politics being a person who was elected in 1990 and who for all intents and purposes will be back after the next election. It is a proud day to stand here and talk about a balanced budget here in the province of

Manitoba. Who would have known in 1990 when I first got elected in the general election in Manitoba that I would be standing before the House here in just over four and a half years and talking about and bringing accolades upon my colleagues and this tremendous government that has brought forth a balanced budget and with the meat involved to make sure that we do not have tax increases unless we go to the people?

\* (1610)

The fact that we are in a position to look at surplus through fiscal management that has been the envy not only here in Manitoba and other parties here in Manitoba, our opposition, but of all provinces right across Canada.

Balancing the budget indeed is something that has been bandied about by all governments. In the last while we have seen other provinces in Canada saying that they are in a position to balance their budget too. But if we look at the provinces that have balanced their budget which are touting themselves, in particular Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, we have a very odd situation that the balancing of the budget that is brought forth by these governments was on the taxpayers and the citizens of their particular provinces.

We are talking about a province next door, Saskatchewan, that brought in a balanced budget which increased taxes of \$1 billion on the taxpayers of their province of Saskatchewan. They brought forth additional sales tax increase where their sales taxes went up 2 percentage, I believe, up to 9 percent.

In New Brunswick, the sales tax there is up to 11 percent.

Mr. Acting Speaker, here in Manitoba the people here and in the electorate out there on the streets have told us they do not want to pay taxes, no more taxes. We have listened to them over the years and we have brought forth a balanced budget.

It brings to mind a line from Shakespeare that I would just like to quote at this time, and it is from the play, *As You Like It*. I will quote: ". . . one man in his time plays many parts, His acts being seven ages."

We have seen the acts and the ages that have proclaimed ourselves in this government with our budgets that we have brought forth now for the eighth time and which is the balanced budget we have worked on so hard to get to, one year ahead of the allocation.

Mr. Acting Speaker, these indeed warrant a lot more comments on my part as to the accolades of this government, the former Minister of Finance and the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province and indeed this side of the government in their prudent management and their attitude of trying to get more worth out of the dollar, more bang for the dollar, spending wisely, not spending more.

Before I get too far into the budget and the highlights, I think I would like to just dwell a little bit on the great constituency of Niakwa, which I have the great honour to represent here in the House. [interjection] Yes, that is a very good point there. My colleague the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) reminded me of a few very positive things that have been happening in our constituency which I would like to mention as I go through my speech here today.

The constituency of Niakwa is very unique in the sense that I am very fortunate that the people in Niakwa have the ability and the foresight and the will to strive for a better community and a community that is based upon participation and co-operation among a lot of various groups within my community.

I am fortunate that I have some very strong community centres in the constituency that I am very proud to be associated with and very proud to help, to work with these people in their efforts



to bring forth volunteerism and a sense of participation in the community. The volunteers, the people that are involved with the two particular community clubs that I am referring to, the Winakwa Community Club and the Southdale Community Club, two very, very big community centres that have attracted a lot of participation. They are very strong in the community in their ongoing commitment to provide services, sports and a place for community recreation and activities. They are very progressive and aggressive organizations. The presidents and the executives that are involved with both community centres deserve all the accolades that I could bring upon them in the recognition of how they are helping their community.

The schools that I have in my constituency are worth a note. All my schools fall within the St. Boniface School Division, and I have had the pleasure of working with the trustees in trying to bring forth their views to the departments that are affecting their decision making.

It is with a lot of pleasure that I have made some very fine friendships and very fine relationships with these people in their endeavours to try to not only supply the services and the requirements for the school division but in looking at the requirements for the schools and the children and the students that are in that area.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is with this in mind that various public forums were held in my constituency at the request of the parents in wanting to know more about the blueprint that was brought forth by the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) and the fact that there was a conscientious request for information and an understanding as to how this would affect their students and how it would affect their schools and their teachers and their whole environment.

In particular one school, College Beliveau, organized a very big presentation with the Minister of Education and myself as to what

their views were. The volunteers there, the parent-teacher associations are very strong in their concerns as to what was happening with their schools and how they can participate in it.

There is a recognition I believe by the parents involved with all schools that there is a need to evaluate and to ask the searching questions as to the priorities and the accountabilities of monies that are spent. In all school divisions, not only in St. Boniface, but we look at all school divisions here in Manitoba, we talk of millions and hundreds of millions of dollars that have gone into the public school system. In fact, I believe the public school system here in Manitoba right now is almost up to a billion dollars of expenditures for the education of our students here in Manitoba.

Truly, Mr. Acting Speaker, money is not the answer for a better education. It is the results that come out of what is put forth by the education and the accountability.

One must look at the proposals for testing along the way for students for their comprehension, their problem solving, their ability to compute. These areas of concern are something that everybody has been asking for in a sense. It is similar to someone who is learning how to swim. They go through various stages of their swimming lessons or their swimming instruction and they are tested along the way for their proficiency, because at the end of their instruction course they, along with their instructor, their parents, the students themselves, want to know that they have done the best and they have been able to compete, and they have been able to come up to the standards that are expected of them.

In the educational blueprint that was brought forth by the Minister of Education, parents are asking for the same type of accountability. They are asking for standards of testing that come along at various stages of the students' tenure in school through to graduation so that they can gauge and look at it in a critical manner as to the

distance that the student is coming forth in their education.

Mr. Acting Speaker, with anything there is always a reluctance at times to bring forth change. I am reminded of a quote that I heard. It is not my quote, but I will repeat it, that the only people who are really anxious for change are babies to have their diapers changed. Other than that there is always a bit of a reluctance to bring forth any type of change in the sense of people wanting to change the status quo or something that they are not familiar with.

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

There are other areas that I would like to speak about, what our government has brought forth, but there is something that I would like to mention also. That is the fact that here in Manitoba, this year in 1995, we are going to be celebrating Manitoba's birthday. It is going to be Manitoba's 125th birthday here, and everyone is going to be having a celebration of this great province of ours.

\* (1620)

It was 1870 when Manitoba joined Confederation. We are now into 1995 which is 125 years of growth in this tremendous province of ours. Manitoba is truly a unique province in the sense that it is a province that has built itself upon immigrants, the migrations of peoples from across Canada, peoples from across the world actually, coming here to Manitoba to set up and settle and to expand and to become part of the growth of Manitoba.

Manitoba's heritage and uniqueness is its diverse multiculturalism that we see in this great province of ours. In fact, Manitoba has the highest proportion of multilingual multiculturalism of any other province and, indeed, in North America.

So our pride is really in the people that we have here in Manitoba. When we talk about

Manitoba's birthday of 125 years we have got to talk about the people who formed Manitoba as one of the strongest and one of the most envied provinces in Canada. Our uniqueness is our diversity, and our diversity is something that makes Manitoba a place that many people will be coming back home to celebrate their birthday here in 125.

The celebrations in 125 actually will be revolving around two particular days. They are May 12, 1995, and also July 15, 1995. That way there will be celebrations here in Manitoba on May 12, and there will also be celebrations on July 15, on proclamation day, here in the Legislature. These are days that everybody is welcome to come back to Manitoba and to celebrate in the celebrations we have here.

Mr. Acting Speaker, in celebrating Manitoba's 125th birthday, we have the opportunity to reach out and ask people to come back to Manitoba--[interjection]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rose):** Order, please. The honourable member for Niakwa has the floor.

**Mr. Reimer:** Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

As I was saying, it is a birthday party for everybody here in Manitoba. It is a birthday party to celebrate this great province of ours of Manitoba, to celebrate in a sense that when we think about birthdays a lot of times we think about family.

Within a family, there are always the individuals. There are people in our families, just like in all my colleagues' families, that are different, who have their own viewpoints, who have their own opinions but, at the same time, they all revolve around the sense of being a family and being part of one of the whole.

So just as we have differences within our own family, we have differences within our own province, and these are the differences that we

have to have a degree of understanding and acceptance.

