

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 12, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I would like to direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have, from the Rosenort School, thirty Grades 10 and 11 students under the direction of Herbert Bjarnason and Bob Fisher. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

Also with us this afternoon from the Landmark School are thirty Grade 9 students under the direction of Russ Dirks. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch).

Also this afternoon from the Gretna Elementary School, we have thirty-seven Grade 7 students under the direction of Alfred Enns and Dennis Reimer. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Chief Medical Examiner Communicable Diseases

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), and it concerns the lack of safeguards in place to prevent the spread of communicable diseases and infections in our nursing homes. When our question was first raised last Thursday in this House, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) replied that nursing home deaths were not a public health issue. Contrary to what the Minister believes, the Chief Medical Examiner and some of the Minister's own officials seem to be saying very clearly that deaths in nursing homes are a public health issue. Not only were these deaths not reported to the Chief Medical Examiner, disease control officials and the Minister do not seem to have been properly informed either.

Can the First Minister tell the House why the Chief Medical Examiner was not notified so that preventive measures could have been taken to prevent the spread of infection in our nursing homes?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to take that question as notice on behalf of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Personal Care Homes Parainfluenza Deaths

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), the reports today seem to indicate that it was not just two nursing homes, that in fact there was a third nursing home that had an outbreak of the same strain of influenza. Can the First Minister tell us how many nursing homes were indeed affected by this particular strain of influenza and how many deaths in total were a direct result of this particular strain?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I am sure that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) will have that information available and I will take that as notice on his behalf.

* (1335)

Communicable Diseases

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary on this particular issue to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), in the hope that he will take the action that his Health Minister has refused to take, will this First Minister now make it mandatory for all nursing homes to report outbreaks of infection, to ensure that this information is immediately brought to the attention of the Chief Medical Examiner, to public health officials, to family of the patients who may indeed be affected and will in fact result in controlling the spread of disease in this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we take very seriously the advice of the Chief Medical Examiner of Health and the senior officials in the Department of Health. Certainly, that matter will be very seriously considered by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in arriving at a conclusion on that recommendation.

Manitoba Intercultural Council Government Interference

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, with a new question.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a new question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), the greatest resource our province has is its people, people who represent the full spectrum of race, heritage and religion. We were pleased on this side of the House to have this year some mention of multiculturalism in the Throne Speech, something that had been neglected the previous year. Mr. Speaker, support for multiculturalism must not just come from words, it must also come from actions. The continuing reactions of

the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) indicates she does not understand our ethnic and cultural society. Once again, she has offended the Manitoba Intercultural Council by delivering by letter her unilateral decision on appointees to MIC.

My question to the Premier, why does this Government insist upon politicizing the Manitoba Intercultural Council, first by taking away its funding abilities, now by filling the council with record numbers of political appointees? Will he overrule the Minister and allow MIC to function with minimal Government interference?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): We on this side do not want to have a politicized MIC. I know that the Opposition, the Official Opposition would indeed like to have a politicized MIC. I recall the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) met specifically with the executive, encouraged them to oppose the Minister of Culture (Mrs. Mitchelson), slandered the Minister of Culture in many ways and encouraged them to go out and criticize and heaped her own twisted view of the actions of the Minister of Culture on that particular organization in a very direct attempt to politicize them. We do not agree with that. We do not want to do that. We are only acting in accordance with the Act that was passed by this Legislature, that set up the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and are taking those actions that are permitted and called for under the Act. We are not politicizing the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Board Member Selection

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): MIC certainly does not see it that way when they have never had so many appointees from Government as they are having from this particular Government. Mr. Speaker, not one person on this primary list is from outside the City of Winnipeg. Can the First Minister tell the House today if he considers that our heritage is the purview of only the City of Winnipeg, or does he believe our heritage is throughout the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I have said many times in many forums throughout this province and beyond that our greatest resources are people, that people from all walks of life, from all backgrounds, people such as myself, a child of immigrant parents and grandparents coming to this country looking for a strong future, a sound future, a place to live in peace and freedom to raise a family, to take advantage of the best that this province has to offer. That is our heritage that we cherish, that we believe in, that we support, and that is what we will work on as long as we are in Government, which will be a long time.

* (1340)

Advisory Role

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): This Government has said that they see MIC strictly

as an advisory body. Can the First Minister explain then why the committee of Cabinet has never yet once met with the multicultural committee? Why does this Government insist on not only stripping its funding abilities but ignoring its advisory capacity?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, firstly I assume that when she means having met with the multicultural community or committee, that what she means is the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I spoke with Mr. Glasgow on Thursday evening, the Acting Chairman of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I spoke with him directly and said that as soon as the new executive were in place, the Multicultural Committee of Cabinet would meet with the executive of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, that I would be in attendance, that I would ensure that we met with them so that we could have the benefit of their advice and input in the ideas and concerns they wanted to share with us.

Mr. Glasgow knows that and understands it. We have committed that our entire committee of Cabinet will indeed meet with them, and that is what we are looking forward to because we believe that they have advice to give as was set up under the Act. The Act set them up as an advisory body. We intend to take their advice and listen to their advice, Mr. Speaker, and utilize them as they were intended to be used under the Act.

Manitoba Intercultural Council Funding Responsibilities

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): It has been over 14 months and they have not yet met with the First Minister. I was at the panel discussion on Friday night, Mr. Speaker, and I too would like to raise questions concerning the MIC meeting over the weekend.

People from all political stripes and all ethnic organizations were very, very critical of the heavy-handed unilateral way this Government is treating the multicultural communities of Manitoba. My question to the Premier is, the MIC passed two resolutions unanimously over the weekend. One was dealing with a formal statement dealing with the China situation as the other provinces have done, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The second resolution that was passed recommended this Premier reverse the decision of his Minister to reinstate the funding responsibilities with MIC that were part of their organization prior to this Government taking office.

It is not a funny issue, Mr. Speaker. He could have been at the meeting Friday night. My question is to the First Minister. What is his position on the resolutions that were passed by the community-based multicultural organizations this weekend?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): What is funny is that the Member reads a prepared speech to the House and does not ask a question. He is here for the pure politics of it instead of asking a specific question. That is what I found humorous, Mr. Speaker, and I regret that the Member, who has been here a long time and

does not know any better, should take that way of acting in this House.

The fact of the matter is that I have indeed shown that I would be responsive. When Mr. Glasgow called, I talked to him and discussed the situation. They had given six days' notice of a desire to meet with me at a time when we were about to bring in a Budget, that we had just brought in the Budget, and I had two and three public events each evening last week. I could not meet with them before their council annual meeting. I said to him that we would meet as soon thereafter as it was possible, and we are committed to do that, Mr. Speaker.

With regard to their resolutions, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) that it was his Government that passed the Act that created the Manitoba Cultural Council as an advisory body. It did not in legislation, in any way, give them authority over fund raising. That legislation says that they are an advisory body and not indeed a funding body.

The funding comes from the Government of Manitoba, from the Lotteries Foundation and the only way for true accountability, so that we do not have the difficulty that we had that led to an auditor's review and criticism is that funding shall be indeed under the purview of this Legislature so that every Member can ask questions and ensure that it is being properly dealt with.

* (1345)

Mr. Doer: If you read the annual report of the president presented to the council, it clearly indicates that he and his Minister are wrong in the interpretation of the Act and the mandate that the body has in terms of dealing with funds.

Mr. Speaker, why does this Government deal with the multicultural community in a differential way to what it is doing to the Arts Council and Sports Federation? If we were to follow the same kind of logic as the Premier has indicated, we would have withheld money from the Arts Council after the Rainbow Stage fiasco. Why is he treating this group totally differently than the other groups under the Department of Cultural Affairs?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I will repeat for the benefit of the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) that we are happy to take the advice, listen to the concerns and the ideas of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. We are looking at the implementation of a multicultural Act in Manitoba. We certainly will need their advice, recommendations, and suggestions on those very, very important legislative issues.

We believe, Mr. Speaker, that is an appropriate role for the Manitoba Intercultural Council. That is why we supported the Act when it was here in the Legislature. That is why we believe that they ought to give us that advice and perform that important role for which they were put together as a council. Mr. Speaker, we are working with them to ensure that advice translates itself into things that are good for the multicultural community.

Mr. Doer: Over the weekend, the Government's recommended appointments were all defeated in elections. This Government is totally out of touch with the community-based grass-roots groups, organizations and individuals in the multicultural community.

My question to the Premier, in regard to funding and dealing with multicultural organizations in the same way the Government deals with other community-based groups, will this Premier overrule his Minister and return back the funding to that organization so that they can be treated in the same way as a number of other umbrella groups in this province? Why does he not trust the multicultural community to administer the funds as they have done over the last number of years? Why does he not trust the multicultural community the same way as the sports groups and the arts groups?

Mr. Filmon: Time and time again, the Provincial Auditor has said that as much as possible, funds that are funds of the Government of Manitoba, of the people of Manitoba, ought to be dispensed in a way that is accountable to this Legislature. Members on that side of the House in their hypocrisy have argued over and over again that they want to be able to have in committee all the various groups and organizations that spend public money. They have argued that they want that to be a public matter, of public record, and in fact the way in which we have set this up they will be accountable to the Legislature. In committee, your questions will be answered.

Let us not try and have it both ways, as the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) does it. On the one hand, he argues that we ought to be having more accountability, more opportunity for committees of the Legislature to examine way in which money is spent, and now he says, no, we should give it to them and have no accountability to this Legislature. He cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Doer: There is a difference between accountability and differential treatment in the manner in which this Government is conducting itself with the multicultural community. We trust community-based groups. Whether it is child welfare, arts, sports groups, we trust the people.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) is, why has he taken away the trust of this Government for the multicultural community to deal with their own resources? Why has he taken it away from the community-based groups, from the elected representatives of the community, and put it in with a bunch of bureaucrats, unlike other organizations that get funding from this Government?

Mr. Filmon: All of the money will be distributed by a committee of people from the multicultural community. They will be people who will be well-respected, well-known in the multicultural community. We take it a step further. They will be accountable to this Legislature, and they will have to come here and answer for their actions.

Liquor Control Commission Three-Year Plan

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, last Thursday and Friday, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) kindly took as notice six questions raised by the Honourable Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) with respect to the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission and its three-year planning.

The questions raise a number of issues, Mr. Speaker, and in the time available to me I will attempt to deal with them. I think a major issue raised is that freedom of information brought in by this Government makes access to this type of information available to the Honourable Member, although I authorized that through my own office.

In November of 1987, at that time we had an NDP Government, we did not have freedom of information, with that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), on a point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): Answers are clearly outlined in Beauchesne as being brief and to the point raised. This speech on behalf of the Government House Leader might be interesting during other time periods, but certainly is not appropriate for Question Period. I would ask you to rule the Government House Leader to order.

* (1450)

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). As the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has indicated, he has six questions to answer. The Honourable Minister of Justice, kindly answer his questions now.

Mr. McCrae: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were indeed six questions.

Mr. Speaker, in November of 1987, the MLCC did indeed at that time have a three-year plan, which I was not aware of at that time, and I think in November of 1987 the Minister would have been the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). At that time, among the issues on the three-year plan of the MLCC were, first, cheque cashing; second, the deletion of the restriction on broadcasting of beverage alcohol advertisement between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.; and third, the introduction of sampling of wines and liqueurs in liquor stores. Incidentally, sampling of one-third of an ounce of wine, I am told by experts in the police department, would not register on the breathalyzer machine.

The Honourable Member also referred to the deletion of the advertising restriction at supper hour when people are watching television. I remind the Honourable Member that in July of 1987, the NDP Government allowed juveniles to enter and consume alcohol in cocktail lounges. I remind the Honourable Member that in June of 1984, the NDP opened licensed premises

during supper hour, so we are not talking about advertising, we are talking about eating in and consuming alcohol.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, there were six questions raised.

Mr. Speaker: That is right, and if there is time we will come back to the Honourable Minister of Justice, because time is scarce.

Prince Charles School Closure

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, for the past year, the parents, students and staff of Prince Charles School have been preparing for the transition, for some in fact the painful transition to the mainstream.

The realization that planning for facilities as well as emotional preparation, the realization that planning takes time prompted my questions on November 24, 1988, to the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). All three responses to those questions were taken as notice and all three remain unanswered.

The time is now, Mr. Speaker, for approval in principle to become approval in cash. Can the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) tell the House when the funds will be available for the necessary renovations to provide for as smooth a change as possible for the students from Prince Charles School?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I guess I should tell the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) that in fact it was Winnipeg School Division's request of November 3, 1988, that Prince Charles be closed and so that students from that institution then would be clustered into five different schools within the division. It has not been a year ago.

* (1355)

Secondly, the division did request that decentralization take place and that renovations to the schools be done. This request was then taken by the Public Schools Finance Board and the renovation costs were put into the three-year capital budget. This is the way that all requests are done, and it has been scheduled for September of 1989. So we are moving ahead with the renovations to those various schools as soon as we can. This is done in accordance with the policy that has been set for the Public Schools Finance Board, and there is nothing that has been done to try and delay the process in any way, shape or form.

Handicapped Children Educational Facilities

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, but the students have to be in place by September of 1989.

Can the Minister tell what has been done to prepare for those students in the five clustered schools? They have to be ready for acceptance of the students in September of 1989.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Once again, it is the school division's responsibility to plan their activities, so that if they are going to close the school that other facilities be ready to accept those students.

Mr. Speaker, Prince Charles School, as a matter of fact, is a good facility and one that can continue to be used as an education facility. As a matter of fact, the Public Schools Finance Board did visit the school and did make note of the fact that it was not a situation where a school had to be closed because of deteriorating conditions or facilities not up to par.

The Public Schools Finance Board has acted as quickly as they possibly could with the request that came on January 3. As a matter of fact, the Public Schools Finance Board has written to Winnipeg School Division No. 1 to find out what they would like to use Prince Charles School for, and as yet have not received a response. So in terms of the Public Schools Finance Board, they are moving as quickly as possible.

Mainstreaming

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding, and we have been told that there is a transitions committee that will be established between his department, the Minister of Education's (Mr. Derkach) department and the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). Can the Minister tell me if this particular committee has been established to assist with the thrust that the previous Government presented towards the implementation of mainstreaming?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): I will take that question as notice and report back to the House.

Elderly Abuse Initiatives

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey). We have been asking questions about elder abuse in this House since the very moment we walked into this Chamber last July, and we have been put off with a blizzard of rhetoric and delay. The severity of the problem of elder abuse has been highlighted yet again, this time by the Public Trustee who is worried about an urgent situation.

My question to the Minister is very simple. What immediate actions and plans does he intend to take as the Minister responsible for Seniors in this Government to meet the urgent situation? Those are not my words. Those are the words of the Public Trustee.

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for that comment. I would just make one reference to his

research. I will point out here that the Public Trustee indicated in the Free Press that, if I get 25 cases a year in the office, I bet—these are the operative words I bet—there are 200 cases out there. I would say that is highly speculative and I think we should work hard with the organizations, as we have been doing, with the leadership of the different seniors' groups to specifically determine the direction they want to go. That is what we have been doing.

I met this morning with staff. We are working with the different groups and organizations as to what we can do with the problem to best solve it in the best interests of everyone. We will be working, as I have said and as the Government has been saying, on a discussion paper which will be released very shortly, which will clearly indicate how we are going to be dealing with the problem. I think it is very key indeed that we work very closely with those people who are in seniors' responsible roles to assist them.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey), we are not interested on this side of the House who is talking about bets, whether it is the Public Trustee or the Minister, because we ought not to be gambling with the lives of senior citizens.