It has been mentioned, and I believe that Mr. Speaker mentioned the other day that this is also the Year for Tolerance, the celebration of the Year for Tolerance. Just as last year was the International Year of the Family, I believe it is the International Year for Tolerance. Tolerance is an odd word in the sense of trying to put a definition on. I would rather use the definition of a year of understanding and acceptance.

Here in Canada right now we are going through a tremendous amount of change of attitude and change of direction. At the same time there needs to be this awareness of what is happening within our great country of Canada. More and more we have to have the ability to listen and we have to have the ability to understand.

We have to have the ability to try to accept one's differences, not necessarily in the sense of a reluctant acceptance but an understanding through an educational process, through an awareness process--[interjection]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rose):** Order, please. I believe the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) and the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) have already spoken to the budget resolution, and the floor now belongs to the honourable member for Niakwa.

**Mr. Reimer:** Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I realize that this budget has indeed created a lot of debate inside the House here. Many of the members are still quite enthusiastically involved with this budget, and they still want to get their views on record.

The member for Concordia has had a chance to put his views on the record and they were truly interesting in the sense that it sounded like an echo.

The member for Concordia, the Leader for the NDP party, has indeed come back out and come out on the side of the party of spending, the party of trying to cater and pander to the interest groups but, at the same time, more of the people and more of the understanding for the budget is coming through with the people that you talk to on the streets, the people that you meet in the grocery stores or on door to door where there is an acceptance and an understanding that it is time to balance the books, it is time to get the House in order. You can only go to the grocery store with so much money and if you spend it that is all you have. This is exactly what we have started to do with our Manitoba government.

Mr. Acting Speaker, before I get too far into the Budget Debate, I would also like to just spend a moment to talk about some of my colleagues who will be no longer with me after the next election, who have decided to retire, if you want to call it, from politics and retire from the party and the humdrum of this great institution that we call the Manitoba Legislature.

In particular, I have grown to know four people very well in the caucus since I joined in 1990 and these indeed were colleagues who come forth with an openness and an ability to converse in a very open manner in questions and in concerns that maybe for them they had gone through but for me they were important because I was bringing them forth as a new MLA and a person with questions as to policies, procedures and the implementation and the background possibly in their department as to what they were looking for.

In particular, I grew to respect and to admire the member for Morris (Mr. Manness) in his deliberations as Finance minister when I first came into this government. I held in high respect and awe his ability to look at the finances of this province in a very critical manner and bring forth a vision and bring forth a proposal to work towards what we now have as a balanced budget. I must commend and congratulate the

member for Morris in his deliverance and his ability in part of his tenure here in this House.

The member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), who is also retiring, has become a very good friend. His attitude and his forthright analysis of situations, not only in the House but in caucus, and the ability to communicate and the willingness to listen to his colleagues, particularly some of the class of '90 that came in here with their vim and vigour and their directions--there was always the ability to have someone, particularly the member for Pembina, to come forth with a calming effect and an analysis that sometimes, through experience, that you certainly do appreciate.

I got to know the other member very well from a long time ago. That is the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme), who has decided to retire. The member for Riel has been a long-time friend because he is from my end of the city, if you want to call it. I first got to know the member for Riel when he was involved with city politics. I remember I was involved with community centres at that time, and he was a city councillor. In fact, he and his brother were councillors at the time. I remember going before community committee and sitting and trying to convince those two fellows, particularly the member for Riel, on certain aspects that I figured were important for my community. I would try to do battle with him in trying to bring forth our positions regarding the community and the community centre board which I had the honour to serve on. I got to know him very well in that.

I always considered him a very close friend and someone that I could talk to and get an answer from at any time regarding some problems that I had. His wealth of knowledge brought forth a lot of second sober thought at times when you started to bring out certain concerns and that.

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

The other member that I am going to miss a lot is a fellow that shares an office with me, in a sense, and that is in our office space downstairs. That is the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose), who has decided that he is going to go onto bigger and better pastures and greener pastures or whatever he feels is available now. I have the great pleasure of being close to him because, as I mentioned, we share an office. From time to time, the conversations are sometimes very lively and sometimes very forthright in what is happening, not only in our local constituencies--I, for one, as an urban MLA, have my concerns in a sense, and then the member for Turtle Mountain, who is what you might call a rural member, represents a lot of the farm communities and some of the excellent small towns in his constituency.

\* (1630)

I have had the joy and the pleasure of knowing the various flavours, if you want to call it, of this House. They will be missed. They will be missed for their contributions, their input, their wisdom and their wit more than anything else, Mr. Acting Speaker. I congratulate them on their dedication to the Manitoba Legislature and the people of Manitoba. I thank them for the ability for me to be a small part of their life in my tenure here as an MLA. I go away richer from this House by knowing these four individuals, and I wish them all well in whatever endeavours they decide to take forth.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as mentioned earlier, we are talking about a tremendous achievement here in the history of Manitoba, and that is bringing forth a balanced budget. A balanced budget that will set us on a course is something that is not only good for tomorrow but it is good for our children. This is one of the reasons why I believe it is very, very important, because it is for the young people of this province that we have to leave a legacy. The legacy that we have been passing them is the legacy of debt, and you cannot go on living beyond your means.

It has been shown and it is coming forth by all levels of government now that the balanced budget is something that has to come about. There has to be a course, there has to be a direction that is prudent, that is going to show the priorities in the redirection of spending so that there is more spending wisely instead of spending more. This is a permanent fixture in all households from the time that you first start to go out on your own or in with your parents, you are only allowed so much to spend. After that there is no more; you have to wait until you have the revenues to spend or to get functioning as to what you feel you should be spending your monies on. So we have to be, in a prudent manner, looking at not only today with the budget being in balance, but we have to look forward to what we are going to leave the legacy for our children.

Running an annual deficit was brought forth and absorbed by this government in taking over the tremendous burden that the NDP left to the Manitoba taxpayers, and it is something that has been a tremendous challenge in trying to whittle down the debt, Mr. Acting Speaker. At the same time, this government has always had three priorities in its spending in the monies that were allocated towards it. We have made health care, education and family services the one-two-three priorities of this government. Over sixty percent of the expenditures are in those particular areas. Health care at 33.4 percent is the highest percentage of expenditures of any province in Canada. That bears repeating because so many times we have heard the comment made that we are cutting back and we are not spending as much on health care.

When this government took power in 1988, I believe the health care budget at that time was \$1.3 billion. That in itself is a lot of money; \$1.3 billion is a lot of money. However, through prudent management and recognizing the needs for where the expenditures should be going, we have increased funding to health care to \$1.8 billion in our last budget. That is an increase of over half a billion dollars of monies; over \$500

million have been increased in health care. That is not a cutback; that is more money into the system.

The reprioritization, the redirection of funding has to continue and it will continue, because with the aging economy, the direction towards trying to spend money more wisely instead of in expensive hospitals and expensive intensive care where beds were taken up and the expenditures were high, it is better to shift it towards more home care, more community-based health care, so that you get more for your dollar, if you want to call it. You are able to utilize the tremendous experience that is out there within the medical profession. You have seen the prudent manner which the various doctors and health care professionals have come forth with their attitudes towards what they feel is a saving manner in the expenditures. So there is an awareness that the dollars spent have to be more wisely put to better use for our health care.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to just dwell a few moments on some statements that have been made by the opposition in regard to their attitude and what they feel is the direction that should be gone with the expenditures of this Manitoba government. I have to look back to when the Leader of the Liberal Party at the time got involved with a brochure and a survey that was sent out at the taxpayers' expense for approximately--I believe it was 85,000 questionnaires and 20,000 returned--an expenditure of over \$45,000 for a survey as to what people thought was happening here in Manitoba.

After the survey was done the Liberal Party came forth with its agenda, if you want to call it that. It was called the Liberal legislative agenda. One of the things that pops right out, and one thing that the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards) has criticized in the few times that he has got up to criticize the budget, because there is not that much in the budget that he can criticize, but the one thing that he has criticized was tax incentives to business, saying that we

should be redirecting the monies, not giving tax incentives to business. I find it very passing strange, if you want to call it, that on the first page of the Liberal legislative agenda, the strategy, as they call it, a dual strategy as they call it, will be a training strategy which will focus on youth employment, which we have done. The other thing is tax incentives for business. This is their agenda that they brought forth for the Manitoba Legislature.

Now all of a sudden, when we bring forth these measures and we get involved with the so-called increased budget in the Industry, Trade and Tourism department which is used for the promotion of business, the promotion of jobs, the promotion of getting corporations and companies to be involved with this great province of Manitoba, to be part of the Manitoba 125 birthday and celebrate with us the low taxes and the fact that no taxes have increased in the last seven years, the Liberal Party is saying that oh, no, no, you cannot do that. On the one hand, they have said that this is what they would do. We do it and then they say we should not be doing this.

It is like the old adage of sitting on the fence. We will wait to see which way the wind blows, and then we will take a position on it. Then we will jump on it. Wait to see which way everybody wants to line up and that is the way we will be.

\* (1640)

So the Liberals can be the party of any way they want. I find a few of this legislative agenda kind of interesting where they are also talking about a guaranteed annual income. They are talking about a sales tax break; at that time they were talking about the sales tax break where they would drop the sales tax to 3 percent for large purchases.

They talked about the parents bill of rights in the public schools. That is an interesting comment. If there was any type of analysis done

as to what the Minister of Education has been doing in the last little while in regard to the public forums that were held not only for the teachers to get their input as to the new directions, which was tremendously successful, plus the fact that there was a large parents forum in which the parents had the opportunity to give their views as to what they figure should be involved with the act, these types of things were tremendously informative, not only for the Minister of Education but for this government in bringing forth the attitudes and directions as to the blueprint.

One of it was parental involvement and parental responsibility and parental input into what should or might be part of the school milieu in bringing forth the blueprint.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we did listen to the people, we have listened to the people, we will continue to listen to the people, especially in education. Education, there is no doubt about it, is an investment in our children and in the future in this great province of Manitoba, and no government can do it alone. They have to have the ability to talk to the people, to have the people be aware of what is happening, to have the ability for the people to be part of the decision making.

And that is what we have done. We have had the public forum in education in which we brought forth direction. We have had the public forum in justice in which we brought forth direction. These are the types of things that this government will continue to do. The fact that this government has had a plan, it has a plan for the future, it has momentum in the sense of the public attitudes and their concerns, is one of the things that will make this government come back into power if and when the next election is called.

Mr. Acting Speaker, these are the types of positive initiatives that this side of the House and this government grow upon. These are the things that this government can sell. These are

the type of things that the people of Manitoba are aware of. They know the agenda, they know the province will grow continually with this government, and the fact that they have the ability to be part of this growth. They have the ability to make change through their elected representatives, through this government and this Conservative government led by Premier Gary Filmon.

These are some of the things that we have to be aware of when we start to look at the choices that possibly we will be making in the next while, if and when the election is called.

I have to make further note of some comments that were put on the record back in December of 1994 in which the Leader of the Liberal Party was being questioned on CJOB. Everyone seems to listen to CJOB; it is a station that brings forth a lot of controversy because of its various people and commentators, in particular various people that have been questioned and commented on.

One of the things that I bring forth is a conversation that was done, as I mentioned, back in December of '94, in which the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), was being interviewed by Richard Cloutier of CJOB. The Leader of the Liberal Party goes on record, he is talking about balanced budget. He agrees, and I think he has agreed here in the House and in the hallway saying that balanced budget is good legislation, it should be done.

In fact, I can quote. He says: I do not think, however, that everybody understands in this country that we must bring government spending under control, because the system just is not sustainable unless you can, at some point, start balancing budgets in this country.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that is an endorsement by the Leader of the Liberal Party of exactly what this government has started to do, started to balance the budget. We started, and then all of

a sudden they say, well, it is a different type of balancing act; it is not the way we would do it; we would do it some way different, we could have done it better. In fact, I believe he is on record as saying, if we were in government--heaven forbid--they would only do it once every four years. So you pick the first year or the second year, whatever it is, that is the year you balance. After that you do not have to worry about it. After that you just go on your merry way.

One of the most important parts of it, and one of the things that we have been affected with here in Manitoba is the transfer of funding by the federal government to Manitoba. The federal Liberal government, in their proposal in their budget that was brought forward, will be eliminating over \$200 million of transfer payments to Manitoba.

Before Christmas there was also the speculation as to the transfer payments of monies to Manitoba. At that time on the radio the radio announcer, Richard Cloutier, was asking the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), what his opinions were and what his position was on the lack of transfer payments and the cutting of transfer payments to Manitoba. In commenting, the Leader of the Liberal Party mentioned at that time there was speculation as to how much money was going to be coming. I believe the figure that was going to be transferred was around \$36 million at the time that was going to be transferred to Manitoba.

This again is a quote from the member for St. James, the Leader of the Liberal Party: Because this province actually got an additional \$36 million in transfer payments this year, we are up, mostly because of some demographic changes, but also because the economy in Manitoba is performing so poorly on the national average--totally false.

Here is the line, and I quote again: So we actually have nothing to gripe about here in Manitoba.

This is the Leader of the Liberal Party. Every time there is something that has happened, we should not be griping. When we go into the rural market and we bring forth a program like REDI that is supplying jobs, that is supplying investment, that is supplying people with work and this feeling of self-worth, what do we have? We have a program that is criticized by the Liberal Leader as small potatoes--shame.

We have here in the city of Winnipeg, when the NACE building that we were buying for, which was--that is the environmental control--Glen, what was the name of that?--NACE, the North American Centre for Environment, was going to be stationed here in Winnipeg, which was approximately 30 jobs for Manitoba. Manitoba was identified as a place to be. Winnipeg was identified as a place to be for this job. Where did it go? It went to Montreal on strictly a political decision by Sheila Copps, the Minister of Environment. Everybody here in Manitoba, including this government, was incensed that this should be moved to Montreal, and what did the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) say? Well, we have bigger fish to fry.

Here in the city when we lose jobs, we have bigger fish to fry. When we are in the country, when we lose jobs or when these programs are gone, they are small potatoes. When we get the cuts in transfer payments which are coming about, the Leader says, so we actually have nothing to gripe about here in Manitoba. I mean, where does the Leader of the Liberal Party stand?

But, Mr. Acting Speaker, I see that my time is almost up. I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to speak at this time on this budget.

I will be voting for this budget. There is no doubt about it. This is the budget for Manitoba, the budget for the future of Manitoba, and I thank you very, very much for the opportunity to speak on this. Thank you.

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Mr. Acting Speaker, I too would like to take this opportunity to put my comments on this budget, as I see it.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, the government has put forward a budget using projections and false figures, or inaccurate figures, pardon me, inaccurate figures that imply that they could bring forward a balanced budget, and it is surprising for a government that for the past seven years or since the time they have been in government have not brought forward a balanced budget, have in fact run up some of the biggest deficits that we have seen in the history of this province and now, on the eve of an election, proposing to bring forward a balanced budget.

In doing that, they have based all their hopes on gambling. Rather than getting our economy going and getting people to work so that people can make a fair contribution to the economy of this province, they have based everything on gambling, and this government implies and would like the public to believe that they have not increased taxes.

\* (1650)

Well, if you look at their record, they have increased many taxes. Although they may not have increased income taxes, there have been many taxes that have been increased, and one of the biggest is a tax on the vulnerable and the poor with the gambling. This gambling is a tax--  
[interjection]

True, the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) says we started gambling. In fact, yes, gambling was started under the NDP, but the revenues have never accelerated to the level that they have under this government. The video lottery terminals are the biggest generator of revenues and the most addictive of all gambling, and this government chooses to continue on with their record of increasing gambling without



addressing the real issue of the impacts of this on the people.

Mr. Speaker, as I look at this budget, I would like to address it as it affects the various sectors of the people in my community, that being the people in the farming community, people in the fishing community, people in forestry and various other industries, and in my constituency there is a very large percentage of seniors and also students.