White Paper Release

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): The elder abuse paper was due in October of 1988. In the Throne Speech, we now hear 1989 or maybe 1990. When will the Minister take this issue off the back burner and on to the front of this Government's agenda where it belongs?

* (1400)

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, it was the Liberal Critic (Mr. Carr) who is using the research of, "I bet there are 200 cases out there," nothing further substantiated. This House and the people of Manitoba last week were subjected to the Liberal research. The people of Manitoba and this House were subjected to the Liberal research, which came out very clearly in two editorials this last weekend. It speaks very highly of the Liberal Party, by the way.

I want to make it very clear, particularly to the seniors of the Province of Manitoba, that we are working very aggressively with the leadership of those organizations to deal with the problem, and we will do whatever is necessary to make sure that the seniors are protected when it comes to abuse and/or any other matters that affect them.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, the best way to examine how serious the Minister is, is the budget of the Seniors Directorate, set at \$200,000 last year. Now it is \$207,000 and \$300 to boot. That means an increase of nearly a dime for every senior in the Province of Manitoba. Where is he going to get the resources to give this item the appropriate attention it deserves?

White Paper Costs

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is very simple. How much will this paper cost? Does he have the resources to fund it, and who is writing it?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, I will stand in defence of the seniors who calls them not worth more than 10 cents, as the Liberal Critic did. Shame on him. I would expect, on behalf of the seniors, an apology to the seniors of Manitoba in referring to them not being worth more than 10 cents. That is just what he has done. I ask for him to apologize to the seniors of Manitoba.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, there is a paper being developed and we will present it after we have had full discussion with the leadership of the seniors of this province.

Family Violence Program Development

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier (Mr. Filmon). All Manitobans were shocked and horrified by events of this past weekend in St. Boniface. I am sure all Members in this House share in the grief that Manitobans are feeling around the deaths and the murders in the Reid family. We cannot go back and change that tragedy, but we can prevent similar situations or try to prevent similar situations from occurring by acting immediately.

Given that the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) has said her comprehensive policy on domestic violence will not be ready for some time, given that there are well over 1,000 people, victims and batterers, who have been turned away from agencies providing counselling services in this past year alone, could the Premier (Mr. Filmon) give assurances to this House that he will act immediately to ensure that resources are provided and counselling services are put in place to meet the crying need of people who are victims of family violence and domestic abuse?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, there is no question that all of us share the grief, the loss of the people involved in that dramatic hostage taking and murder. All of us are concerned about the effects of family violence on society. Consistently, our Government has indicated as a priority and put more and more funding into wife abuse shelters, into spousal abuse programs, into family abuse programs within our provincial Government Department of Family Services. We will continue to give it the highest possible priority to try and address the concerns so that situations such as this or any situations in which violence occurs within families are eradicated as soon as we possibly can.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the seriousness of this Government to this very critical problem.

Agency Resources

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. John's): I would ask the Premier, given that there were in fact 573 victims and batterers turned away from Evolve because of stretched resources just this past year, given that there were 465 women in need turned away from Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, given that there are over 100 on the waiting list of Women's Post-Treatment Centre, and the list goes on, could the Premier indicate to the House, give a commitment to this House, that he is prepared to immediately respond to this crisis and provide the necessary resources to those agencies to meet this very grave, great need in our society?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I really wish that the Member for St. John's, who I know has a sincere concern about resources for women and families, would not attempt to politicize the situation by speaking about people turned away from these shelters.

Mr. Speaker, I remember in Opposition when we had to, for days and weeks on end, lobby, criticize, urge her Government to give funding to the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, and they stood fast for the sake of 25,000 not wanting to give more funding to that centre. I remember when we were out advocating on behalf of women who were wanting to have more facilities at resource centres.

Now here we are having made moves to replace Osborne House, to have the Ikwe centre for Natives, to have a resource centre in Thompson, to have family shelters throughout the province that were never ever put in place by her administration, having committed more funds and larger increases to this very, very important matter than ever were contemplated by the former NDP administration. I wish that she would not try to make political hay out of an issue that is as tragic as this one.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I regret that in fact the Premier has chosen to politicize this issue when I was trying very hard not to. The Premier will know if he was aware last week, I have raised questions like this three times over the past number of weeks.

Mr. Speaker: Order; order, please.

Program Funding

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member kindly put her question now.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): We are dealing with a dramatic increase in numbers of people seeking counsel. Would the Premier indicate to this House whether or not he is prepared to move off of Treasury Board several proposals that deal with this critical area, such as proposals from the Steinbach Crisis Centre, from New Faces, from Family Services? Would he agree to move off of Treasury Board any existing proposals dealing with this critical area and ensure that funding is put in place immediately so that women can, yes, and children, yes, find a safer place?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the whole thrust and objective of all of us in Government should

be prevention, to prevent these family breakdowns, these situations that lead to violence, prevent them from occurring.

What the former administration did not contemplate or recognize was that in addition to providing fundings for studies and projects on a short-term basis for victims, what was most important was to prevent the incidents of this happening. One of the best commitments we could make to victims and potential victims was to go into prevention as heavily and as completely as we could. We are looking at that, because I believe that it is important in our society. The Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) is ignoring that, saying that there is no place for that, that in fact what we ought to be doing is working on some of these other projects when, Mr. Speaker

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) on a point of order.

* (1410)

Mr. Ashton: I regret having to once again raise Beuchesne 417 which states quite clearly that "answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate." I would submit to you, Sir, that the Premier has breached that provision of Beuchesne on all three counts. I would ask you to draw him to order.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member. The Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), on the same point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I might ask you also, when considering the matter raised by the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), to look also at the "lengthy preambles and duplicitous preambles" in the questions posed by Honourable Members opposite.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank both Honourable Members. I am sure, as all Honourable Members know, multi-part questions do tend to lead to lengthy answers, and yet I would like to also remind all Ministers that answers to questions should be as brief as possible.

Keewatin Tribal Council Tax Exemptions

Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner). On October 7, the then Minister of Municipal Affairs wrote to the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities and stated the following with regard to the Keewatin Tribal Council's case against the City of Thompson: "When I receive a copy of the decision of the court, I will be in a better position to determine what action, if any, we have to take with respect to the matter." Will the Minister of Rural Development now tell this House what action this Government intends to take?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): I thank the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) for his question. It is certainly something that the court has ruled on. I have asked for a legal opinion and advice from my department on this matter and, as soon as I have received that, I will sit down and attempt to—and I invite both Opposition Parties to meet on this matter with me, to discuss this matter and see whether we can come to some point and some reasonable course of action on this matter, but only if and when I have received legal advice on it.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Springfield, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Roch: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Treaty rights are granted by the federal Government. What action does this Minister plan to take with his colleagues in Ottawa to ensure that our municipalities do not suffer any loss of revenue whatsoever and ensure that Treaty rights are not violated?

Mr. Penner: Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you, as I have indicated to the House, that I am quite willing to sit down and discuss this issue with the two Parties opposite to see whether there is some resolve to this matter. It is certainly a matter that takes some decision making. But before I receive legal counsel or advice on this matter, I simply will not discuss the matter publicly. I think it would be detrimental to the resolve of the issue in the long term if we did that.

Mr. Roch: The fact remains that Treaty rights were originally granted by Ottawa, but the spirit of that legislation was to exempt the property on the reserves. He has to be in touch with his colleague, the federal Minister of Northern Affairs, to ensure that: (a) there would be no loss of revenues to any rural municipalities; and (b) that Treaty rights be respected. Will he be in touch with his colleague in Ottawa over this issue so that we can then sit down and discuss it amongst all the three Parties here in Manitoba?

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, yes.

ERDA Agreements Negotiations

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) about the status of ERDA negotiations. We have a great deal of concern in this province about the fact that, as is becoming more and more evident, a number of these agreements are going to be cancelled insofar as renewal and that in fact there will not be a great deal of activity taking place with regard to the federal Government in this area. Since I last asked that question, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has indicated he has talked to the Prime Minister. I understand it was a friendly chat.

I would be more concerned as to whether the Premier has raised the serious issues facing Manitoba with the Prime Minister when he was given that opportunity. Did he receive any assurances from the Prime Minister on

the ERDA agreements? Did he express his deep disappointment with the fact they were not being renegotiated? Did he raise the issue of the Portage base closure and ask for a face-to-face meeting with the Prime Minister so that can be rectified?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we as a Government continue to deal with the federal Government on a whole host of issues of concern to us, ones that we raised publicly and talked about publicly more than a year ago, such as the renegotiation of the ERDA agreement. They had been left on the table as unfinished business by the former administration, no progress, no indication of anything. We have been working very diligently with the federal Government to get those ERDA agreements back on track.

There is a whole host of other issues of concern that we continue to be in touch with our federal counterparts, agricultural issues, issues of an environmental nature, the Port of Churchill, the base closures here in Manitoba. All of those issues are constantly being discussed with our federal colleagues, because we are concerned to get the best possible treatment from Ottawa for the people of the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Plohman: I cannot believe the Premier (Mr. Filmon) would come up with this hollow rhetoric in an answer to a serious question. In view of the fact that those agreements did not come up for renewal until the spring of 1989, I ask the Premier whether he has established priorities with the federal Government, whether he has received commitments and whether, in his friendly chat, did he just talk about the weather or did he raise these issues with the Prime Minister and get assurances that he would have a face-to-face meeting on these serious problems facing Manitoba?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, let me assure you that whenever we talk with federal counterparts, whenever we talk with provincial counterparts, we talk about serious issues. We do not talk as full of rhetoric and hot air as the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) does.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): Can I have leave of the House to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Rupert's Land (Mr. Harper) have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Harper: Mr. Speaker, the Fast for Learning Campaign by the Assembly of First Nations of Manitoba commenced today, a campaign for our future, our children, our culture and heritage and our education. I might add that this fast for learning is not a hunger strike. This is an awareness campaign. It is intended to be a public conscious-awakening campaign. The

campaign is to bring attention and focus on the plight of aboriginal people. It is to make people aware and remind them that there could be a better future for our aboriginal people, and also that the key to this bright future is education.

It must be said that aboriginal people are not asking the taxpayers, the citizens of this country to pay for their education. It must also be said that aboriginal people are not asking for unlimited education funding, nor are they asking for handouts. Education for aboriginal people has been assured and guaranteed through the Treaties made with the federal Government. The aboriginal people gave up certain lands and resources in exchange for benefits such as education. Over the next few months, the campaign will be asking hundreds of individuals to join in the struggle to protect Treaty rights, which is education for our children and grandchildren. The campaign has chosen to establish an ongoing fast of a chain of hundreds of individuals who support our cause by sharing our hunger for a few days. Each person's fast is a personal statement and support.

I would like to thank some Members from both sides of the House who attended the ceremony this morning, and also to the Members who indicated that they will be taking part in the fast. I hope other Members of the Legislature will consider joining in the fast such as I have dedicated myself for the next three days without food from today.

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, just a brief—may I have leave to make

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the Honourable Minister (Mr. Downey) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Downey: I am just pleased to say that as a representative of the Government of Manitoba, I have joined with our colleague from Rupert's Land in that fast to acknowledge the plight of the Native education funding difficulties. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Member for Niakwa (Herold Driedger), does he have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

* (1420)

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): I thank the House for giving me leave to make the statement, even though I had not asked for leave yet, but I just wish to underscore what was said by the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) and was said by the Member for Rupert's Land (Mr. Harper), and indicate to the House as well that there are several Members of our caucus who have indicated their support for the plight of the Native people, to make their own personal statement and fast along with them so that the message of commitment here can be sent to the federal Government for them to follow up with their commitment that they should be prepared to make.

ORDERS OF THE DAY BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate of the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that this House approve, in general, the budgetary policy of the Government, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry (Laurie Evans), who has 28 minutes remaining.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): As you well know, there are some things in life that it is not wise to stop in the middle, and I am not sure that I can get back on the same—

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): No, that is what happened to the hair on your head. It stopped in the middle.

Mr. Laurie Evans: As usual, Mr. Speaker, I can get excellent advice from my good friend, the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey).

But the point I was trying to make on Friday is that it is not wise, in my opinion, to take the Budget and attempt to deal with it in isolation because the Budget of course is a document which is really a blueprint as to what the Government intends to do in the upcoming fiscal year. It is something like taking a look at anything in isolation. I use as an example the situation where my wife, for example, cannot eat pecan pie because she is allergic to the nuts and, if somebody offers her a piece of pecan pie, the immediate assumption that they make is that she does not like the pie, while in actual fact she likes the pie but she is allergic to the nuts.

We have the same situation here with the Budget. There are a lot of things in this Budget that we like but there are a lot of things that we do not like and a lot of those things can be equated with the allergy to nuts, Mr. Speaker. So while we certainly do not want to be on record as being in opposition to tax cuts—we favour tax cuts. We are not in opposition to moving toward a better balance of the budget. We are in favour of closer balance to the budget, but what I am attempting to do is to take a look at some of the things that were promised to us in the previous Throne Speech, back in 1988, and see just what has been delivered on that program—

An Honourable Member: Virtually everything, virtually everything.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Well, I would hasten to differ with my honourable friend, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), because there are many things in the previous Throne Speech that were not delivered on and I will mention a few more of these to him. One of these is, a major component of our renewed thrust for economic development is the expansion of our tourism section. Now all you have to do is to take a look at the Budget this year to see that there has been no significant improvement in the support that goes to tourism. Tourism has been put on the back burner.

Here you have something that I think all Parties will agree has tremendous potential for Manitoba, and it is virtually being ignored.

The next item, Mr. Speaker, that I want to look at is the item where it says, "Plans are in place to implement my Government's commitment to improve the province's highways, with Highway 75 receiving immediate priority." Well, here you have a situation where we have been working on Highway 75 for years. They talk about twinning it from both ends. My guess is at the rate it is going it will probably be into the next century before Highway 75 is completed. I would be a little skeptical as to when you start from both ends, whether this Government has the ability to have those two ends meet in the middle.

There is no indication that Highway 75 is a high priority. Highway 75 is the entrance into the southern part of Winnipeg. It is the main way of coming into Winnipeg. It is the main route for tourists coming in from south of the border, and these two things tie together. The priority that is given to tourism has to be identified as the priority that is given to Highway 75. I can only infer from the fact that both of these things were identified as high priority back in the Throne Speech in 1988, that one has to really question the confidence that you can have in the Government of bringing forward these things to reality, Mr. Speaker.

Another item that was mentioned in the 1988 Throne Speech is, "My Ministers are working to attract energy-intensive industries to the province." We have seen already that they have not been able to make any headway as far as the aluminum smelter is concerned and, although the Dow Corning issue has been mentioned, there does not seem to be a great deal of progress made on that one either.

The next item that I want to touch on is, "Many of the opportunities my Government is pursuing to strengthen and diversify Manitoba's economy provide for federal Government involvement. My Government is committed to a more co-operative approach with the federal Government as we prepare to renegotiate federal-provincial agreements which foster economic and regional development such as the Northern Development Agreement, the Mineral Development Agreement and other sectoral agreements."

Well, we have a situation here in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, where a dialogue between the two levels of Government has deteriorated to the point where it is virtually non-existent. We have already a situation where eight ERDA agreements have expired as of the 31st of March of this year. There is no indication that those will be renewed and one has to assume that if they have run out in March, the likelihood of continuity of those is very, very negligible. I know for example, the ERDA agreement, the subagreement for agriculture, \$38.5 million, which was split between the federal and the provincial Governments on a 60-40 cost-sharing basis has expired. Some of the projects are continuing because all of the money was not spent, but there is no indication that there will be continuity of that particular program.

So to argue that you are fostering better federal-provincial relationships has to be regarded as being

ridiculous. You have a situation where the Minister of Defence, the Honourable Bill McKnight, has yet to even make an appearance in Portage where he was supposedly going to come out and discuss the rationale for the closure of the CFB at Portage, and the same thing with the Prime Minister. How often does he come to Manitoba and what impact does he have when he comes, and does he sit down and negotiate with the province? The answer is absolutely no, Mr. Speaker.

I can go on and on. There are others here that I want to touch on just briefly. "My Government will implement new and creative incentives to attract and retain physicians and other specialized health care professionals in rural Manitoba." Well, this was back in 1988 that this statement was made. We have not seen any progress whatsoever in terms of the retention of physicians in rural Manitoba. It has been a disaster, so there is no reason to assume that if there has been no action on the promises that were made in 1988 that one should assume the promises in 1989 will be any better.

Another one is, "Manitobans have expressed the view that the health care system should benefit from lottery revenues." Now we have a situation where the Government is talking about establishing a lottery or a casino in the Fort Garry Hotel. Now we see not only is it going to be recreation and multiculturalism and so on, but now health is going to be supported through the casinos and the lotteries. You get the impression that pretty soon this Government will be relying on lotteries and casinos to fund practically everything.

The other thing that one has to be clear is that the majority of Manitobans are opposed to the casinos, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: Where do you stand on casinos? Where do you stand on them?

Mr. Laurie Evans: Where I stand, Mr. Speaker, is that we cannot rely on gambling funds to support the majority of the things that we regard as being the services that we rely on here in Manitoba.

An Honourable Member: But some of it is okay.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Some of it, as the Minister indicates, but when you start to utilize lottery funding as the basis for operating on a year-in and year-out basis, one has to be very skeptical as to the Government's approach to this.

The next thing we can look at, and here again is the 1988 Throne Speech which says "The number of day care spaces in Manitoba will be increased in co-operation with the federal Government." We know what the federal Government has done as far as day care is concerned. It has done absolutely nothing. It has put it on the back burner and there is no indication that it is going to come forward on the current agenda. Therefore, the likelihood of additional day care spaces in Manitoba that can be attributed to co-operation between the two levels of Government is absolutely nil.

This is not the only one, Mr. Speaker. "My Government is planning specific measures to meet the challenges of an aging society, including the establishment of a comprehensive strategy to co-ordinate the delivery of health care services to seniors. A White Paper on Elderly Abuse will be released." Here again, this is 1988. The same thing could have been said in 1989 because in that intervening year there was absolutely nothing done.

The Minister who was responsible for seniors at that time did not even know what colour the paper was going to be that he was going to bring forward. He did not know whether it was going to be a White Paper, a Green Paper or what, so we are right back where we were in 1988. Not one thing has been done in these areas.

-(Interjection)- One can only stop and watch for so long, but I think the thing that should be made clear to the Minister—and he is chirping from his seat here—is that I am 55. If you look at the situation this way, if you take a look at normal retirement and I am 55 and if you take normal retirement as being 65, I have sat in this year in this House for 10 percent of my remaining productive years.

Next year, I will only have nine years to go. You get to the point where you have only one year to go and, if you do not do something, you have lost 100 percent of your potential productive career because you have hit 65. I think everyone on the opposite side of the House should be reminded that this is the first day of the last years of your life and it is time that something got started and something got done.

All I am trying to put across to you is that these promises have been made in 1988 and you have sat on your hands for that intervening period. There has been virtually nothing done. The one that is most critical is this one where you have talked about assistance to the seniors. Many of us on both sides of the House are going to be seniors pretty soon and we will still be waiting for the action that you promised in 1988.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, William Chornopyski, in the Chair.)

Mr. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): You are over the hump already, though.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I am over the hump and that is why it worries me. The Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) says I am over the hump already. One has to wonder whether one can rely on anything or fend for oneself, because that is the sort of approach that this Government has taken.

Moving on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the next one I want to point out is it says, "My Government will also be pursuing comprehensive rural development policies." Here again we have seen absolutely nothing in terms of comprehensive rural development policies.

I went up to a meeting at Neepawa where the most right wing of all the Conservatives, Mr. Harry Mardon, came up and he said what you should do is decentralize

* (1430)

and treat it as though it was the army. You just go in and tell people where they are going to move and tell them to be there the next day. I do not know whether this is the plan that the Conservative Party has for decentralization or not, but when the most right wing of them all uses that philosophy, one has to assume that they probably use his recommendations.

I could go on and on here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, looking at the things that have not been done but have been promised. I am only going to touch on a couple more of these.

One of them is the fact that the Centre for Sustainable Development was in the 1988 Throne Speech. What have we seen about the Centre for Sustainable Development? First of all, when it was first announced by the Prime Minister, it was referred to as a world-class international centre for sustainable development. In that time frame, in that intervening period of time from November, which you might remember was just before the federal election and one does not place much emphasis on what Tories say prior to an election, this is what he said, that it would be an international, world-class centre for sustainable development.

In the intervening period, Mr. Deputy Speaker, several things have disappeared. First of all, you never hear it referred to as world-class anymore. Secondly, you do not refer to it as international anymore. What has happened? You have a little bit of seed money put in by CIDA, you have absolutely nothing from the provincial Government. Now you have a situation where, first of all, you do not know where the international centre is going to be, you do not know who is going to fund it, you do not know what size it is going to be. All you know now is it occasionally gets referred to as a Centre for Sustainable Development, all the rest of it has disappeared. In addition to that, you have had Maurice Strong come in, talk to the group at Brandon that were interested in having it there and he has said in all probability all it will be is a switchboard. So if that is all it is going to be, then we have to start to be concerned as to whether we can rely on it ever occurring at all or not.

The other area that I want to talk about briefly, which is mentioned in both Throne Speeches, is the whole concept of rural development. What have we had in the last little while? We have had -(Interjection)- I am not opposed to rural development. All I want to say is it is time that we saw something happen in a hurry.

All that we have seen in the recent past is a change in the name. It used to be Municipal Affairs, now it is Rural Development. We have seen a change in the Ministers, and all that means is when you have a change in Ministers after one year it is a method for prolonging the procrastination period. In other words, there is nothing planned. You shift the name, you shift the Ministers, it gives you some more time to think about it and delay. I would anticipate in the next Throne Speech, if we are unfortunate enough to have to put up with another Throne Speech from this Government, that we will be looking at a situation where they could just change the dates and there would be absolutely no difference, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I find it very, very difficult to have any credibility, give any credibility to the Throne Speeches. Therefore, if

you cannot believe in the content of the Throne Speeches, then why in the world would you worry very much about the Budget, because if you are not confident in what they tell you they are going to do, then the Budget itself becomes virtually irrelevant.

Now, I am sure that Members opposite would be a little disappointed and surprised if I did not spend a little time talking about agriculture. I have got plenty of time to touch on agriculture. As the Deputy Speaker, you well know I have a lot of respect and confidence in the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). I want to give him credit for having done what I thought was a good job in the face of the difficulties that he faced with the drought in 1988. He took action quite quickly, established the two programs, namely, the Greenfeed Program and the Basic Herd Retention Program, and both of these have been fairly effective. They have looked extremely good in comparison with the programs that were brought forward by the federal Government.

The federal Government's Drought-Aid Program was a fiasco from one end to the other. I think that Mr. Mayer has to be identified as probably the master of mismanagement when it comes to the handling of the drought programs that were available in western Canada. They were virtually a disaster.

I also want to give the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) credit where it is due. Certainly we supported, and still do support, the establishment of the general farm organization, and I am pleased to see that KAP has been certified. I realize it is a relatively difficult task to get the wheels in motion for the establishment of KAP. The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) has pointed to his colleague, the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner), and certainly I feel that the Minister of Rural Development has to have been given considerable credit for the strength of the KAP organization.

I am also prepared to compliment the Minister on the re-establishment of the check-off for the Manitoba Cattle Producers' Association. I feel that this is the right route to go there. I am pleased to note that the Members opposite are quite prepared to acknowledge the compliments that I am giving.

I am also very pleased that there have been some moves made in the area of tripartite stabilization. I think, here again, the stabilization that the Minister has been able to negotiate for the red meat industry, for the beans, sugar beets, and most recently the support for the honey industry, are certainly commendable and I applaud him for it.

Finally, another area that, while it is certainly overdue, I am very pleased to see that the compensation for the Interlake farmers has finally been worked out. I am sure they will be a little disappointed in the size of the support that they are getting but, after all that period of time, I think it is important that issue finally be resolved.

There are areas within the agricultural Estimates, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am disappointed in. If you look through the Estimates in Agriculture, there appears to be very little in the way of funding for any innovative

or new programs. In actual fact, the budget for Agriculture in the upcoming year is \$88 million which, out of the total Budget, is well below 2 percent.

Here again we have a Government that stands up and says that agriculture industry is the backbone industry here in western Canada and still give less than 2 percent of the total. Once again I have to say, "some backbone," if that is the type of support that it gets, less than 2 percent.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): The farmers are sure happy today.

Mr. Laurie Evans: The farmers are happy and I am sure the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) will try to take some credit for the rain that is falling out there. If he is the one who is responsible, I just hope that he knows how to shut it off and turn it on when it is necessary. Do not shut it off. I am certainly not advocating that you shut it off, Mr. Minister, if you do have that type of power. I doubt very much as to whether you do or not.

* (1440)

Certainly, I have not seen very much in the Budget that would indicate to me that there are any new programs advocated within the Manitoba Department of Agriculture. The program areas are virtually static. They are sitting there at increases in the range of 1 percent to 2 percent which is less than the cost of inflation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so there is no innovation within that department. There is nothing in there that would indicate there is going to be any additional support in the farm credit area, other than a minor amount for beginning farmers, which I support. At the same time, I think if you look at the statistics as to the number of bankruptcies and the difficulties that farmers are having in the areas of farm mediation, there needs to be more stimulus given and more support in terms of farm credit.

The Throne Speech and the Budget mention very briefly the concept of income stabilization. Here again, this is an area that I am very supportive of. I think that it is time we had an income stabilization at the farm level and try to get away, over time, from the support of individual commodities. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this concept of income stabilization now goes back far more than a decade. The initial thoughts on this are starting to become quite old. There has been reluctance on the part of the federal Government to take the initiative, and there does not seem to be any initiative being taken by the provincial Governments to get this whole concept of farm income stabilization off and running.

I am also very concerned and disappointed by the fact that even the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), who I regard as one of the more credible Ministers, seems to have fallen into the trap that if you are not prepared to do something in a hurry, you name another committee. We have had him name a Red Meat Forum. What in the world is a Red Meat Forum supposed to do? We know what the problems are in the red meat industry in this province. We know that part of the problem is that we do not have the industry, the packing and the processing industry that we used to have.

For years now, because of the inadequacies of the Beef Stabilization Program, we have seen young calves moving out of this province to be fed to maturity in other areas. The last thing we need in my opinion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the establishment of another committee to study this thing. Surely the Members opposite, and particularly those who have been in here a long time—and some of them came in here I assume while they were still wet behind the ears because they have many years of service—surely they do not have to sit longer, establish more committees to decide what should be done. The time to act is now. For goodness sake, let us get off our hands and get something done rather than establishing another committee.

The Red Meat Forum, I am disappointed in it. Here you have a forum that has no budget. It is operated primarily by volunteers. I certainly applaud those who take their time to do this voluntary service, but I am not convinced that you can expect an unbudgeted voluntary group to come up with quick solutions to the red meat industry in this province. Something more significant than that has to be done, and it has to be done much more timely.

What about other committees? Now we have an Agricultural Advisory Council to look at such things as what we should be doing in Manitoba as far as coming up with a made-in-Manitoba method of payment recommendations as far as the Crow benefit is concerned. I am not opposed to it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What I am opposed to is the time frame. If you are still looking at committees to do this, you have had Alberta and Saskatchewan working on this now for two and three years.

Mazankowski, the federal Minister of Agriculture, says that he will be coming out before the end of this month with White Papers that are going to discuss all aspects of the method of payment. I am satisfied. I am sure that Members opposite are not, but I am satisfied that Mr. Mazankowski knows already exactly what he, as the Minister of Agriculture at the federal level, plans to do as far as the method of payment of the Crow benefit to the farmers are concerned.

He is going to advocate immediately that it be paid to the farmers. This may be the right way, but I am not convinced the program that he advocates that may be satisfactory for his Province of Alberta is identical or ideal for the one that should be for Manitoba. What we need is some initiatives taken in Manitoba where Manitobans sit down and develop the recommendations that are appropriate for Manitoba, and that should have been done 18 months or two years ago, it is not right now.

Where I stand, it is the necessity of having a made-in-Manitoba set of recommendations as far as the method of payment. All I am saying is that should have been done two or three years ago. What I am complaining about and do not agree with is the fact that you are now establishing these committees after you have sat in Opposition for six-and-a-half years, now you are deciding that maybe it is time to establish committees to look into something that should have been done a long time ago. That is the biggest problem that I have with the Throne Speech, it is the biggest

problem that I have with the Budget. You are now starting to take the preliminary action that you should have had completed while you were still sitting there in Opposition. You should not be worrying about having to do this preliminary stuff now.

We also have another committee that has been established to look at decentralization.

An Honourable Member: Are you opposed to it?

Mr. Laurie Evans: This is the harping that you get from the Minister all the time, are you opposed to it? I am not opposed to it. I think that you should be doing it, but you should not be establishing committees now to figure out how to do it. You should have been looking at that while you were sitting on your hands in Opposition for six-and-a-half years so that when you came into power you are ready to go on it. So all I am saying is that you are always behind time. You are always behind time as far as the action is concerned. So here we are, a year-plus into operation, and we are now establishing committees that should have been identified and the decision should have been made a long time ago as to what you would do when you were in a position to do it. Instead now, you are in a position to do the things and you are trying to figure out what you should do.

These are the types of things that lead me to have very little confidence in the Budget. The items there individually, taken one at a time, may not be too bad but when you look at the fact that they have lost their entire credibility, then one has to say you cannot support the Budget because if you do then you are showing that you have confidence in the Government, and I have no confidence in this Government ever pursuing the things that it has promised to do. So it is as simple as that.

I want to touch on a few other things before I sit down. The one that has bothered me the most for a long, long time now is the whole concept of free trade, and this one has not been mentioned. Free trade is barely mentioned in the Throne Speech. What I would like to do, I would like to quote from some comments that were made by a strong advocate of free trade, who all those opposite will know, and that is Mr. John Crispo, a well-identified, well-known economics professor at the University of Toronto who is far to the right of most people who I know and I am sure is one of the key advisers to the federal and to the provincial Conservative Government.

I just want to read a few of the comments that he made, and he made these at a meeting in Regina, where he was talking to a group of obviously strong free trade supporters, and this is what he said, and I quote: "Free trade with the United States will produce some losers among Canadian businesses—especially in the dairy, poultry and food-processing sectors. But there will be a long string of winners.

"Small firms in Saskatchewan will need help to make a successful play in the U.S. market," he said. Crispo, whose comments repeatedly brought enthusiastic applause," I might add, "said Canadians must reduce

spending on or eliminate social security, medicare and unemployment insurance. 'Medicare is going to kill us,' he said. 'You tell somebody something's free and they go berserk.' Crispo said not only the public abuses Medicare. Unscrupulous doctors also treat people when it isn't necessary. 'I go to a cocktail party and feel guilty because I haven't had a heart by-pass. There is excessive treating, drugging and testing going on.'"

He went on further to say: "Canada must reduce spending and raise taxes. 'One thing that has to go is excessive spending on social security. You can't do well by those in need if you insist on doing the same thing for everybody.'" In other words, universality has to go. He said, "Nobody should get unemployment insurance unless they are in training, upgrading or relocation.