I would like to just review the impacts of this budget on these people. I would like to begin, first of all, by addressing the whole issue of agriculture and the very serious impacts the farmers in our province are going to face, also because of this budget, but more significantly by changes made by the federal government to the Crow benefit and also to the cuts that the federal government has made, a 30 percent cut to farm supports and the impacts of that.

The biggest impact, as I said, is on the Crow, and I am disappointed that the federal government has made that decision to cancel it. We always had a discussion here in the House. The Conservatives moved to pay the producer, and we always said it should stay to the railways. That is fine. It is good to have a debate. We lost the debate, and the money was supposed to be paid to the producer. Although we do not agree with that, we accept that. However, nobody ever expected that the federal government would make such drastic cuts and that we would not have a phase-out period.

Before the federal budget, there was discussion of \$2.6 billion. Farm organizations were lobbying for over \$7 billion in payments to buy out for a transition from the end of the Western Grain Transportation Act.

The number that came up is \$1.6 billion, what it would cost to keep the WGPA in place for three years. What I am very disappointed with is the action taken by this government that they are not fighting the federal government.

You know, when there were jobs at Shilo that were being lost and other things, the government organized all-party committees to lobby the federal government to try to retain jobs, but this government is not doing anything. Instead of lobbying the federal government and saying that is not enough, we need a better payout, we need a transition period, they are accepting that \$1.6 billion is acceptable. Now the discussion is whether it should be paid to the producer or to the landlord. That is exactly what the federal government wants. They want the producers and the landlords to be arguing about who should get the money and not addressing the real issue of whether or not the package is adequate, and it is not adequate. That is the concern.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) this afternoon raised a statement put out by the consultation group, and he was indicating that I would not endorse this. No, I will not endorse a document that says the long-term impact change for the transportation policy will have a positive effect on Manitoba agriculture. In return, this should have positive impact on land values. Well, I am sorry. I do not believe that and neither do most Manitobans. Most Manitoba farmers believe that this is going to have a very negative impact on their farm values. It is going to have a very negative impact on their income to their families.

When they have to start paying these increased costs--and most of you on the opposite side of the House coming from farm communities should know that farmers operate on a very narrow margin. There is very little there, and if they have to start paying all this increased cost, there is going to be a negative impact on farmers. [interjection] The member across the way says, pay the railways. Yes, many of the farmers would still like the money to be going to the railways, but that argument is lost.

I am listening to the farmers in my constituency that I represent and a good part of the province who feel that it should be. I believe that the farmers were treated much more fairly

when the money was being paid to the railways than they will be now. There are going to be certain parts of the province where we will not be able to afford to grow grain, and we are an exporting country. Things are going to change.

The other disappointment I have with this government is, why are we--here in Manitoba the one opportunity we have, I believe--because the change has been made--is if farmers can ship their grain through the port of Churchill. I do not hear enough support from the federal government. Nor in this budget did we hear one word from this government offering their support to the port of Churchill. We have just had a study done by the federal government that says the port of Churchill is viable. Farmers believe that if the port of Churchill and the line is upgraded we will be able to ship our grain through that port, and that would give an opportunity for other farmers.

This government talks about diversifying agriculture. It is true we will have to diversify, but farmers have been diversifying for the past several years. Look at all the different crops that are out for sale right now. Farmers have done a good job of diversifying. Farmers will adjust, but there is going to be a tremendous amount of pressure on them.

When we look at this document here-- [interjection] I should give you a little bit more history on this document. I received this document at about eleven o'clock, and I talked to Mr. Geddes who is the author of this document. I said to him, there are a couple of lines in this that I do not agree with. If you can change those few lines I will endorse it. He said he had to have this article at the Co-operator by noon, and he could not get consent from the other people who were supporting the document to change those things. I said to him, fine, if you cannot reflect what my views are in the document--I support parts of it, but the parts about the improvement to agriculture I cannot support. He would not change the document, so I said, fine, let it go the way it is because there is no time. I

will discuss things with you later on. The parts of it that I do not support, where this is going to have a positive impact on agriculture, there is going to be a negative impact on agriculture because of these changes, Mr. Speaker. I think that rather than fighting over who should get the payments--I believe the payments should be going to the person who is putting the crop in, not the producer.

**An Honourable Member:** I thought you said the railroad. Which is it? Now you changed your mind already.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) seems to be misinformed on what I have said. I would suggest that he look back at some of the records on the many statements I have made on the Western Grain Transportation payment. We will leave it at that.

Mr. Speaker, just remaining with agriculture, I think that we have to do a lot more to get value-added jobs into the rural community, and I am disappointed that, at a time when we have cutbacks from the federal government, this government would also choose to cut back on the agriculture budget. They say on the one hand they are very supportive of farmers, they want to diversify, but they also cut back the supports to farmers and cut back the agriculture budget at a time when farmers are facing great difficulty.

\* (1700)

The other people, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency that are affected by this budget are fishermen. We have heard the whole discussion on the study put out by the federal government on the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation and whether or not that corporation should be dismantled, and I want to state very clearly, as I have to fishermen in the constituency, that I believe the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation is a very good organization. It has brought fairness to fishermen, and if there are-- and there are some problems that fishermen in

the North are facing. There is a problem with representation on the Freshwater Fish Marketing Board, but dismantling of the board will not address this problem.

Part of the problem the fishermen were facing was created by the government in power. The discontinuing of the freight assistance to bring fish out from the North has put a great burden on fishermen, and that again is an issue that was not addressed by this government. They should be considering much more support for northern communities, but then I guess that is not surprising. Now we have heard before that the people in the North do not vote right, and I guess they are not going to get support from this government, and fishermen are part of that group.

I talked to people in NACC communities as well who had been hoping for some supports. The northern agreement that expired and they had hoped that a new one would be signed and there would be some supports for them in this budget, but instead what they have is a cutback of 3.8 percent in their funding. Certainly I do not believe that is a positive impact. I talked to some of the people in those communities over the last couple of days and it is surprising. Nobody is talking about the balanced budget. What they are talking about are jobs. They are saying, where are the jobs? We remember when we had more jobs. We remember when we had better health care service than we have now. Those are the issues that people are talking about, and they want a government that is prepared to work along with them.

The member for Portage (Mr. Pallister), when he was speaking, he was talking about his family, and he talked about how fortunate they were to have neighbours who helped them when they were facing difficulties. And it is true, in the rural community we do have a very supportive community and neighbours help neighbours. But in many cases some people do not have neighbours to help them. Sometimes it is a whole community that is in a desperate

situation, and that is where government comes in. Government has a responsibility to put out a helping hand and help people, play a role in job creation, and this government has not done that. In some of the communities that I represent we have a very high unemployment rate, and we are paying a tremendous amount of money for social assistance.

Yesterday when I spoke to these people, they said, you know, we would like to be working. We have ideas of how we can be working, but the government is not listening to us, and government has a responsibility to put out that hand and help people when they are desperate. Not all people are as fortunate as the member for Portage said that his family was where the neighbours could help. When the whole community is facing difficulty, someone else has to help out and help that community rise so that they can play an important role, a contributing role in society.

Mr. Speaker, the other group of people I want to talk about is, again, people in the logging industry. People in the Duck Mountain area have some very serious concerns, and I want to make the government aware of them. Since I was elected, from the first I talked about the Repap deal that this government signed and moving the cut line for Repap into the south mountain. That caused some concern and we always asked the government to move that cut line back, so that there would be opportunity for economic development in the Swan River area. The government negotiated, and when Repap did not fulfill their deal, they took the hardwoods away from Repap. Of course, there is the opportunity now that we have an OSB mill being built in Swan River, but Repap is still allowed to harvest the softwoods in the south mountain, and Louisiana-Pacific will be allowed to take 20 percent of their wood in softwoods.

There are also all the other quota holders in there who take softwood, and I am concerned, as are the people in the forest industry, as are the people of the Swan River Valley about the

tremendous amount of pressure there will be on the Duck Mountain. If Repap decides to harvest all the softwood they are allocated, Louisiana-Pacific takes their 20 percent of their cut in softwoods, and Abitibi-Price and Spruce Products and all the other people take theirs, there will be problems.