"In an interview, Crispo said corporate taxes should not be increased because this would jeopardize the competitive position of Canadian corporations."

Now, I just put that on record because to me this is the essence of free trade as far as the Conservative Governments at both levels are concerned. It is a business-oriented proposal which is going to do away with universality, it is going to put into jeopardy all of our social services, our Medicare and all the rest of it. We see it happening already in this country now.

The recent federal Budget has done away with universality and that will be further eroded as time goes by. We have already seen the loss of many jobs in Manitoba alone. Our Conservative colleagues will not admit that any of those losses are due to the Free Trade Agreement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but there is no doubt in my mind that many of them are.

The one area that the Conservative Government in this province is going to have as a liability for as long as they remain in power and that is the fact they have to deal with a federal Government that is led by Brian Mulroney. The federal Government in Ottawa does not have any credibility and that spill-over is going to affect all of them in due course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and from my standpoint their biggest obstacle they have is the Prime Minister. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

* (1450)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member's time has expired. The Honourable Minister of Labour.

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to take part during the Budget Debate. I would like to thank my colleagues and all the Members who offered their congratulations and best wishes.

In turn, I would like to offer my best wishes and congratulations to my colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns)—

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Thank you.

Mrs. Hammond: —and as well to those Members of the Opposition who have new critic responsibilities.

My best wishes go to the Speaker (Mr. Rocan) who, in a minority situation, is doing an admirable job. I think the secret of his success is that he only intrudes in the debate when it is absolutely necessary and that is much appreciated. On Friday, I was thinking most of the Members are thinking, thank god it is Friday. I wonder what day the Speaker is wishing for.

Mr. Downey: July 1.

Mrs. Hammond: The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) says July 1. He is probably correct.

I would also like to congratulate you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because your courteous and friendly manner will stand you in very good stead in this House, and congratulations on your appointment.

I would also like to thank the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) for his help and support. It is nice when you take over a portfolio that there is somebody there who can give you the past practice and give you help as you are going along, and I certainly appreciate that.

As I become more familiar with the portfolios, Labour, Status of Women and the Civil Service, the more I realize they are interconnected. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the initiatives my department is undertaking reflect our Government's approach to labour, from training and access to employment, to fair pay and safe working conditions, to quality pensions for retirees. If employment equity is to become a reality in Manitoba, the provincial Government has a responsibility to set an example.

We will provide training and experience which will enable women to compete for senior executive management positions within Government. This Executive Development Program will help to address the fact that, although women make up 46 percent of the Civil Service population, they hold only about 15 percent of senior management positions. In addition, we are extending the existing Career Development Program to Natives, persons with disabilities and visible minorities outside the Civil Service.

Other training opportunities include the very important work being done by our Apprenticeship and Training Branch. By working with employers and apprentices in our 36 trades, we are developing highly skilled, qualified tradespeople who are earning a salary while they learn their trade. Again, society's traditional view has been that trades are the realm of men alone. At a time when technology is rapidly changing the trades and the traditional pool from which to choose apprentices is diminishing, we must expand opportunities. Our Apprenticeship Branch has embarked on a number of initiatives to recruit women in apprenticeships.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that the strength of the labour relations climate in Manitoba lies in the success of the collective bargaining process time and again in this province. Employers and employees bargain in good faith to resolve contract disputes. I intend to proceed with the repeal of final offer selection in order to reinstate the balance so necessary to this process.

Manitoba has a right to be proud of its labour relations climate. It is one of the best in the country. In terms of person hours lost because of work stoppages, our record is exemplary. In 1988, for example, Manitoba ranked second lowest of all provinces in person day loss to stoppages. We need to congratulate our employers and employees on this fine record. While we are on the subject of labour relations, I would like to reassure both management and labour in Manitoba that as Minister of Labour I believe and have always believed that the best way to help people resolve their differences is to get them together and talking.

I come from a labour family. I have encountered very few issues or problems between people that could not be resolved by discussion and consensus. As a Government, we also place high value on consultation with the community at large and I am continuing this important practice. We are assessing the Government's Pay Equity Program and are continuing consultation with school boards and municipalities.

The recent restructuring of Government departments resulted in some additions to our Department of Labour. Placing Workplace Safety and Health in Labour is a positive move since the main client groups from organized labour and industry are the same for workplace safety and health issues as for other labour-related issues. This move will ensure that labour and management groups work together to prevent occupational illness and injury, that Manitobans enjoy the safe work environment to which they are entitled.

Other recent additions include the Worker Adviser office and Labour Adjustment unit. Worker advisers assist employees having difficulty making a claim or whose claim has been rejected by the Workers Compensation Board. Where plant closures or major layoffs are likely, our Labour Adjustment unit will co-ordinate the provincial responses to the resulting retraining and employment needs.

I would like to turn my comments to another topic of great importance and that is the Status of Women. The Throne Speech outlined the basis of this Government's action plan for women and the Budget confirmed its commitment with dollars. The action plan is a result of the Manitoba Women's Initiative. This initiative was a series of consultations with women throughout Manitoba that took place over a five-month period, ending in March of '89.

The Government's aims in establishing the initiative were to provide women in all parts of Manitoba with a window through which their concerns and opinions could have a direct impact on Government policies and programs in the province, to identify gaps and overlaps in Government services that are of particular interest or relevance to women, to focus in particular on the problems of violence against women and their children in Manitoba and on economic security and opportunities for women in Manitoba.

I had the privilege of acting as the chair of the Women's Initiative. For those who took part in the initiative, the process was a memorable one. As we said in our report, during these consultations we have been angry, amused, frustrated, impressed and very

often deeply moved. After holding 60 meetings in 24 communities and meeting over 1,000 women, on March 8, as chair of the Manitoba Women's Initiative, I submitted a report to Government for action.

The former Minister responsible for the Status of Women appointed an action team who reported to her on April 8. The report of the initiative included 94 specific recommendations for actions by virtually every part of Government. Since that report was submitted to the Government, as Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I am now responsible for a Government-wide action team that is following each and every one of those recommendations as departments analyze and respond to them. We have responded not only in dollars but in the revision of policies, programs and services.

We have established an open consultative approach which reflects our desire to form partnerships with the women of Manitoba. My own department of the Status of Women will begin this process of outreach and ongoing responsiveness by establishing offices in Portage la Prairie and The Pas. We will re-orient our services by establishing a consultation branch that will work with women's organizations in their developmental activities.

Our first priority coming out of the Women's Initiative was to provide better funded and more responsive services to battered women. Last Tuesday, the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Oleson) announced funding of \$355,000 to expand the crisis line now housed at Klinik. There will be one crisis line at Osborne House to serve Winnipeg, and a second line, a province-wide toll-free line, at Ikwe-Widdjiitiwin Incorporated to serve Native victims of wife abuse. Both organizations are in the process of renovating new facilities. Both lines will offer 24-hour services.

Upcoming announcements will outline a revision of the shelter system and educational measures. We have committed ourselves to the philosophy that abuse is a crime. Let me explain what we mean by that and why it is important. Certainly, we know that abuse is legally a crime in the Province of Manitoba, but we heard from women all over Manitoba that abuse was not being treated seriously enough. Treating abuse seriously is what we mean by abuse as a crime.

* (1500)

The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has committed his department to make the equitable treatment of abuse a priority for his department, through workshops, through appeals when sentencing is viewed as being too light, and through programs in his department that mean that abuse cases will be monitored. He views these issues of such importance that he has put them on the agenda of the Attorneys-General Federal-Provincial Meeting that was held last week to explore what additional measures can be undertaken.

The expansion of the unified Family Courts, as announced by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) and the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Oleson) on May 16, is a critical element in ensuring that restraining orders for batterers are quickly processed. At a time when other jurisdictions are cutting back in this area,

this expansion clearly indicates our Government's commitment to provide services that are accessible throughout the province by establishing one of Canada's most comprehensive and extensive unified Family Court system.

Under the maintenance, the Department of Justice and Family Services has also been able to work with Legal Aid to ensure that social assistance recipients now have access to free Legal Aid assistance in pursuing the obtaining of maintenance awards. This is an area that we were really delighted to be able to make progress in because before Legal Aid would not take on these cases and so women could not establish—if they could not afford the service, they were not able to establish a maintenance award. So when they got off social assistance, they had nothing established and had to start all over again. It just was not a fair system. So we are just delighted to be able to have that in place.

Today the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Oleson) announced the social allowance payments for the needy single parents to get immediate allowance access, that the province will be removing the existing requirement that single parents be separated or deserted for more than 90 days before qualifying for provincial benefits. Sole support parents are eligible for assistance from municipal Governments during the first 90 days of separation or desertion.

This initiative will ensure that these benefits to single parents are not determined by where they live in the province or how long they have been separated. An additional \$2 million has been allocated to the social allowance programs budget for 1989-90 to cover expected costs resulting from increased caseload. Single-parent families assisted by the Social Allowance Program currently number 9,700, with about 95 percent of these households headed by women. This initiative announced today by the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) was one of the recommendations that came out of the Women's Initiative Consulting Committee, and we are most appreciative that the Government has been able to move so quickly on that particular issue.

In January, the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) announced another policy that I feel is incumbent on us to mention, that children in families receiving social allowance benefits will now be able to keep all of their earnings from employment provided they attend school full time. Under the new policy, the earnings of dependent children, who are full-time students, will be exempt from consideration as family income and will not affect the level of their family program benefits.

At the time the Minister noted that over 3,000 children in families receiving social allowance aged 14 to 17, the age group expected to benefit most from this policy will have a significant impact. Also children even younger who have paper routes or do baby-sitting will be able to keep their earnings. That again is a real help to people on social assistance. Not only that, but it allows young people to understand that they can work and that they can earn their own money and they can be a good help to their families. I think that was an important step taken by our Government.

The importance placed by this Government on issues for women in the area of health is outlined by the creation of a Women's Health Directorate. By creating this Directorate, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) will ensure that there is comprehensive response to women's health issues.

There is a growing response among the women in Manitoba to the challenge of entrepreneurship. Everywhere we travelled during the Women's Initiative, women expressed their desire to go into business. They also outlined the difficulties in accessing credit. The Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism has announced a Loan Guarantee Program that will be targeted at women. We know that this will enable many women, especially those in rural and farm areas, to establish businesses that will allow them to more actively participate in our economy.

The Indigenous Women's Collective has received funding of \$10,000.00. They and other aboriginal women are now working with the Native Secretariat to develop both funding and policy priorities for Native women. This marks the significant recognition of Native women as important players in the issues of aboriginal people.

Rural and northern women want education opportunities provided in or close to their home communities. For many women, this is the only way to make education truly accessible. The Distance Education initiative within the Department of Education will provide this type of community-based learning opportunity. The community colleges are already undertaking an audit of classroom materials to assure that these materials are non-sexist.

The Women's Directorate has launched an active campaign to promote math and science for young girls and women in order that they keep their options open for future career choices. At a national level, Manitoba is participating in promoting the concept of career pathing so that young girls in the school system will be more conscious of making their career choices.

Many additional initiatives are under way. However, this is only a first step. I have asked the Action Team to continue to work with me to respond to the needs of women as they are further identified. We as a Government are listening to the women of Manitoba. We have proven our willingness to take their concerns and translate them into action, to respond to their needs and to work with them to identify our future direction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to further mention that during the Women's Initiative our Government gave funding to the small shelters. They moved it from \$13.90 for women, \$6.30 for children to \$30 each. We were able, in the initiative, by curtailing our cost to contribute to some of this funding. We were very pleased to be able to do that. We were also able to bring the shelter directors together so that they could begin a process of establishing standards for wife abuse services throughout the province.

We were also able to contribute to the cost of the publications of interest to women, which is the guide to education and training opportunities, employment programs and business information and services of special interest to Manitoba women.

Further funding has gone on. When we were in Opposition, the area that were of concern to many women in Winnipeg and in Manitoba was Osborne House. There are literally hundreds of women who help out in Osborne House, many, many organizations that participate, that help, that are very interested in helping. It was really a pleasure to be part of a Government that spent \$415,000 to get a new facility for Osborne House after the dilly-dallying that had gone on with the former Government.

That is just the beginning, that does not count the renovations. It does not count the money that will be coming from Family Services. I am really pleased to be able to say our Government has moved and moved quickly on issues that pertain to family violence. We also have bought a house—actually it is an apartment building I believe—for the Ikwe-Widdjiitiwin for Native women, so they would have a shelter for Native women. That is where, of course, we are going to put the toll-free crisis line in when they are ready to accept it.

* (1510)

We really appreciate, at the same time, mentioning the work that Clinic has done in taking over the line in an interim fashion and being very patient until these two projects got off the ground, because no matter what has been said by Members of the Opposition, you could not move on these lines until both of these places, Osborne House and Ikwe, were prepared and ready to accept them in their new buildings. In the fall, we are very hopeful that they will both get off the ground.

The other area we were able to move on last year was the grant to the Immigrant Women's Association for counselling services. That was for \$147,800.00.

These are all areas that this Government has moved on so far. I cannot be more pleased to be a part of the Government that has been so sensitive to women's issues. I am really pleased to be able to take part in this Budget Debate and to be part of a Government that has been able to manage their resources so well that we are—

An Honourable Member: Good Government, good Government.

Mrs. Hammond: Right—that we are able to give a two-point cut in the income tax rate, which was sorely needed by Manitobans, that the Manitoba tax reduction for each dependent child will be increased from \$50 to \$250 this year, just a wonderful increase. It is going to be such a help to the people of Manitoba.

I cannot imagine why the Opposition Party would think of opposing a Budget that was offering this kind of help to Manitobans, that the reduction for each disabled dependent over 18 will increase to \$250—

An Honourable Member: Think on what you do or what you are about to do.

Mrs. Hammond: Repent—that the payroll tax reduction is worth \$24 million. These are all a help to Manitobans, so that not only will they have more money in their

pockets but we believe they are better spenders of their money than Government is. I think it is time the Opposition recognized that. So instead of asking for more money for absolutely everything, take into consideration what this Government has been able to do in the short time that it has been power. I really am genuinely pleased to be part of a Government that can bring in a Budget like this, and the Fiscal Stabilization Fund which so many of them are downgrading.

Who, in their right mind, would not put money away so that when hard times might come you can cushion the blow for people? Do we not do this every day? This is what I call a savings account. Do we not all do that in our daily life? Do we not tell our children to save, so that when something happens they are going to have some money that they can help cushion any kind of blow that comes along?

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Creative accounting.

Mrs. Hammond: The Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) calls it creative accounting. Is that what he calls it at home when he has a savings account and he is putting money away for a rainy day? Sure you do. If you have a mortgage, you do borrow money and you have it. So you do have a savings account. I think that this is a welcomed change.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mrs. Hammond: Thank you. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really have been very pleased to be able to speak on the Budget. I would like to now just say a few words about some of the things we are doing. It was mentioned earlier in my speech on the Civil Service Commission, and that is that the affirmative action initiative which is the Executive Development Program for which women will have a chance to move into senior positions, that it will provide women at senior professional and/or middle-management levels with the necessary development, training and work experience that will enable them to compete for senior executive management positions within Government.

Also, that Native persons, persons with disabilities and visible minorities are the groups most underrepresented in the Civil Service. If employment equity is to become a reality, we need to take corrective measures to increase the representation of these underrepresented groups. This objective will be assisted by the new focus given to the existing Civil Service Career Development Program. The latest offering of the program was restricted to current civil servants. I am now opening up this program to Natives, persons with disabilities and visible minorities outside of the Civil Service. It will provide selected candidates with training and development experiences that will help to prepare them for management positions within the Civil Service.