I think the government made a real mistake when they allowed Repap to cut softwoods in the south mountain and did not move them back to the original line, because my understanding is that Repap has a lot of wood that they could be using in the North that they are just sitting on. If the government would act and move Repap back to the line--and they could have done that, because Repap broke their end of the agreement, but they chose not to.

I think the government really has to look at what kind of--by giving away the forest to Repap and then giving all the hardwoods to Louisiana-Pacific without doing an environmental impact assessment, there is concern on the amount of pressure that is going to be put on that Duck Mountain. I think there was a mistake there.

Mr. Speaker, other people that I talked to about the impacts of the budget--when I talk to seniors about the budget they did not have much interest in the idea of whether the budget was balanced or not. In fact, there were some people who kind of laughed at the idea. They said, where did this money come from all of a sudden? How come they ran up deficits for so many years and now they have a balanced budget? Could it be that there is an election coming?

Senior citizens have not forgotten what this government has done, how they have increased their Pharmacare costs, their costs to stay in a personal care home. That has put real pressure on some families. Nor have they forgotten that home care has been cut for them by this government and taken away their ability to stay in their home for longer periods of time, forcing

them into personal care homes which are very high cost.

This government would like the public to believe they have done a good job, that they have kept taxes down and everything is just rosy for people in rural Manitoba and in all of Manitoba. The public does not buy that. The people out there know, as do our students know.

Students who are graduating this coming year are very concerned about whether or not they are going to be able to get a job, whether or not they are going to be able to afford to go to university, and many of the rural parents are concerned with the drop they are going to see in their income over the next few years, whether or not they will be able to afford to send their children to university.

Mr. Speaker, another area that I want to touch on which does not relate to the budget, but I heard someone across the way mention the PMU industry. I want to tell you that in January we met with representatives of the PMU industry, and they are concerned about some of the attacks that have been made on the industry.

We suggested to the industry that we would be quite prepared to sit on an all-party committee and work with the industry to protect the industry and get better information out. The people in the industry like that idea and they have given it to the government, because I recall reading the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) saying in the paper that they would support an all-party committee.

I say to the government, if they support that all-party committee, put the committee in place. Let us show our support as members of this Legislature, that we do support the industry, and we want it to stay alive and well in Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the other groups of people in my constituency who have expressed concern.

When I look at this budget, Mr. Speaker, I have concerns that the government has chosen to cut back on Environment and in Natural Resources, and, again, I relate back to my constituency. We have the Louisiana-Pacific plant that is being built. There are concerns. I am very pleased that I was able to be part of the lobby to get better emission controls into that plant, and I hope that those emission controls will go in, but we also have to have people working within the Department of Environment to see that all the environmental regulations are being followed, within the Department of Natural Resources to see that our forests, our fish and our other resources are being harvested sustainably.

\* (1710)

But if we completely gut the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, who is going to be there to be the watchdogs for the public, the watchdogs for the government, to ensure that things are being done properly? So those are disappointments in this budget that I see.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to just touch on the whole idea of taxes. When we look back at the record of this government, there are many, many increases in taxes that they have made. The public does not believe this government when they say they have not increased taxes. The public knows from their bottom line how much more they are paying, how much less they are taking home in their paycheque. They know, at the end of the year, how much less they have, and they do not believe this government when they say that they are decreasing taxes.

Mr. Speaker, another group that is in my constituency is the aboriginal people, the Shoal River Band and the Indian Birch Band, Pine Creek Band, and all of those people have expressed concern. I have raised the concern many times to this government on the whole issue of treaty land entitlement and settling those agreements.

It is very unfortunate that the government has chosen to let those issues just ride, because a government has a role to play in ensuring that the interests of all people are met, and, certainly, we want economic development. When I listen to the people from Shoal River--and I believe it was Chief Hubert Kematch from Shoal River Band who said, we are not against Louisiana-Pacific coming in. All we want is a fair piece of the pie. We want some of the work. We want work--the land that should be coming to them, that they can do the harvesting on that land, but the government--[interjection] But it has not been done. Nobody has dealt with it. They have asked and asked, and I asked the Minister of Native Affairs (Mr. Praznik) to come out and meet with the band and deal with that. This government has refused to meet with the bands and deal with that, and that is unfair.

It is unfair to say that that is your policy and then not deal with the issue. At least have the common courtesy to sit down with these people and look at what their issue is and try to resolve it, so there is not a conflict.

Mr. Speaker, another issue that I have worked on since I was elected and one that was in last year's budget by this government, but is not in this budget, is the expansion of natural gas to rural communities.

I am disappointed that the Swan River area did not meet the requirements to get natural gas expanded in the area, but natural gas is also very important for the area again because of the Louisiana-Pacific plant and the emission controls. We had a commitment from this government that they would put natural gas into the Swan River area, and that seems to have fallen by the wayside now. The time is getting short.

When I spoke to the people at Louisiana-Pacific, they have to know very soon whether or not there is going to be natural gas or else they have to make alternate plans for an energy source to run their emission controls. This

government has not delivered on that, and I hope that we can work to somehow resolve that situation so that we will have the opportunity for an alternate energy source.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is a smoke-and-mirrors budget where the government would like to convince the public that they have addressed the issue of deficit. They are not figures that can be substantiated. The government has not taken into consideration loss of revenues transferred from the federal government. The government has not taken into consideration the loss of revenue there is going to be because of lower farm incomes, and there are going to be lower farm incomes in this upcoming year. It has not addressed the real concern of jobs, getting our economy going, building a stable base. It has not addressed the concern that people have that we are losing our health care system, first by actions taken by this government, and also a reduction in transfer payments from the federal government.

It has not addressed on the whole issue of education; in fact, the funding that this government has put in place over the past few years to education has put a tremendous burden on many school boards. School boards have drained all their reserves, and we are seeing a tremendous pressure on the public school system, while the private school system is getting a much fairer share of revenues.

With respect to this budget and what this government has been doing to support the economy of rural Manitoba, I do not think that they have been doing a good job, and I will not be supporting this budget. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services):** Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour to rise in the House today to address our eighth budget of our government.

As my esteemed colleagues have pointed out indeed to me, this will be my swan song. But I

have one advantage. It is by choice. So before I begin my formal remarks regarding the budget, I would like to take some time to say a formal good-bye to my honourable colleagues, and a couple of them especially.

The member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) I really enjoyed in government. I enjoyed the fighting spirit that he had, and I really enjoyed mainly the first two or three years in opposition when he showed us the ropes and probably was the spearhead and probably one of the reasons why we are in government today.

Then my friend from Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) who showed you his quiet esteem that he has, and when he gave his throne speech remarks it was one that I think we shall all cherish and put away and make sure we read it every once in a while.

Then to my friend from Morris (Mr. Manness) who served as the minister responsible for Finance, who we had to go to as ministers, face him for quite a few years, get his remarks and make sure that we listened to his wisdom. As a Minister of Finance, to me as a minister--I was Minister of Urban Affairs and Housing and then on to Government Services--I found with this particular individual he was fair to everyone. He treated all the ministers the same. There was no favouritism. If he had a rule he lived by that rule. You did not always agree to it, but that is the type of person he is, the honest character that he is.

Also, the enlightening experience with all of my colleagues the past nine years. I do not believe that these people who I have worked with--I do not believe the nine years has gone by so quickly. The nine years seems like probably nine weeks. If we look across the House there has been a great change from when I entered this House in '86.

I know this will be my last speech. I do not know whether it is as public service. We do not know what is down the road, but I would like to

take the opportunity especially of thanking the Premier for allowing me to serve the people of Manitoba as a minister of the Crown. The Premier who, like the rest of us, had to learn to be Premier. The rest of us all learned along the way, but the Premier learned well. By the budget you have before you today, our total team learned well. That did not come as a result of any fluke. That came as a result of hard work.

All my colleagues present and past in caucus for their continued support and encouragement and my colleagues in this House for the experience I have gained in my tenure here. I will certainly miss the people I have met and worked with during my years in the House.