The success of the Affirmative Action Program is measured by results. I will continue to request from the Civil Service Commission regular affirmative action

reports to ensure that departments are making progress in accordance with our Government's affirmative action comments.- (Interjection)- My goodness, I am hearing some remarks coming from the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) and I am sure I am going to hear more.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for having this opportunity to speak to the Budget Debate. I would hope all Members would consider supporting this Budget, because I think it is a real boon to Manitobans to at last have some tax cuts and have an opportunity to spend their own money.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to rise to lend some thoughtful comment onto this Budget. I recall, and it has been recalled many times and put onto the record on our behalf and on the behalf of others as well, that when the Budget Speech was read there were reactions on this side that looked just a little bit, and I think if I quote the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) correctly, "ashen faced" because on the surface the Budget looks excellent and on the surface I have to admit tax cuts are like the meringue on a lemon pie, excellent. I mean, it looks appetizing.

I think that, essentially, if we focus only on that aspect of the Budget, we never bother taking on the other aspects of this particular Budget, and that is what I wish to focus on now. In fact, when the Members opposite actually started to speak to the Budget, they were cackling with glee and they were rubbing their hands because they thought they had us in a box. Actually, -(Interjection)- I hear a word from my side here suggesting that what they were displaying was arrogance and I have to concur, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was arrogant.

But continuing a little bit further on, I think after our Leader spoke and made her response to the Budget, I heard the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) from his seat shout out, "What is it with these Liberals, can they not even draft a non-confidence motion?" He expected a non-confidence motion. Obviously that is what he would have done, had he been in our place. He would have automatically, without thinking any further, drafted a non-confidence motion and he would have spoken about this. He would have ranted and there would have been rhetoric laid out as to why.

Members opposite have long since complained that basically the Liberal Opposition is not really behaving as they would like it to behave. I mean, they do not do this, they do not do that. They criticize, they study, they just apparently are not doing as is anticipated. One thing we did not do as anticipated was we did not automatically come up with a non-confidence motion because the word at hand was to study this document, because remember that sweetheart part of the tax cuts. That is what we had to look at because you need to examine something like this in some detail.

We had talked about the Throne Speech the week before. It was essentially a hollow document, and we expected that if there was to be any substance to what this Government was to do it should be in the Budget, and consequently we were going to look at it. Now,

while we were looking, what did we have to resort to? What happened from Members opposite—personal attacks. I have never heard such personal attacks, vindictiveness. I mean, the actual—simply people putting onto the record comments that I would have thought should not be heard within this particular Chamber. One would have thought that the debate should be to the issue, but instead we have this invective, we have personal attack, and essentially also—and I recall particularly the Minister of Natural Resources' (Mr. Enns) advice, advice that we on this side should support the Budget. Do not vote against the Budget because if you vote against the Budget you will rue the day, because essentially what we had to do was support the Government because that was what the Budget should have meant.

* (1520)

To put some weight to these words, I will just simply refer to the words of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) where he referred to the NDP Opposition Members in this House supported the Budget last year, the departments of Government, so that was their way of candidly supporting the levels of expenditure within all the areas of programming. In other words, if we support, we cannot do our job. Basically, to do the job properly we have to analyze, and that is what we did.

One of the things that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) did was he waxed biblical, and he suggested with his advice that we should be very careful. I would like to simply recall in the same vein that when advice was given back in the Garden of Eden, when the serpent was tempting Eve, the advice was, "follow my advice and you will be guided appropriately."

We have to be careful by the Members in this House that we do not presume too much when we give advice, because we all know what was the punishment for that serpent. That serpent was essentially told from that time on to crawl on its belly, never to walk on its legs or to stand up or whatever. It was always to be punished in that respect. That is what we have to focus on when we take the advice coming from the other side.—(Interjection)— Absolutely, and it is this actually, this business, the fact that we have to look carefully to do our job well that brings me to the heart of my address.

Actually, to begin this response here, I wish to actually utilize the conclusion that I was not able to put onto the record when I was debating the Throne Speech because I had exceeded my time. I thought at that time I would never have a chance to use this particular conclusion again, but after having looked at the Budget document I realize that it serves now as a very good introduction because the focus of what my Budget criticisms are is on the aspect of good management.

How does this Government and this Government's agenda, and now its Budget, affect my constituency? I would like to just simply respond briefly to the Member for Lac du Bonnet's (Mr. Praznik) comment when he said he could not understand how anybody could not support the Throne Speech, which at that time was a hollow document enough, and now of course the Budget

Speech, he is taking comments from our 1988 Throne Speech as his guideline. When we supported the Throne Speech, we again essentially lost our teeth because we were told constantly, "You supported the agenda, how can you criticize"?

We cannot accept that on this side because our system works on a strong Opposition. Oppositions, by definition, oppose. Historically, if we recall, when Oppositions were first permitted in the at that time monarchy system, the Oppositions were called Loyal because obviously when you criticize Government that is not a very good thing to do. This heresy somehow had to be excused and consequently it was mandated in the British system under the Loyal Opposition.

Oppositions oppose to keep Government honest. They point out problems, they point out areas that have been overlooked, they indicate mistakes. In order to do this properly, you need to be passionate, else there is no substance to your Opposition. If a Government cannot survive this particular exercise, then obviously it is time to fall because Governments are not defeated, they defeat themselves. When the Opposition is stronger, whether that Opposition is in here or the Opposition is out there, they will be defeated. They defeat themselves.

I would be reneging on my commitment to my constituents in order to represent them effectively if I was delinquent in my role as a Member in this Assembly in Opposition, and it is that Opposition that I intend to underscore. Perhaps when you are in Government you have a different role, but in the Opposition benches you must oppose. You must point out the weaknesses. I can represent my constituents in no better way than to keep Government honest.

If I recalled some of the previous comments in the Throne Speech Debate, I think that the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) said, and he used his hand to gesture to the Government benches, that those Members were temporary custodians, indicating that they were soon to be relegated back to the Opposition benches. I think it would be wise for us not to presume on that comment as much as to reflect upon the entire message of that epithet.

We, the lawmakers in this province, are the temporary custodians. Whether you are in Opposition, whether you are in Government, the whole of us 57 are the temporary custodians. It is the system of Government, the bureaucracy, the Civil Service which is the part of Government that endures, and this is the part of the Government that also needs to be kept very honest. You do this largely through the Public Accounts Committee.

The Public Accounts Committee evaluates how well the system of Government works for the taxpayers of Manitoba. Do the taxpayers get value for their money? This committee has the responsibility to determine whether the bureaucracy in Government departments, the public service—and we all work for the same master in this instance—is actually doing what it is mandated to do. We are all here to do what is best for the people. Our watchword should be "principle and ideals," not political expediency.

The Public Accounts Committee can be a very effective vehicle to guarantee good Government for all our constituents, and it is the role on this side of the House to keep that side there honest. In heated debate and with critical comment, tempers can flare and issues can become sidetracked, positions can become muddy, but at a time away from this Chamber it is this Legislative Assembly that keeps the Government honest. At least, that is what it could do with a bit of change in the rules governing how the Public Accounts Committee works.

I make this promise to my constituents. It is my intention to press for such change. It is time we in Government realize—and to the people in Manitoba, I underscore all 57 of us are in Government—that the whole bureaucracy serves the same master as we do. Only they endure while we are ephemeral, just a passing fancy.

We owe it to our electorate that the Civil Service, once again, becomes a public service and that Government serves the people that it was implemented to serve. As politicians, it is our role to interface, to explain, to convince. We have the vision, and in us the people have placed their trust. All 57 of us must ensure that the system we have created delivers and does not, by its own systematic and bureaucratic establishment, undo what we have been elected to uphold.

I can recall, in an address made by the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) referring to the Public Accounts Committee, that a remark was tossed across the floor again, I recall not now by whom, that essentially we are the chair, that the Opposition chairs this committee and therefore we should be calling it. I have attempted to do so. I wish to place on record that in this House the Government calls all committees and it is this change, or this is one aspect of the Public Accounts Committee's mandate that I would like this House to amend, because we have much responsibility and in this particular responsibility of the actual examination of Government, and I am not talking about the political aspect of Government that belongs in this Chamber, but the actual delivery of the system of Government as done by the departments, by the public service, needs to be examined elsewhere. That is something we could change with an amendment by the Rules Committee.

Continuing in my address, frequently herein, the Liberals have been accused of being power hungry. I would like to suggest that is not the case. The Liberals have been accused of being arrogant. I, once again, would like to suggest that is not the case. We are told we are going to bring down the Government if we vote against the Budget and, once again, that is not the case.

If we look back a year and a half or so, the Tories wanted power so desperately they brought down the Government which led to this particular situation we have today.

* (1530)

An Honourable Member: It was your Leader's vote.

Mr. Herold Driedger: I hear a comment it was our Leader's vote that did this. I doubt so, I doubt so. I think the Members of the Second Opposition Party would probably take issue with that. No, the Government of 1988 was brought down but the people opposite did not know why. They had no agenda.

Now, continuing as to why I say that if we vote against the Budget, this will not bring down the Government because we have here another Party in this House that has indicated it is going to support the Government, that it is propping up the Government. Now that I consider arrogance, that is absolute arrogance, the fact that they here who sit and say we oppose, we reject, we criticize, but then they turn around and say, yes, slap you on the shoulder, we are not going to vote against you. This to me is arrogance.

An Honourable Member: That is power hungry.

Mr. Herold Driedger: I hear the word "power hungry." I would like to put that onto the record as well. They are power hungry. Obviously, the Second Opposition Party could not accept the repudiation by the people. There was no agenda in the Throne Speech in '89, yet the NDP supported it.

The Budget itself which was introduced last week singles out tax cuts and returns, in the terms of the Finance Minister, \$200 million to the people of Manitoba, actually to Government Cabinet control, a kind of a Jobs Fund, if I might be able to coin the phrase, a kind of fiscal responsibility fund. Cabinet will decide what to do about the area of fiscal good management or which area of fiscal good management needs a public relations boost, and consequently will see to it that it gets it.

The Second Opposition are voting to cut the very same taxes they raised in the Kostyra tax grab. What has happened to change their minds? Has the economy changed so dramatically from one year to the other that they can now vote for cutting the very taxes that they said were to be increased? To answer that question we actually have to focus on why did they actually raise those taxes two years ago and one year ago? The answers were, there is a large uncontrollable deficit. The answer was debt management, the answer was external interest costs, the answer was get Government spending back into control because Government spending was out of control.

What has changed? Are they so enamoured of the Progressive Conservative policy now? Is everything rosy? If everything is rosy and they wish to participate in this particular action, why not cross the floor en masse? Formalize the marriage, put the spectre of election, if such it is—because some of us here relish, others fear. I will let the record decide later as to who relishes and who fears the election. Put the spectre of election far away. You may as well. The \$61 million returned to the taxpayer by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is roughly equivalent to the \$60 million tax grab introduced by Mr. Kostyra. But today, the NDP favours the Tory position of then. So do us a favour, stop playing with the fears of Manitoba, formalize this, live no more in sin, do the honourable thing, consummate the marriage.

Why—because obviously we are going to go through this exercise again—are we here on this side looking at this Budget as critically as we are? Why are we on this side looking past the tax cuts, past the popularity of the tax cuts, and I must admit that it is a popular measure? Why are we not in favour of the Budget? Is it good management when you are out of step with the rest of the country?

Now, Mr. Wilson, when he introduced the federal Budget, raised taxes, spending was down, the other provinces in this country are doing the same thing, they are introducing tough Budgets. In some terms, it is draconian. The watchwords we are asked to accept—and we were listening to these watchwords for the two months prior to the introduction of the federal Budget—the watchwords were constraint, the watchword was retrench, the watchword was limit, curtail, economize. We must practice restraint, we have to dig into our pockets, we must cut the deficit, the taxpayer must bite the bullet.

What is happening in Manitoba? What has happened here to make the Budget come out to be such a singularly different document than everywhere else in the country, not only everywhere else in the country but other parts of the world as well, because we hear about draconian budgets in the USSR, we talk about tough times in Poland, we have the same thing in the United States.

Is the underlying structural problem that is facing those countries and the other provinces of this country no longer with us? Are we no longer faced with that same problem? Are we living in some form of nirvana, some form of heaven so that this Budget that we have here can be introduced to be exactly as it is? Has this Government opposite here done something so different? Let us look at the figures, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In the 1988 defeated Budget introduced by the NDP, mining revenues were listed at being \$27 million or \$28 million. In the 1988 Budget introduced by the Tories, the mining revenues were \$117 million, and in this Budget they are \$180 million. Now what has happened to so suddenly skew that number? What is more to the point, what will happen when the numbers go back to what they normally were, because we then have a difference of \$150 million to \$155 million? Have the Tories really done something different? Has anything underlying been changed?

We are told that the average—well, I am not saying we are not told. I have looked at the past Budgets and looked at the average equalization payments and the numbers were roughly corresponding somewhere between \$600 million and \$700 million. But because the Ontario economy is so wildly out of sync with the rest of the country, they are doing so well compared to the rest of the country that is doing so badly, particularly Manitoba, we had an unexpected windfall of \$200 million. The rest of the economy is still the same.

* (1540)

Can we count on this excess revenue, this excess windfall, to stay? The answer is no, and the Finance

Minister (Mr. Manness) did reference that, because the Ontario economy is beginning to cool down. Long-range nickel prices are beginning to fall. Right now, while the nickel prices are so high, I, as any manager of a nickel mine, will not be mining high-grade ore but rather the most expensive, the most difficult-to-get-at ore, the lowest rate ore because, the price being so high, I can actually justify taking out the lowest-cost ore.

What does that do to my profit margin if I mine the most expensive ore? It starts to lower my profit margin and consequently the revenues that will accrue to the Government of Manitoba will start to fall. The Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) did reference that as well. They will return to normal and we will be back to what we had before this whole skew in the budgetary revenues occurred. We will be back to \$450 million deficits.

We may find at that time that the tax cuts may have been irresponsible, because then tax increases will be necessary. We may not. Taxes go up, taxes come down, taxes go up. The people beyond this building experience a reality slightly different from ours, a reality that tends to be less concerned with the things we talk about in here, tend to be disillusioned by the machinations of politicians. They tend to be disillusioned because they see much of what is done in this building. Much of what is done by politicians is done largely to make political points, to score points. They essentially have no trust.

Why do they not have this trust? The answer should likely be why, because what has this Government done with this windfall that it has just received? It is using it to mask what would still be a whopping deficit, which is the underlying structure. We have this blip. It comes in. The underlying structure is still the same. Nothing has changed. How are they doing it? By changing accounting convention.

The last Budget we were asked to examine in this Chamber in August of 1988 gave us figures which showed projected expenditures compared to the preliminary actual previous year results. These numbers are available to us now. Page 11 of the Financial Statistics clearly shows in a column that the preliminary actual number is there in its gross form. You do not get that number unless you have the individual numbers to add up to get to that total. We have the preliminary actual numbers available, but what are we asked to compare in this House? We are asked to compare the Budget estimates of the previous year to the Budget estimates of the next year.

Based upon this comparison of Budget to Budget, the estimated expenditures will increase only 4.5 percent. This is a number well within reason. It keeps within inflation and it substantiates the sham claims that the Government is actually controlling costs. That means it is responsible Government. That means they are demonstrating good management, but the actual expenditure that is planned will increase over 6 percent, that is, when you compare the planned expenditures against the preliminary actual figures.

We cannot actually show what happens to individual departments because we have not been given that documentation, so I ask you, is this responsible? We

could use some of that excess revenue to kick-start some programs. We could use some of that extra revenue to underwrite and support some valuable programs that are floundering now, but instead it is hidden. Changing accounting convention to make yourself look good is politics, not good management. That is one reason why the people beyond this Chamber tend to doubt what we do and tend not to trust what we do in this Chamber.