\* (1720)

I would also like to thank all the people I worked with in my 21 years in public office. I will start--if you think about 21 years we have gone through six Presidents, six Prime Ministers, and I believe five Premiers, and we start thinking that time goes by pretty quickly.

I would like to thank, starting with the school board, the people I worked with: teachers, parents, school trustees and the administrators while I was on school board; all the employees and fellow councillors, including Bill Norrie, whom I served under for quite a few years while I was on City Council; my staff, the deputy ministers and my employees while I have been minister for the provincial government; most of the residents of St. Vital for allowing me to serve them as school board trustee, City Councillor and MLA.

I was speaking to my wife, Yvonne, the other day, and I asked her, you know, Yvonne, I do not why I am leaving office; there is something about it that I have really enjoyed. I have really enjoyed the work as a minister, the work as an MLA. I cannot actually say that I really enjoyed being in opposition for the two years. I did not like opposition. I was told by my colleagues that you will not enjoy opposition. I guess the reason

why I did not enjoy opposition, I did not like to get up every morning and have to be negative, and I guess that is part of the beast.

Also, the other thing I did not realize, the last couple of months I thought to myself, why would I want to leave this place? All of a sudden I came back here last Friday, I decided, I know what I do not like about this place. It is the Assembly. It is what you have to say and what you have to do. I think that is probably the most, I do not know, the part I did not like the most. I always said to people coming to Question Period, when you were in government, it was like going to the dentist, but I really was not happy to come back into this place last Friday.

I think I will probably not miss the day before the election or the day after. We probably all will miss the day of the election, because anyone who has been involved in elections and has won elections knows the feeling of coming back in this Chamber and the feeling of getting up the next morning and enjoying every minute of when you win an election. It is a high you get probably. When you are older, it is one of those few highs you get because you got them when you were in sports and things, but winning an election really can be quite a high.

I think the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) mentioned in his closing speech that he ran in so many elections, never lost a poll. In the City of Winnipeg this is virtually unheard of, except for maybe the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), but other than that, the rest of us hoped that we would win more polls than the next guy.

Probably one of the hardest things I ever had to learn was when I left from city for school board and civic elections, I lost very few polls in civic or school board. However, in '86, and the light in your eyes the first couple of days out on the streets, when you went to talk to somebody and they said, Gerry, we like you, however, we are not voting for you, no matter what you did

for them in your past experiences, they would look on you and they would say, well, I am sorry, but we are not, that was probably the toughest thing to learn when you are knocking door to door. However, I think that is good in civic politics and provincial politics.

We in the city have a different aspect that we have to deal with. I could have a bay in Riel that has 12 to 14 different ethnic backgrounds with 14 different ideas on how a government should be served. That is part of what we have to be faced with in civic when I am dealing in the urban seats. I think that is probably why I would not want to live in the country. I like to be able to, if I do not like the way the guy cooks my pizza I go to the next guy or down the road. If I do not like the way the guy does my laundry, that type of thing, I have that choice, and I guess that works against you in politics.

But it has been a good process. I do not just go back to the seven elections that I was involved in personally. The first elective process in 1960 was when my father first ran for civic politics. I remember my father--I think one of my jobs was banging the posters on the poles when it was legal to do that. You would go down St. Anne's and St. Mary's Road. Then he taught me one thing. He taught me how to ID vote, and his form of ID vote was very unique. He was the only French Canadian on the ballot known in the area. So he and a guy by the name of Lucien Boisselle decided that the way of IDing votes was to go through the telephone book the day of the election and phone all the French Canadians--Parlez vous français? Louie is running, get out to vote. He led the polls twice. With three people to be elected, he led the polls twice.

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

So along the way you learn through that process that there is always a way to ID. When I first ran for school board I went through all my people who bought their Autopac or bought their

insurance. People who dealt with you, you went through the list and you contacted them personally. I think that is probably what Jack Hardy did when I worked for Jack Hardy in 1969, my first provincial election. Jack won the battle, but he lost the war. In that case Jack was ready to come into provincial politics and hoped at the time he would be a cabinet minister.

We all know what happened in 1969. Jack left a job with the taxation department provincially and decided to run. He thought he was going to be a cabinet minister. Unbeknownst to us, we were not elected in 1969. The fellow that we lost to, Jim Walding, won the by-election. I worked against Jim Walding. In fact, I worked for a Liberal by the name of Dan Kennedy, because we felt Dan Kennedy would upset the NDP. However, we lost that war. Then, I guess, Walding came back, not to haunt me but to help me.

I became interested in politics I think during Bill 56. Anybody who knows Bill 56--my colleague over there, Harry, remembers it well--the famous Autopac bill of Bill 56 where all the Autopac agents or all the former Autopac agents, like myself, came and listened to what was going on in this particular bill.

We spent many a day making presentations to the committee. I remember Harry getting up and talking about the--what was his famous word?--I think it was the jackboots walking down the corridors. He advised everyone at the time that we should probably be talking about liability coverage only. We have gone a long trend in that way since that was passed in '70.

We have gone to liability, which we know as no-fault. Many things have happened. Many things have been very, very enjoyable. I am told that I can go on and on in this speech because it is my last one. I do not have to stick to any notes.

**An Honourable Member:** We will give you extra time.



**Mr. Ducharme:** No, I do not want the extra time. I will be glad to be finished. I think I have five more sleeps, right? Until the budget vote, I have five more sleeps--five more. When that happens, I am all finished.

I think that we have all, since the class of '86, enjoyed different things as it has happened. We were all elected, that class. We have gone through a very, very tough couple of years in opposition. We went through two real tough years as a minority government. We learned to understand--not that I am saying it was bad. We learned to understand some of our colleagues in the opposition very well. I had some housing bills that I had to learn, and learn about my colleagues. I appreciated the type of things they gave to us. We had fun.

Meech Lake, of course, that was another startling turn of events that we had. Then we get on. I would be remiss, though, in not thanking those who supported--the greatest. Those are the people that right through--your children. The children, if you think about it, when I entered politics, my youngest was nine, and now he is 30. I was in my 30s, and now I am in my middle 50s. I feel like I am in my 60s.

\* (1730)

I will not talk about my best supporter who probably is the reason why I was so successful in politics. That was my right hand; it was always my extra that I had out there, my wife, Yvonne, who put up with and supported me, not only in business while I was not there, but she is the one who would handle the constituency problems when people came to the office. As you know, if you are on the avenue in your constituency, they come to the office, but that is part of, again, doing business.

I would like to thank the person who probably talked to me about entering politics quite a few years ago, a woman by the name of Gladys Rothwell who was chairman of the school board and was my secretary at the time;

Don Craik who talked at my nomination meeting, spoke, in 1985. However, Don unfortunately did not see the election of 1986. Don died a very young man and it was his wife, about two years ago, who told me, Gerry, get out when you are healthy. She said, I wish Don would have probably got out a little earlier.

We forget about those people that helped us. I would also like to thank especially the people of Riel, the people of St. Vital. Although Riel is small in terms of area, you could drive through the riding in about five minutes. There are about 13,000 homes or a combination of those and suites which 48 percent of them are apartments, seniors' residences or condominiums.

During the last seven years as MLA for this area I am proudest to say that people have definitely helped the people of Riel. Especially some of my pet ones was rewriting the Housing Act which I think--sure there are always people who think it could be changed--but we established the housing for it that was established in it. We have announced to people on the other side of the House, we have kept our rent increases down in the area. We have also worked on some senior complexes. The Knights of Columbus was built in the area. There is low-rental housing fixed up in the area.

The community clubs have all survived and benefited as a result of what went on in the area. They all survived and received Community Places Grant Programs. The establishment just recently of the Green Team worked well in the area. A safer Seine was established. The Dakota-St.Eugene parish, St. Mary Magdalene Church, the St. Vital Baseball Association and the St. Vital Knights all survived and did well with this government.

Also, my old alma mater, Glenlawn Collegiate, did very well under this government, and also I have always enjoyed working with the St. Amant who now have a golf tournament that has done very, very well in the area, and that is my other love is the golf, and they have done a

very excellent job considering the type of monies that are available to run such an organization. But they survived because they are volunteer workers like everyone else in the Riel area.

Again saying that Riel has been a very rich and rewarding experience, I will miss the people that I have met at the doors and who contact me as MLA. They might not always agree with what I had to say, but it was an enjoyable experience. You knocked on these doors probably--I guess in seven elections you probably go to some of them three times, so you probably went to them 12, 14 times. You get to know where that biting dog is at the back of the house. You get to know every doorstep, and you get to know everyone, whether they are a supporter or not. Whether they are a supporter or not they would still say, hi, Gerry, how are you doing?

Maybe I can tell you a little experience of how you can get swayed by someone who you thought was a supporter on civic days. I went to this one house one day, and anyone who knows River Road knows that the houses butt onto each other, and they go from the front to the back, and then there is a roadway that usually goes between the houses. This one gentlemen had been in my office, oh, I would say six months before and he had a telephone bill that amounted to \$3,000. He was quite upset, because he had not paid it, so he was wondering why we would cut off his telephone. I sent him down to the minister in charge down the hall--Wendy and I. I had not heard from him so I figured, well, he certainly was well looked after.

One bright, warm, sunny afternoon I turned and I knocked on this door. A young gentleman came to the door and said to me, Gerry, he is just on the phone. This fellow had always supported me in civic, so I said, I guess he is looked after. He comes to the door and I hand him all my information. I had my computerized letter, I had all my pamphlets, and I give them to him. I say, how are you doing? I am not going to mention his name. So he looks at me and he takes it and

he throws it in the garbage, just rips it up in front of me. I am startled by it all, but I looked at him and I said, listen, I do not know what your problem is, but I am not going to get involved in arguing with you. I have too many other places I have to go to.

He starts following me down the driveway, and it is about 300 or 400 feet. He is yelling and cursing at me, just yelling and cursing at me. Meanwhile there is a guy up on the roof who is fixing the roof, and he is hearing all of this. Meanwhile I have a fellow who is the first time knocking on doors with me at the other end, and he hears this guy yelling at me. All of a sudden I get to about 20 feet from this other guy working on the roof and this guy following behind me--I thought he was going to hit me. All of a sudden I turned around and I says, Ed, I guess it is too much to ask them to put a sign on your lawn.

**An Honourable Member:** Did he laugh?

**Mr. Ducharme:** I do not know if he laughed, but he sure stopped yelling at me anyway.

I think it is amazing that--

**An Honourable Member:** Did you put a sign there?

**Mr. Ducharme:** No, I could not get a sign. It is amazing that the family--I know that all of us would like to pay back some of the time that we know we should have given them. You know there are times that you should have been there. It was either a graduation of your oldest boy of Grade 12, because you were called out of town, and you find out he wins the top student award and you were not there. Grandmother and mother were there, but dad was not there.

There were times that maybe you should have been on the snow bank watching the hockey, but you are out at a school board meeting or something else. I said that to an old politician one day and he said to me: Gerry, you would

have been involved in something else. The only thing I am amazed at is--my oldest son and my wife, who are in business on St. Mary's Road--with all the issues that you are faced with in politics it is a wonder they have got any business left. So I hope that maybe I can go back and help them revive some of that business.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to commend, again, my colleagues for bringing forward this budget. I feel proud to be part of a team that brought forward this budget. I find that it is a great way to leave politics with a balanced budget.

I guess a balanced budget, if you try to compare it, is like putting for that eagle putt, the joy of that, or maybe making that last stone when you have to win the game. Or else maybe the biggest one is about as satisfactory as watching my granddaughter, Katie, give me that "I love you" smile that she gives me. Those are the kinds of feelings that this kind of thing brings to you when you are leaving the House.

I think we have to look over that for the first time in 20 years Manitoba will not incur a deficit. You know, this is a remarkable achievement considering the fact that, again, whether the opposition likes the fact or not, and we have always used that no major taxes have been increased since this government took office in 1988 and that the interest on the deficit and capital expenses were included in the budget unlike the provinces of Saskatchewan and New Brunswick.

\* (1740)

Manitoba, and we have said it again and again, proud and strong, and these are words that appear on the budget brief that was distributed by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson). Manitobans can be proud of their achievement because they are the ones who have made this possible through the budget consultations that have taken place prior to each of our eight budgets of this government.

Manitobans have told us that they want a balanced budget, that they are willing to work as a team with government to make it happen. I think we in cabinet and also our upper benches know the work that has been involved, and it has not always been a pleasure to be turned down by Treasury Board on things that you wanted this government to do.

I can tell you, I was probably part of when at City Hall you had a little more money, at school board you had a little more money, because this was at the time when you did have an inflationary period and it was always easy to provide government at those times.

I think all government departments looked within themselves to find better ways of providing better service to Manitobans while holding costs down. Priorities had to be reorganized. Some departments have been reorganized internally. Some areas, like in my department of Government Services, we have our Special Operating Agencies, all of which has led to this time where Manitoba can stand proud of its accomplishment. You always mention that these are things that, I guess, they are not the sexy type of thing that papers like to write about, but in government we have throughout all departments done that. The Finance minister mentioned that all the departments have been saving, through their good process of reorganization, money to provide the three largest departments with the ability to carry on by increasing their amount.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not mention the contribution of all the government employees who have not only given their time, their energies and their expertise to make sure this happened, they also, reluctantly at first, accepted the 10-day reduction in their work year. I may say that some of the employees have said to me very quietly, and I can say it now, have talked about their Fridays off. A lot of them are enjoying their Fridays off. They also enjoyed between Christmas and New Year. I can say that. I do not have to go to the doors any

more. Our summer season is so short that a three-day weekend, when the weather is good, it goes a long way toward making a happier work environment.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am proud to be part of this government which will not allow any future governments to reverse these employees that all Manitobans who worked so hard to achieve. All this work, we do not want to be dumped overnight by someone else coming in. Anyone who comes in and spends foolishly with the introduction of the balanced-budget legislation, the people of Manitoba will have a major say in the tax increases in the future. If a government dares to incur a deficit, the Premier today, his or her ministers will have their compensation decreased. That is probably another reason why I am leaving the government, if that happens.

I believe this legislation will strengthen the optimistic view of most Manitobans as to the opportunities available to all citizens of our great province. Our children and our grandchildren and all future generations will no longer have to leave the province to seek job opportunities elsewhere, because I truly believe that the spirit that built this strong province will get stronger as a result of the efforts put forward by Manitobans today. It is after all the Manitobans of today who have told this government that once we achieved a balanced budget, they did not want to see a deficit again.

I noticed some of the remarks. I was not here yesterday to hear some of the remarks, but I noticed, by reading some of the Hansard and the opening, the remarks of the official opposition, first opposition, that he started to talk about '96-97. Now he did not talk a lot about '95-96. He did not mention--now that we have balanced one year he wants us to balance two for the price of one, and I was surprised that he would not talk more about the budget.

Sure we balanced it a year ahead. I can say that without hard work it would be impossible to balance the two for the price of one. I think that

with the balanced-budget legislation and the low cost of living in this province, I am positive we will attract new businesses, not only from other parts of Canada but internally.

We are now in a global economy era of our history and to limit ourselves to one small country on this planet would be disastrous. The world we live in is experiencing a very, very technological change where once people and businesses communicated in time periods of weeks instead of minutes as we do today. The announcement we made just a short while ago in regard to Manitoba's information highway and that was the backbone that we talked about. I am sure our children and future generations will be able to learn and work where they choose and will have access to this very, very important information service anywhere in the province.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Acting Speaker, I had a chance to talk about the different things that we had when I had the opportunity to reply to the throne speech. I had the opportunity to advise of what Government Services and what the Seniors' Directorate had accomplished in the last year.

**An Honourable Member:** Tell us again, it was good stuff.

**Mr. Ducharme:** No, I do not think I will tell it again. As a matter of fact I will go right by it. Maybe I will digress a little bit more.