What has Government actually done with the windfall? They have created a phantom account, a rainy-day savings account which the preliminary actual shows the Government as actually having a \$48 million surplus. The Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) indicated that what should be done is, when you have excess revenues, and I will quote, "I am sure the Member for Niakwa and his own family maintain a savings account there to be dipped into on a rainy day." I wish to assure the Member that this is true. If there is extra revenue, we definitely do put it into a savings account.

Where do I see the \$48 million that was actually declared surplus into the savings account as a \$48 million item? It is not there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What actually is there is a number that has become \$200 million. Now that \$200 million is actually correspondingly equivalent to the revenue that was the windfall revenues that were earned. What has happened to this fund? What has actually happened to those windfall revenues? We are told that the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) borrowed money to create a \$200 million—and I would like to put into quotation marks because this is for the NDP "jobs creation" and for the Tories "fiscal responsibility slush fund" to be manipulated by Cabinet as needed.

Now, when it is manipulated by the Cabinet as needed, that sounds to me that is political. That is not good management. How much money has been borrowed?

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Sounds blatantly political politics.

Mr. Herold Driedger: The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says, "blatantly political." I actually was going to refer to that later on in my conclusions.

How much money has actually been borrowed and at what rate? The \$200 million fund and the \$48 million surplus and you take the difference is \$152 million, which the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) says has been turned into some long-term funding or long-term borrowing. When questioned by our Finance Critic (Mr. Alcock) as to the cost of this, the answer was that there was no cost, nothing at all. Now this to me is misleading. Either it is there as borrowed money and therefore has costs, or it is not. If it is there, it will cost. There will be a cost figure. If it is not there, then what happened to the money?

On page 5 of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund in the budgetary document, we find out that the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) indicates that in the next year, '89-90, he anticipates a \$20 million interest on this \$200 million fund. Now that is strictly 10 percent interest

on a simple savings account. Ten percent interest does not indicate to me long-term borrowing. You do not borrow money at 10 percent in a long term. This sounds to me like financial prestidigitation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Prestidigitation, for the Member for Churchill's (Mr. Cowan) benefit, is—

An Honourable Member: Spell it.

Mr. Herold Driedger: I will not spell it. I will let Hansard spell it, but I will define it. It is called magic. It is called the shell game. It is called moving things back and forth.

The Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) used a biblical injunction in his response to the Budget Debate. He said, "fill warehouses and good years and save these goods in the warehouses for the tough times." Now this argument would be perfectly acceptable if the excess revenue was actually saved. But what were the excess revenues actually used for? I maintain that the excess revenues were used to lower taxes by \$61 million. The excess revenues were used to reduce the deficit on paper from what it was predicted to be in the 1989 Budget year—I believe it is on page 1 of the Budget document—somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$150 million to the anticipated 84.

The difference again, that has to come from somewhere. Either you have the money there or you do not. You reduce the deficit, so this money was used up. But how then was the fund created? It had to be borrowed money. As I said before, if this fund exists, it has a cost and, if it has a cost, there is a cost item. Therefore, we should be able to examine the accrued interest that is anticipated from this fund. So I ask, which warehouse, how full and what is the rent?

Back to the savings account comment made by the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), if you have a dollar and you have it to save, you put it into an account. The dollar is there to spend or to leave, but the dollar exists. If you take that dollar and you buy something for a dollar, the dollar is gone, but you cannot do both. You can do one or the other.

* (1550)

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, based upon this careful crafting of a budgetary document to demonstrate good management by changing accounting conventions, by creating phantom accounts, I cannot support the budgetary plans of this Government.

I like the tax cuts but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this underlying flimflam, this sting operation designed to make the Government look good, I cannot support that because you see this whole budgetary exercise is an exercise in playing politics. The Minister of Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Mitchelson) would use the term if I may quote, "blatant politics." This Budget document is simply an election Budget. Look at the tax cuts.

We have a creation of a phony account which is going to allow, by graphical depiction, show that the deficit is going to be going down from the extreme high in page 1 of the Financial Statistics of over \$500 million in '86-87, dropping to about \$290 million in '87-88,

and then dropping again and then dropping again and dropping again, logical nice steps to indicate good management based upon this phony account, borrowing from the account to lift up the deficit to demonstrate it is not as good as it was, or not as bad as it could be, when in actuality what this Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) should show is a \$48 million surplus in this last year, a \$48 million surplus based upon his own numbers. Now this number, if you take a look at high deficit surplus—and next year because everything else is going to go back to normal, back to high deficit again—would not look too good for a Government because it would seem to demonstrate there was little control, that it had little choice.

Now this would be honest but it would not be good politics. Consequently, we have a Government that is showing not good management, not good judgment in creating this, and if I may use again, financial prestidigitation. I would not be representing the interests of my constituents well if I voted to support this Government. Therefore, I will let the constituents, according to the Minister of Finance, also make that determination come election time. With that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rest my case.

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

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): It just goes to show, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all comes to those who wait. I appreciate that applause, as belated and as hesitant as it may have been.

I welcome this opportunity to speak to this Budget, and at the same time to address some of the comments that others have made during the debate. Before doing so however, firstly, I want to clearly indicate that I will be voting to support this Budget because I favour the tax breaks for families that it contains. Earlier I was of the impression the Liberals supported those tax breaks but were going to vote against the Budget in any event, making certain that they did not happen if they had their way. But just having listened to the Member for Niakwa, the Opposition Critic for Northern Affairs (Mr. Herold Driedger), I heard him say something which is somewhat different from that which I have heard before. He said that they do not know if those tax breaks are a good idea or not.

If you listened carefully to what he said, he said that they were not certain those tax breaks were the appropriate tax policy at this particular time. So I now know that not only are they voting against the Budget for a whole number of reasons, which I want to talk about a bit later, but they do at least have some hesitancy at the very least some reservations about whether or not the tax breaks are an appropriate tax policy at the present time.

Mr. Herold Driedger: On a point of order.

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

Mr. Herold Driedger: Mr. Deputy Speaker, before we allow this confusion as indicated by the Member for

Churchill (Mr. Cowan) to continue any further, I would like to correct the confusion that he is sowing by indicating that he, himself, voted for the same tax increases that the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) is cutting back, so let us not talk about whether these taxes are right or not and actually not put words into my mouth.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A dispute of the facts is not a point of order.

The Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has the floor.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in response to that non-point of order, I want to make three statements. I want to quote three of my colleagues in this House over time. The first was the previous Member for Niakwa who said in Opposition you cannot have it both ways. It is interesting to see that the Liberals are trying to build upon that somewhat questionable approach but are indeed trying to have it both ways during their comments on this Budget Debate.

Secondly, I want to quote. I am going to have some difficulty with the seat but we all know who I am talking about when I quote the Liberal Member who used to stand up last Session all the time and say, "Whoop, there he goes again." I want to put that quote in the particular context of what my Leader (Mr. Doer) said the other day when he referred to them as "wishy-washy Liberals, there they go again." In essence, they do want to have it both ways and continuously try to do so.

I also support the increased taxes for corporations, such as they are in this Budget. To be quite frank, I do not believe that the Budget goes far enough in either direction. I do not believe that it goes far enough in providing tax breaks to Manitoba's families and to Manitoba working people. I do not believe it goes far enough in undoing the imbalance between taxation on corporations and taxation on individuals, but I hope that by voting for this particular Budget the Government will take note in the future and go even further with tax breaks for working families and more responsible taxation for mining companies and large corporations.

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

It should also be clear that voting for this Budget is not a blanket endorsement of the Budget and the Estimates.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): You want it both ways.

Mr. Cowan: Well, the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) says that I want it both ways. I will come back to that point because it is his Leader and he and Members of his caucus who have suggested that if they vote for this Budget they cannot, therefore, criticize the Budget or the Estimates in the future. I will attempt to show him later on in my comments how that is not only illogical, but it is contradictory and it borders on hypocrisy, at least for the Leader of the Opposition who has made statements in this House in the past which should be referred to during these comments.

I also believe that there are many areas where this Budget falls short. I guess overall in my perception, if I had to categorize the Budget as something, to give it a name, to give it a title, I would call it a lost opportunity Budget. It is a lost opportunity Budget because the Government could have gone a lot further with the financial flexibility that it is experiencing in the current year.

It could have provided greater tax breaks. It could have given even larger tax breaks to working families. It could have evened out the tax burden on middle-income Manitobans. It could have put more money into programs and policies that deal with the needs of Manitobans. It could have done that had it chosen to do so in this Budget and the Estimates to follow.

I want to speak to the issue of lost opportunities from a more philosophical perspective for a moment or two, and I do so from a vantage point of both experience and detachment, experience that flows from six years as a Minister in a Cabinet and the detachment that comes from this last year in Opposition and being able to stand back a bit and review and reflect upon that which we did as a Government, as well as that which we did not do.

With that backdrop in place, I want to offer some unsolicited but constructive advice to the Conservative Government of the Day, and they can do with it as they will. They can accept it and reflect upon it or they can ignore it. I do not even say they ignore it at their own peril. It is just one person's perception of what a lost opportunity means in the longer term.

* (1600)

We have to start off with a premise. The premise is that there is no perfect Government. Like the predecessors of the present Government, the NDP Government itself was not a perfect Government. There really is no such animal as that perfect utopian Government. If a Government accepts that thought that is inherent in them being a Government, from the beginning, if it acknowledges the fact that it is indeed imperfect, it also must acknowledge the fact that it will make mistakes because what is being imperfect other than making mistakes from time to time?

If that is the case, it should determine at the beginning of its term not only that which it hopes to accomplish, but also where it is willing to make those inevitable mistakes. That only stands to reason. The Government cannot choose not to err. If it cannot make that choice, at least not in a rational way, it should take the time to choose how it will err and where. That is an important consideration for any Government. I believe that the fear of making mistakes and the fear of failure will set the tone and shape the agenda of any Government just as much, if not more, than their campaign promises, their public agenda, their statements, and their proactive plans.

More importantly, as time passes and any Government learns in the harshest and the cruellest way that mistakes can be very costly, that mistakes can rapidly diminish their political currency, that mistakes can cause them more grief than they ever

imagined, that mistakes can stop them from doing the things that they really want to do by consuming their time and energy and distracting them from their public agenda, they invariably try to spend more time avoiding mistakes than they do trying to make things happen.

If one looks back upon the progression of Governments and political Parties while in power, one will see them come to power with a fairly aggressive agenda and they will make a lot of mistakes because they are doing things. They are trying to make things happen. They are trying to change things to suit what they believe to be the better society. But over time, after having made those mistakes and paying the consequences and the price of those mistakes, they develop a siege mentality. We have heard that term quite often. We have heard different Governments referenced to within the context of that term. They do less and less that is innovative so as to minimize the risk of making more mistakes. They tend to spend more time on protecting their flanks than reaching out to the people who elected them to serve them. They tend to become more and more withdrawn and less and less active and less and less functional as a Government.

Now, I said this advice was constructive. To make certain that it is taken as such, I want to clearly indicate that these remarks are not meant to be critical of any one Government at any given time. I believe they are indicative of all Governments from time to time. I believe they apply equally at one time or another to every Government regardless of its political stripe, regardless of the Members of that Government and their abilities or lack of abilities, regardless of the public agenda and the philosophical approach which that Government brings to office.

So I am not being critical of one Government or another. I am not being critical solely of this Government. I guess I am being critical in a way though of the system. If I am critical of anything at all, I am critical of a system that focuses more on mistakes than it does on accomplishment. When I express that criticism, it is also self-criticism. We are all at fault in that regard. We are at fault as members of the general public. The public pays more attention to the mistakes Government makes than to the achievements Governments make.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair.)

The media, reflecting the public will, does the same. Mistakes are front-page stories. Achievements and accomplishments are featured much less prominently and, when you are in Government benches, you would even say buried in the back pages, the inside pages, page 12, page 13, page 14, with not quite the same media flair or prominence that those mistakes Governments invariably make are featured.

I said I would be somewhat self-critical, and in that vein so are Opposition Parties and Opposition Members to blame by being much more quick in their criticism than they are generous in their praise. I guess that is part of the system where we combat each other on a daily basis in this House, but I believe it also leads to the type of situation where Governments are able to less serve the public than they would like to because

of fear of making mistakes. The Opposition Parties and Opposition Members—and I number myself among them—are to blame as well, so the odds are stacked against any Government right from the start. From the moment it is elected, the trend starts that will ensure that over the period of its term it will become less and less active, less and less innovative.

Then of course when I said we were all at fault, the Government is at fault as well, because the Government proceeds to compound the problems by trying to hide its mistakes, thereby making them a much more valued commodity and a sought-after prize. Worse yet, it seeks to avoid mistakes at all costs, even at the risk of making the most regrettable mistake of all, and that is the mistake of not doing something that should be done, that needs to be done, that they should want to do, for fear of making a mistake.

I guess when I look back on our own term and my own tenure as a Cabinet Minister, it is not the mistakes that we and I made that I regret the most, not the mistakes that happened when we were trying to change society for the better, trying to help people—and we did make mistakes in those efforts—but what I regret the most is what we did not get done, what we did not accomplish, what we did not have either the wherewithal or the time or the energy or the courage to carry forward with when we saw a need. If I had it to do over again, which I do not believe I personally will but I hope my Party does, my advice to them from that position of experience and detachment would be not to fear the mistakes so much as to fear regretting in the end not having done something that should have been done.

I make these points in the context of a lost opportunity Budget. I do so because of that reflection that I mentioned earlier. I will support the passage of this Budget because it offers tax breaks to working families. It is not such a bad Budget in other areas to the extent that it should be defeated but, like the Government that wrote it, the Budget is not perfect. It falls short in several areas.

Those tax breaks, while positive, could have gone further. I think the Government should have seized the opportunity of the day to make them go further. Again in hindsight—I reinforce this point because I am trying to provide constructive advice and I hope it is well taken—it is not the mistakes we made as a Government that caused me as much regret as do those things that we wanted to do but failed to accomplish because we did not take aggressive action to do so or we unexpectedly ran out of time.

I reinforce that point because I believe that if the Government truly wants to offer more tax breaks to working families, if it truly wants to correct the imbalance between corporate taxes and personal taxes, if it truly wants to offer better services and programs, it should take every opportunity, including this Budget, that it has to do so. Again the regret is because we did not take aggressive action to do what we wanted to do or we unexpectedly ran out of time.

Those are two important points. Any Government can easily lose opportunities because it fails to act or because its time runs out.

* (1610)

The first point is important in the context of a Conservative Government, and here I am going to focus my criticism a bit more sharply. Conservative Governments traditionally, philosophically are less prone to progressive action than they are to protecting the status quo. That is an historical fact. That is one that is, I believe, not disputable at all.

The second point is most important when a Government does not command a working majority and can fall unexpectedly at any time. Such is the case with this Government. Believe me when I say, I say so again from experience, that a Government can fall unexpectedly at any given time. When that happens, there is no second chance to go back and do the things that one should have done. There is lots of time to reflect but there is no opportunity to take and change the course of history by being pro-active and innovative.

So in the context of this Budget, the Conservatives should have gone further in their taxation of mining companies at a time when those companies are making hundreds of millions of dollars in windfall profits. The Government could have chosen to return some of their own windfall revenues as a result of that and other taxation changes to Manitobans through increased services or through decreased fees, rather than play fiscal games with an unnecessary Stabilization Fund.