When I heard about the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), often he gets up and he speaks about the member that we have on this side of the House that was on City Council. He tries to jump us all into what he calls a gang. Well, I will tell you, by the looks of what is going down at City Hall right now I wish we had a gang if you want to call it that.

The members that we have on this side of the House, I can assure you, I will match their contribution that they have done publicly to him any day. Maybe he likes to refer to them--I do not know why he uses the word "gang." I do not

know of any time when I was at City Hall that I had an easy issue to sell to anybody. It was a whole new ball game when you went there to try and get anything through City Hall.

They are calling this the VLT budget. He fails to remember what other revenues do we get that are very large and that are from alcohol. Who brought down the drinking age from 21 to 18 in one swoop? Who brought it down? I mean, let us not get righteous over this. [interjection] They did, and yet you have not heard us complaining about the revenues that it has probably brought to this province.

**An Honourable Member:** Do the numbers on that.

**Mr. Ducharme:** We should do the numbers over that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we should get that--

**An Honourable Member:** That is the reason why he did it.

**Mr. Ducharme:** The reason why we did it was for the revenue. Okay. No, I think it was political.

I would also like to mention that the press has been fairly fair with me throughout the 21 years. They have been fair for the 21 years. The only problem I have is one particular individual that writes an editorial now, and--

\* (1750)

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, did he have a former political affiliation?

**Mr. Ducharme:** Yes. I am saying that I have a hard time, him having a vested--I think he has a little conflict of interest, writing an editorial on what is going on in the Legislature.

I would say, even myself, he mentioned that I had said I was going to retire before, and then

I changed my mind. I did not change my mind. Something in health in the family changed my mind, and I think that I have one thing that I can say to him. I should be able to say when I enter politics and when I retire. I do not think that is up to him.

I have one other thing to say to him. I completed my obligation to the end of my term; somebody else did not, and I am not mentioning his name again, but somebody else did not complete his obligation. So maybe, when he writes his editorials on people that are in government, he should think about that.

The other one thing I would like him to really think of, because he sat in this House, when he writes an editorial, write it and use constructive criticism and watch the personal vendetta that affects the families. Families do get affected, and of all people that should know, that is someone who is now on the editorial board that sat here as an MLA.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, I think that government over the past seven years, our government, has promoted many initiatives to provide cost-effective and equitable government services. I mentioned one of these initiatives is the use of the Special Operating Agency, which this government pioneered. These agencies are self-sustaining and help promote the spirit that is much part of our province. Someone who wants to go over to the Fleet Vehicle and talk to the employees over there will find that they are not disappointed in the Special Operating Agency. I think these agencies are indicative of and show the management style that we have dedicated to service, quality, innovation and, more importantly, the results. We not only provided a better service, but we also turned back to the government \$1.6 million in last year's budget.

Four new agencies have been announced in this particular budget, one of which comes under my jurisdiction of Government Services, and that

is the new Land Management Agency. In total, Government Services now has three Special Operating Agencies, and if the new Land Management Agency does as well as the Fleet Vehicles, the government will not only save money but will also provide that better service to its customers. The taxpayers will also save money.

The government is also looking to provide better service to seniors in Manitoba. This government recognizes the importance of seniors. That is why we created the Seniors Directorate in 1988. The Seniors Directorate, over the past seven years, has been involved in a number of new initiatives that I have stated in my previous speeches.

I would like to mention two new initiatives that staff have directed or are presently working on that will provide information to the public.

One of the initiatives concerns the development of a package of information regarding caregivers. Caregiving can be stressful. Sometimes the care required is more than the caregiver can provide or is needed when the caregiver is experiencing changing health. Caregiving can be a cause of worry or anxiety, loss of sleep and fatigue, loss of personal time, financial pressure and strained relationships in the family.

Family caregivers need to learn how to take care of themselves and their loved ones and make use of formal and informal services and supports. For caregivers, that may mean making allowances for the extra roles they perform.

Staff at the directorate are also directing their energies to this area with the objective undertaking the Age and Opportunity Caregiver program.

Mr. Speaker, we talked about the government and what they have been doing and what they will be doing over the next several years. We also mentioned that over the past couple of

months we have received many calls from seniors in Manitoba regarding legal issues.

The government is responding to this need. The Seniors Directorate has been meeting with the CLEA and in partnership with this association will be producing an informal package for seniors on legal matters including the topic of living wills.

Since taking office, this government has been investing in the people of Manitoba. Manitobans want to maintain essential services but also see a balanced budget without raising major taxes so they would have more money in their pockets to keep our economy going.

This government has promoted an environment conducive to business, whether it be the entrepreneurs with our own province or businesses that have moved to Manitoba from other locations. That is improving our economy and decreasing our unemployment.

We have made a very strong commitment to keep our streets and neighbourhoods safe and secure through legislation, as the drunk driving legislation and the maintenance enforcement being introduced this session, as well as the overhauling of the youth correction system with the introduction of the so-called boot camps, night court and the rigorous confinement of adult offenders.

Mr. Speaker, can you tell me how many-- [interjection] One minute? I noticed that I only have one minute left.

I will not go into my notes again, but there is one thing I would like to say in closing. I am probably going to miss every one of you on a one to one. On a one to one, I think that every one of us has the main goal in mind, and that is looking after the people of Manitoba. I just leave you one last thing. Remember that all of you will at some time have to leave this Chamber for the last time. I say to you, always watch what you say. We all get tied up in what

is going on. We all get tied up in the hype of what goes on here.

I have enjoyed politics most of the time. I say to you, it all goes by quickly. Enjoy it, because it goes by very quickly. I say to you, it has been a slice. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Seeing that we only have a couple of minutes, maybe I will start it off by actually acknowledging the speaker that spoke before me.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to listen to a number of members that have chosen their departure from this particular Chamber. I, like the others no doubt that are here, that have decided to run in the provincial election, whenever it be called, I am sure would like to have that same opportunity some time in the future where we too get to choose.

It is interesting in the sense that when you see the final swan song or the final speech, one of the most common things that comes up time after time is the thank you's. The most significant individual that I hear time after time is, of course, their spouse or the one that has been so close through the years to that particular individual.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that is a very appropriate thing, that the family life as--you know the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), that the first time we actually saw him get somewhat soft, I must say, or the minister that just delivered his speech, the Minister of Government Services.

I think that all of us acknowledge the very important role that the individuals, our loved ones around us, play in politics, because we might sacrifice to a certain extent no doubt, but so do our loved ones. I acknowledge the acknowledgement that these individuals put on the record; I believe they are very important.

Tomorrow, when I actually get my speech underway, I have a lot of stuff that I want to comment on and, hopefully, I am going to be able to--

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

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Inkster will have 37 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House now adjourns and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 14, 1995

## CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>			
<b>Presenting Petitions</b>		<b>Gambling Addiction Programs</b>	
Physical Education in Schools		Barrett; Ernst	894
Lamoureux	887	<b>SmartHealth</b>	
Barrett	887	Chomiak; McCrae	894
<b>Reading and Receiving Petitions</b>		<b>Victims Assistance Programs</b>	
Physical Education in Schools		Pallister; Vodrey	895
Lamoureux	887	<b>Health Care System</b>	
Communities' Public Education		Gray; McCrae	896
Ashton	887	<b>Children's Advocate Report</b>	
<b>Tabling of Reports</b>		Martindale; Mitchelson	897
Annual Reports:		<b>Social Policies</b>	
Law Reform Commission; Justice		Martindale; Mitchelson	898
Vodrey	888		
<b>Oral Questions</b>			
Federal Budget		<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
Doer; Filmon	888	<b>Budget Debate</b>	
Sustainable Development Legislation		(Fourth Day of Debate)	
Mackintosh; Cummings	890	McCormick	899
Crisis Centres		Render	900
Edwards; Ernst	891	Maloway	905
Gambling Policy Review		Pallister	910
Barrett; Ernst	893	Schellenberg	920
		Reimer	923
		Wowchuk	932
		Ducharme	938
		Lamoureux	947