As a Party, the New Democratic Party will want to see how that fund is structured and how it is implemented before making final judgment on it. In the meantime, my colleagues and I will be identifying areas where we believe the money that is being diverted, and I underscore the word diverted. The rainy-day Stabilization Fund could be better spent on providing needed services and programs that are desperately required right now. It is nice to have a rainy-day fund, but when the roof is leaking you get up there and you fix the roof even if you have to dig into your savings to do that, because not to do so means you are going to suffer increased costs over a longer period of time. That is our criticism with the Stabilization Fund. We will want to see how it is structured. We will want to see how it is implemented before making a final judgment on it.

There are also several cutbacks or lost opportunities in the spending plans of the Government that are outlined in the Estimates that accompany the Budget. During the upcoming review of the Conservative spending plans, we will be critical, as will other Opposition Members, of any cutbacks of needed services or any refusal by the Government to provide adequate funding for necessary programs and services. For example, we will not support the suggestion by the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) that we lessen the already too weak taxation on their Conservative friends, the banks. We just will not do that. We are critical of the fact that this Budget ignored the plight of thousands of Manitoba men and women who are unemployed and consequently are facing increasingly difficult times as the jobless rate increases under this Conservative Government.

As a northern MLA, I am especially critical of the Conservative Government cutbacks of nearly \$1 million

in the Department of Northern Affairs. Those cutbacks, while not unexpected given the history and the traditional approach of the Conservatives to the North, are particularly troubling given that they come at a time when that same Government in that very same Budget that cuts back Northern Affairs funding, increases funding to the Department of Urban Affairs by \$3 million and increases funding to the Department of Rural Development, which includes the municipal development functions, by almost \$4 million more. It brings back memories of the Sterling Lyon days—shades of the Lyon years.

Mr. Connery: A great Premier.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) says "great Premier." The point I want to make is that the Member for Portage sincerely believes that. At least, I am led to believe that he sincerely believes that Sterling Lyon was a great Premier. Many of the people in the front benches and the second benches, who are now making decisions, sat in the Sterling Lyon Government when it cut back programs, jobs and services in northern Manitoba.

So while many years may have passed since the North suffered so under the Lyon Government, this Budget clearly shows, as did the comment from his seat by the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) just one moment ago, that the Conservatives still hold true to that Lyon philosophy that so wreaked havoc upon the North.

They increased funding to the City of Winnipeg through the Department of Urban Affairs. They increased funding to rural towns, cities and villages through the Department of Rural Development while they cut funding to Northern Affairs' communities. I fear what might have happened to northern Manitoba if the Conservatives were not in a minority situation. I believe we would have seen full-scale cutbacks, a full return to the days of Sterling Lyon in the cutbacks, just like we saw from 1977 to 1981 under the Lyon Conservatives.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Learn to trust people.

Mr. Cowan: Well, the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) says, learn to trust people. Yes, indeed, learn to trust people, but what they say must also resonate with what they do and what they have done. While this Government, if we were to trust only their words, would appear sympathetic to the North by its actions and by its history, it is clearly unsympathetic to the North. So we are critical of those cutbacks.

We are also critical of the cutbacks, grants and subsidies of low-income homeowners and renters which are contained in the Estimates. We condemn the cuts to the landlord and tenant affairs that will invariably weaken tenant powers and strengthen the position of landlords and land developers over that of tenants and low-income homeowners. So there are those things and other things of which we will be critical over a period of time.

I want to return for a moment to the earlier comments from the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) from his

seat, when he suggested that perhaps we should explain more fully why it is we feel we can vote for a Budget, vote for the tax breaks and still be critical of cutbacks. One has to have some basis against which to judge that action, so we go back to some of the things that the Liberals have done in the past because they seem to be most critical of this approach.

Unlike the Liberals, we do not relinquish our right to be critical of those parts of this Budget that deserve criticism just because we vote in favour of the tax breaks in this Budget for Manitoba working families. They criticize that approach, their excuse for their voting against tax breaks. Let there be no doubt about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when they stand up in this House in a few days hence they will be standing alone in their voting against tax breaks for Manitoba families. They will be alone in attempting to stop Manitoba families from receiving those benefits. I think some of them are understandably nervous about what they are about to do and so they attempt to explain what they are doing by making excuses. The excuse that they use is, if they vote for the Budget, they will be unable to criticize later on the other parts of the Budget and the Estimates process.

Now you know, it is funny that sort of logic did not apply to them when they voted for the Cattle Producers' Association Bill, voted in favour of it but were critical of some of the aspects of it, said that it was not a perfect Bill and in fact, like this Budget, it was not a perfect Bill. They had no difficulty at that time in voting for what they thought was right but reserving the right to criticize what they thought in detail was wrong in that particular document, a document very much similar to a budget, provides an intent of what the Government wanted to do. They had no difficulty when the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) was a sole Liberal Member in this House, in voting for the amendments to the Human Rights Code but at the same time saying that there were certain aspects of it that needed improvement. They were in favour of it but they reserved the right to be critical of certain parts of it.

I assume they did that because they found some feature of those Bills, and there are other examples that we can use, so redeeming that they said, we are going to overlook the problems that we have in order to support what we believe is a positive change. What is different about that and a New Democratic Party Opposition saying, we are going to vote for tax breaks for Manitoba's working families and for increased taxes for mining companies, because we believe those are positive changes to the tax structure today, and at the same time say we are critical of details in the spending Estimates and critical of details in the Budget—absolutely no difference whatsoever.

So if we were to follow the logic of the Liberals, we would find that in essence our actions are not contradictory with what has happened in the past, but their actions are contradictory. What that tells me is they are not so much interested in the logic as they are in finding an excuse because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would not be one who would want to stand up in this House Wednesday, 5:30, and vote against putting money back in the pockets of Manitoba working families.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Shame.

* (1620)

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Finance says "shame" and for once, or many other times as the case may be, I agree with him on that aspect. It is a shameful thing they do, and it is made more shameful by the fact that are not prepared to say the real reason why they are standing up, and that is to precipitate an election, but prefer to hide behind the excuse of being able to criticize later on. There is no logic, there is only shame in that particular decision.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to address some of the comments the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) made during her contribution to the Budget last Thursday. She started out by referring to the fact that some of the speeches in reply to the Throne Speech "contained an inordinate use of the word 'arrogance' and an awful lot of the times it seemed to be referred to me," and that instance referred to the Leader of the Opposition.

Those comments by the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) tell me two things. The first is that she is perceptive and can acknowledge a criticism when it hits home, at least recognize it. The second is that she has taken those comments personally and felt them to be unfair. We appreciate the fact that she views those criticisms as a direct attack on herself. I want to assure her that such is not the case.

I hear some laughter from the back benches of the Liberal seats, but such is not the case. Those comments referring to arrogance and egotism apply equally as well to her caucus as they do to her, because it is that tone of leadership which she has set that reflects and reverberates back through the back benches and along both sides of her to her colleagues, and they are becoming increasingly themselves more arrogant and egotistical as time passes by.

We did not direct those criticisms or that suggestion of arrogance and egotism solely to the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). She should not feel that she has to take all the blame onto herself.

Mr. McCrae: You can share in the quote.

Mr. Cowan: As the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) says, she can share a lot of it with her caucus Members.

However, notwithstanding that, it would appear that she also did not understand what we meant when we called her arrogant, so she went to outline her definition of arrogance by identifying several instances where she thought the Premier (Mr. Filmon) was arrogant when he was the Leader of the Opposition. So far, so good, we agree with her. We think he was arrogant then as well. We think he is a bit weak and timid now, to answer the question from the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), but that does not deflect away from the fact that he was somewhat arrogant in Opposition. The fact that he was arrogant does not absolve the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) of the Liberals today from taking responsibility for their own arrogance. It

is really quite possible for both the Conservatives and the Liberals to be arrogant. Matter of fact, it is possible for anyone to be arrogant, so we have to define what that arrogance is.

She directed her next comments directly to me or at me when she suggested that she found that I was being arrogant when I thought that her non-confidence motion was arrogant because it expressed concern about employment opportunities for Manitobans. I want to set her mind at ease. I did not consider her non-confidence motion arrogant for that reason. I found it arrogant because I thought it showed more concern for her potential employment as Premier than it did for unemployed Manitobans all across this province. That is what I found egotistical and arrogant.

She then said that she felt it would be unfair to consider her non-confidence motion arrogant because it showed concern for the violation of Treaty rights or the need to protect the environment. Again such is not the case, for even the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) does not have to be wrong all the time, and she acknowledges that political Parties and political personalities do not have to be wrong all the time.

I want to read a quote from her inaugural speech in this House, May 13, 1986. I want to reference it to the fact that I believe people are not wrong all the time, and I also believe it is possible to be critical of something and at the same time support it. Now remember, the reason that the Liberals are voting against this Budget is because they are critical of certain aspects of the Budget, but they do not want to relinquish their right to criticize later on. So they are saying if you support something you cannot criticize it later on. We have shown that not to be the case with their voting in Bills, but let us listen to what their Leader said a couple of years ago.

I quote, "What are the Government's agenda expressed in the Throne Speech? There are some positive proposals and I pledge my support to them, but there are many issues that this Speech does not address. Frankly I was surprised by their absence." She says in that quote alone that she can be supportive of something and at the same time be critical of it, and she chose not to vote against that Throne Speech. She chose not to support the Conservatives' non-confidence motion at the time that vote was taken. Although she said she would like to support the motion, she did not. In doing so, in not supporting it, she showed very clearly that one can be positive but at the same time critical.

I think what she had to say about protecting aboriginal rights, protecting the environment is positive. She is not entirely wrong. She is not perfect, which sometimes I wonder whether or not she accepts that reality and that failing that we all have, but she is not totally imperfect either. Finally, in her comments the other day, she worried that I might consider the concerns she expressed about health care in her non-confidence motion to be arrogant as well. Again that was not the case. Her comments about health care in the non-confidence motion were not arrogant, I do not believe they were. However, her comments previously about making Manitobans pay for their slippers, their

mouthwash, their meals when they are in the hospitals are arrogant.

I consider it arrogant, and I will get to the points that I do consider arrogant, when she accuses the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) of being whining and snivelling and incompetent, when it is she who does not know that about which she is speaking. I consider it arrogant when she suggests that comments written by one of the foremost public servants in this province, and one who has served many different administrations capably and well, to be not worth the paper they are written upon. I consider that to be arrogant.

I consider it arrogant when she maps out the Liberal strategy as doing what is best for Sharon Carstairs. Remember the quote? "Sharon Carstairs does what is best for Sharon Carstairs and hopefully that is good for the Liberal Party as well." I consider it arrogant when she says the Liberals and the people they represent and their philosophy is second to what she considers best for herself. I consider it arrogant when their Party condones the use of means tests as a way of saving home care costs.

* (1630)

Obviously, we have some question as to whether or not she is being arrogant and egotistical so I wanted to clarify matters, so I went to the dictionary to reacquaint myself with the definition of "arrogant" and "egotistical," the two qualities or traits of which we have accused her. I just would like to read "arrogant" into the record. Arrogant is "overbearing, presumptuous or haughty," and of course "egotistical" or "egoism"—let us use egoism first—"is an ethical theory that treats self-interest as foundation of morality, systematic selfishness or self-opinionatedness."

Let us review one of those quotes again. "Sharon Carstairs does what is best for Sharon Carstairs, and hopefully that is also good for the Liberal Party." What does that do? That to me is an ethical theory that treats self-interest as a foundation of morality. She is doing what she thinks is best for her and second to that is what might be best to the Party that she leads.—(Interjection)— It is self-opinionated, that is what it is. Egotism—just tell me whose picture jumps to mind when I read this quote—and I want people just to reference their perceptions in this House, okay? "Egotism—too frequent use of 'I' and 'me,' practice of talking about oneself." Now, I bet you I could have a quiz in this House and at least three-fifths of the House would have the same common picture jump to mind when that quote is read to them.—(Interjection)— Well, maybe four-fifths, but some would not admit it.

I guess the question is, are they really being arrogant and egotistical when we suggest that we should all go to the polls right now because they happen to be enjoying some public popularity and the only place they go, and they know it, the only place they can go in the future is down. So they would have us defeat this Budget, defeat tax breaks for Manitobans, take money out of Manitobans' pockets because they are afraid of their own political future. That is a Liberal philosophy and a Liberal policy of the caucus. We are told that

they are unanimous in that decision. I say that sort of decision reflects the mentality, the egotism and the arrogance of a Leader who suggests that she does what is best for herself before doing that which is best for others.

I said earlier that I believe, over time, that will more and more permeate the Liberal ranks and that the public will more and more see that indeed is what this Party is all about, doing what they think is best for themselves at any given time and that will, over time, have a backlash. They are right when they believe that they have only one place to go and that is down in public popularity. That is where they are headed by the type of approach that their Leader and they are taking consistently and constantly in this House each and every day.

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

Mr. Cowan: That is what will happen when they stand up and vote against tax breaks while making phony excuses to excuse only arrogance and egotism among their ranks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has the floor.

Mr. McCrae: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Much has already been said about the Budget delivered on June 5 by my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Many pictures have also been reproduced in the newspapers and on television showing a smiling Minister of Finance at the time when he was able to explain the details of his Budget. Indeed, the Minister of Finance was smiling on behalf of his constituents and my constituents and all of the people of Manitoba because for the first time in a long time the Minister of Finance was able to bring in a Budget that will enjoy, I suggest, universal acceptance by the citizens of this province. It will also result in considerable progress, economic progress, now and well into the future for this province.

I must say that my first reaction upon hearing the Budget speech completed was that I am glad I am not a Member of a Party whose Leader is going to force me to vote against this Budget. I say that because I am proud to stand and speak in favour of this Budget. I will get it on the record early, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I intend to vote for this Budget so that no one needs to have any doubt as to which direction my comments are taking me. That was my first reaction, that I am glad that I do not have a Leader who is going to force me to vote against this Budget because on behalf of my constituents I can say that my constituents would not be pleased with me if I were to turn my back on this Budget or withdraw support for it.

I say that to other Honourable Members who are thinking about how they will conduct themselves on the day appointed for the vote on this Budget. I say to them, search your souls, have good and lengthy discussions in caucus, discuss this with your colleagues, discuss it also with your constituents and find out if

those constituents are with you if you happen to be tending towards voting against this Budget. If you do find that your constituents are in favour of the approach you are taking, you might want to check out their Party credentials.

An unlikely result for me was the reaction of the Winnipeg Sun to this particular Budget. I do not think that any of the newspapers in this province would want to think that they are aligned with a particular political Party or take a particular view consistently on political matters, but I must say that the Winnipeg Sun editorial of June 6, the day following the Budget, was refreshing for me and something that gave me some comfort and something I think addressed the issue of the Budget squarely and addressed it in a way that Manitobans see it as well. So in that sense, the article, I suggest, reflects the thinking of Manitobans.

May I quote, Mr. Deputy Speaker, very briefly from the editorial? "So, how's the political climate in Manitoba? Couldn't be smoother. Finance Minister Clayton Manness has come down with a Budget that guarantees the province, barring some unforeseen calamity, a year of political stability. There's something in it for everyone and virtually nothing negative in it for anyone."

The editorial refers a little later to the fact that the Budget brought forward by the Minister of Finance is politically unassailable. The article concludes with the following: "But the most important aspect of the Budget is the 2 percent reduction in the rate of provincial income tax. We needed that. It still leaves us, at 52 percent, among the most heavily taxed of all Canadians, but it's the first break we've had in a long time.

"That, together with the increase in the tax reduction for children for low- and middle-income Manitobans, makes it a little nicer to be a citizen of this fine province this morning."

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Mr. Speaker, that last paragraph reflects, I suggest, the view taken by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province when he is critical of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) when she refers to our province as a have-not province, as a weak province and as a hard-up province. That is not the view taken by the Premier of this province. That is not the view taken by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and it certainly is not my view.

I arrived in the Province of Manitoba in 1957 when I was quite young. Over the years since, I have grown closer and closer in my affection for this province, and I think consistently, Mr. Speaker, that I and others on this side of the House have taken an optimistic view of the future of our province.

The position taken by Members of the Official Opposition in this House in opposition to this so-called "good-news Budget" is a message for all Manitobans. That message is a question. The question is, do we want to take this doomy and gloomy outlook for our province or do we want to look ahead with some confidence, look ahead at the challenges facing us and join together and work together towards building a better Manitoba?

I think Manitobans are saying, yes, we want to build a better Manitoba. We do not want to turn down a Budget that gives us a great opportunity to begin that process of building a better Manitoba. So my suggestion to Honourable Members opposite, the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose), for example, my suggestion to him is to take a look again at the Budget that he will be casting his judgment on, on Wednesday of this week, discuss the matter with his colleague, the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake). Perhaps the Honourable Member for Assiniboia should consult his constituents on this matter before he makes up his mind finally on which way he should be voting on the day appointed for the decision on this Budget.

* (1640)

Now the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) tells us that he has consulted his constituents. I wonder if they are the same constituents he consulted on the day he was nominated to run in the election in 1988.

Now I suggest to the Honourable Member for Assiniboia, the Honourable Member for St. Vital, and others in the Official Opposition, that if they feel they have done an adequate job of consulting with their constituents, they might try again. Their constituents can read the newspapers as well as I can. Their constituents can read the newspapers as well as the Honourable Member for Assiniboia, the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

I know, Mr. Speaker, it has been difficult to be a Liberal over the last week or so in the Province of Manitoba. I know that, but there is a brighter day dawning for Members of the Liberal Party, because ultimately they will come to their senses. Ultimately, they will get in line with other Manitobans and they will see things through the same glasses as the glasses used by their constituents.

But today, Mr. Speaker, and tomorrow and Wednesday, as they consider their vote on this Budget, during those days, they will have more opportunity to reflect very soberly and very calmly and very reasonably about the position they are taking. They will have the opportunity to ask their Leader, is this really the position we ought to be taking at this time in the history of Manitoba? Is this really the position we should be taking? Does this position adequately and properly reflect the wishes of our constituents who are the people who sent us here, to represent us faithfully and to the best of our ability? Is this really the position our constituents want us to take?

So I seriously ask Honourable Members to think about this, to approach their Leader again if they have not already done so, to ask her to look again at the position that she is proposing to take with respect to the Budget. I ask them also to consider the difficult process the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has gone through to arrive at the conclusion that she has arrived at only just so very recently.

We know that on the day appointed for her contribution to this debate, for her response to the Budget, the Leader of the Opposition did not know on

that day exactly what position she should be taking. She did not know previously to that what position she should be taking. When it came to the Throne Speech, she knew before she heard it that she was not going to be voting for that and indeed that she would bring in a motion of non-confidence.

When it came to the Budget, somehow her mind was not made up for some time after hearing the contents of the Budget. We know that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) took the position that somehow the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was bringing in some other kind of program, some kind of program that would not ultimately inure to the benefit of Manitobans and that the tax breaks that are discussed in the Budget should come in sooner rather than later.

We knew that was a position that she took. We knew that her support for the Budget was dependent upon the Minister's ability to bring in those tax cuts sooner. Now, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) demonstrated to the Leader of the Opposition that was not possible. Of course, the Leader of the Opposition had her mind made up about that too, but the Minister of Finance satisfied the Leader of the Opposition about his situation with regard to tax cuts coming later rather than sooner but, no, that was not enough either, Mr. Speaker.

So I ask the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), the Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), to look deeply into their consciences and to discuss a little more with some of their constituents the position that they are being put into by their Leader and ask themselves, is this really what Manitobans want me to do? Is this really what my constituents want me to do? Am I here to ignore the wishes of my constituents or am I here to represent their wishes and to provide some leadership to my constituents?

We need only look at some of the media coverage of the Budget, Mr. Speaker, to know where Manitobans are with respect to this and to know what is being said about this Budget. We know that according to the Winnipeg Free Press of June 7, reporting on events in this House on June 6, we know that jeers and heckles erupted from the Legislature floor when the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) ended her address saying her caucus has not decided if they will support the minority Government when the Budget comes to a vote.

Now that is not only historic, it not only breaks with tradition in this province, Ministers of the Opposition usually are able to come to some kind of conclusion about their position on a Budget before they actually take their place in the House and make their contribution to the debate. Now, I am not here to say we need to be hidebound when it comes to tradition, or that we need to forget all about the way things are done or we need slavishly to adhere to practices that have always been practised in this House.

I agree that some practices outlive their usefulness and that changes are needed sometimes, but there has really been no evidence, certainly no evidence in this Budget that would tell me that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) should not be able to know

what her position is on such a Budget when her time comes to speak in the House.

The Leader of the third Party in this House, the second Opposition Party, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) said, "I do not think they know where they want to be one day from the other." I might add, they do not know from one moment to the other and the leadership they are getting from their present Leader of the Opposition does not really help them out of that bind either.

There is one thing that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) said that caused me some consternation. I mean, this person is the Leader of the Official Opposition in this province, a very important position. People of the province look to her for leadership and look to her for clear thinking. They look to her for positive statements about our province and look to her for responsible opposition, where responsible opposition is required. She accused the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) of using sleight of hand when it came to setting up his Fiscal Stabilization Fund. I have known the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) long enough to know that Minister deals in a very straightforward manner. That Minister does not deal in sleight of hand.

On behalf of that Minister and on behalf of all of my colleagues who support the Budget brought forward by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), I take great offence to those kinds of comments coming from a person in a position as high as that held by the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). But then she added, of course, but the concept of the fund is a good one. That is why I say I disagree with the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) who says they do not know what they are doing from one day to the next. I disagree to the extent that I really wonder if they know from one moment to the next what they are doing.

The Fiscal Stabilization Fund, I suggest, is evidence that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has vision, that the Minister of Finance is capable of looking forward into the future and he is capable of careful planning for the future of Manitobans. That is what the Fiscal Stabilization Fund is all about. Honourable Members opposite, I suggest, will know exactly what I am talking about because the analogy used by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was a very good one, that analogy being, how would you in your day to day lives running your homes manage your financial affairs. Let us take the example of a commission salesperson, for instance. A commission salesperson has good months, good years, and not so good months and good years. Our farmers have good years and not so good years, recently more not so good years. The fact is careful planning for those not so good years is important, or where are you going to be left?

Certainly, the Liberal Critic, the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) thinks that what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is creating is a slush fund. Well, I think in his own personal finances he would not call such a fund a slush fund, so why does he attack the personal integrity and credibility of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) by referring to the Fiscal Stabilization Fund as a slush fund? It does demonstrate

the lengths to which Honourable Members in the Liberal Party will go in attempting to discredit an undiscreditable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Obviously, the people of Manitoba do not agree with the position taken by the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) and certainly not the positions taken by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs).

I say a Budget that decreases taxes, a Budget that decreases the deficit, a Budget that prepares Manitoba or sets aside funds for the future, I say a Budget like that is a Budget that Manitobans have been waiting for, for years. Where are the Honourable Members in the Liberal Party?

Mr. Downey: Oh, they are out to lunch.

Mr. McCrae: My honourable colleague, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) suggests they are out to lunch. I cannot help but agree, as I often do, with the Minister of Northern Affairs. Not only did it do the three things that I mentioned a moment ago, but it also provided significant new funding for health care, for education and other important social services in our province. This is the kind of funding Honourable Members in the Liberal Party want to oppose, for what purpose? For what political purpose, if they will resort to no other purpose, for what political purpose would they have in not supporting increased funding like that?

* (1650)

The Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) often rises in the House and proposes great gobs of new spending of money for justice services, for example. His colleagues suggest the spending of great gobs of money for other services. We know, last summer collectively, they suggested new spending of something more than \$700 million. With that kind of spending being suggested and that kind of pressure being exerted, and if Honourable Members opposite can get support for that kind of pressure, I think this so-called rainy-day fund might not be such a bad idea. If we find that in the farm sector, for example, we have a difficult year, as we have had in the past, that fund is there for that. That fund is there to cushion us, to keep us from more tax shock like we have had in the past or to keep us from running deficits that will put us out of control again, as we have been in the past.

I am glad to say that we are again under control in this province, but I say no thanks to Honourable Members in the Liberal Party. I say no thanks to their suggested spending of \$700 million. That is the kind of fiscal responsibility we can expect from the Liberal Party of Manitoba? Mr. Speaker, I say thanks, but no thanks. Manitobans have had enough of that. Manitobans are looking ahead. Manitobans know that proper planning is going to be important for the future of our kids. That is important to me as a father and as a legislator. I entered politics for the purpose of standing up for the interests of all Manitobans, and notably young Manitobans who have to face the future.

I also stand for democracy. I am telling you running \$700 million-plus deficits steals from my kids and your

kids the right to make decisions as to what they are going to do with tax monies in the future when \$700 million of it has to be paid back, plus interest, in interest charges and deficit reduction, and then they have the gall to talk about a fund set up for those rainy days and those exigencies in the future, to call that a slush fund. I say what unmitigated gall coming from people who have the experience of Honourable Members opposite.- (Interjection)-

My honourable friend, the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), says I know they would not do that. If Liberal Members want to suggest \$700 million spending increases, and tell me then I know that they would not do it, then why do they suggest it in the first place, Mr. Speaker, if they tell me I know you know I would not do that? Why say you are going to do it if you know you will not do it? That tells me something about the credibility of the Liberal Party in this province.

Maybe the Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) will want to discuss that matter with his Leader as well. When he knows his Leader would not have spent \$700 million even though she said they would, then I say they have a serious problem among their ranks and amongst the Liberal benches opposite. They have a very serious credibility problem and a very serious leadership problem.

Herb Middlestead of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce could not see any down sides in the Budget. He said that on behalf of his members he was pleased. He also said that the Budget is going to help entrepreneurs and businesses in Manitoba. This Budget is going to create more jobs and attract more people. The Liberal Party, Mr. Speaker, is against more jobs. They are against attracting more people to our province.

Garth White of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business says there are three issues: taxes decreased, deficit reduction and low-cost initiatives for small business, and they came up with all three. That is the business view. It has been said that maybe we should not be surprised that is the business view of a Tory Budget. The Liberal Party ran a business campaign in 1988. It was basically the same campaign run by the Conservative Party in this province. Their promises were basically the same, so when we try to keep promises that they made, what are they trying to do? What are they doing saying they are not going to support keeping their own promises? I do not understand that either, Mr. Speaker.

I am going to have a heck of a time voting for the Liberal Party in the next election because they do not know what they are doing. They do not know where they are coming from and, more important, they do not know where they are going.

University of Manitoba economist Norm Cameron says that the province's Finance Department has done a dandy job. Those are pretty powerful words to read about a Budget. You do not usually hear those kinds of things about Budgets but this "dandy job" described by Norm Cameron is a job that the Liberals think is not good enough and that somehow they could do better.

That is interesting. They could do better than the kind of Budget brought forward by the Minister of

Finance (Mr. Manness). First, we hear that Honourable Members opposite are an adult day care and that you have to tell each of them things more than three times before they sink into their heads. Then three weeks later we hear, oh, but we are ready to govern, and then we witness the goings-on in this House by Members of the Liberal Party, most notably the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) and the way they mishandled their opposition to the Budget. Then they want to tell us that they cannot tell a dandy job, that they think this is not a dandy job, but this Party that is ready to govern and ready to spend \$700 million, more than we would have last year, but then we know they would not do that, all of that is the same Party that wants to govern in this province. I say, God help us. I know Manitobans say, God help us. I believe there will be a lot of assistance in making sure that does not happen when the time does come.

We did not, frankly, expect to get the kind of reaction we got from the labour representative in this province, Mr. Wilf Hudson, but you know, I will accept his support too. It is unusual, it is unprecedented that we would have a labour leader of the stature of Mr. Hudson speaking favourably about a Conservative Budget. I am very happy to hear that, but it tells me something about the Budget too, but somehow that is lost on Honourable Members in the Liberal Party.

Jenny Hilliard, the President of the Manitoba Branch of the Consumers' Association of Canada, says that the Manitoba tax reduction benefit for dependent children is a great thing. It is going to be nice for a lot of low-income people. Honourable Members opposite want to vote against low-income people in this province too. I say there is something perverse about all that, there is something strange about this. I am saying the Honourable Members who are willing to listen to my voice today, and I am glad to see that there are some who stayed around long enough to listen to me, I say, take it up with your Leader, take it up with your Leader. Low-income people are going to lose out if you have your way in this province. I am telling you, stand up for children, stand up for low-income people. Stand up. You might even check with some of those low-income people in your constituency, maybe you could benefit from hearing from them.

Certainly, as Minister of Justice, if I can digress for a minute from other issues, as Minister of Justice in this province, I am very pleased to see the attention being paid to justice issues by this Government. Would it not be nice if I could say, "and all the credit should come to me"? But I do not usually talk that way because I am not the Leader of the Opposition. I say, this Government deserves some credit for that kind of attention to justice issues in this province, our Government, not me alone.

I mean, I do not do what is good for me because whatever is good for me is good for my Party and so on. I think we have heard quoted something, and I will quote that we know Sharon Carstairs well enough to know that "Sharon Carstairs does what is good for Sharon Carstairs and, hopefully, what is good for Sharon Carstairs is also good for the Liberal Party." Well, let

us hope it is also good for the people of Manitoba too, because they should figure in this equation somewhere. I did digress again, did I not?

An Honourable Member: Yes, you did.

Mr. McCrae: I really should not have done that because I want to talk briefly about justice issues that are very important to me and to the people of this province.

After many years of being ignored, justice issues are not ignored any more; 8.2 percent increased funding for justice in this province is nothing to sneeze about, Mr. Speaker. Eleven million dollars to help people with access to justice in this province, to help the Public Trustee in looking after the people under his care, to help with the Land Titles Office to make sure that people can buy houses and sell houses in this province without having to wait longer than anywhere else in this country to have their title processed.

We were looking also and giving the resources to do the work at the Crown Prosecutions Office so that people facing prosecution in this province can have their cases dealt with sooner rather than later, so that victims can have these matters out of the way, so that witnesses do not have to be inconvenienced the way they have been and, yes, for the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), so that the lawyers do not have to be inconvenienced either.

* (1700)

The point is the money is there for justice issues. The money is there to serve people better. That is what we are attempting to do and we are keeping a close eye on how that money is being spent, but we are not just throwing money around. We have already identified in the last year where money is needed, where financial resources are needed. That is what Government is for, not just to say yes to everyone who comes along, as Members of the Liberal Party would do, resulting in \$700 million of additional spending, which we know they would not really spend. I find that unbelievable and that gets me back to the credibility problem that the Liberal Party has in this province.

The one thing I would like to respond to, in a very serious way, is a point raised by the Honourable Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) who said he was disappointed there was not the same kind of money in the Budget that his Party would have liked for direct Government job creation. I was there, Mr. Speaker, prior to the 1986 election and prior to the 1988 election. I was there and listening to people in my constituency about what happens when the grant runs out. You know what happens when the grant runs out? You are out of work again, that is what happens. That is what happens with direct Government programs.

I hope the Liberal Party will support us in our wish to get the private sector working, as it has worked in the past in Manitoba. We want to work again in the future, to put people to work in real jobs, in meaningful jobs, and jobs that do not stop when the grant runs out. The best way to do that is through tax initiatives like the removal of the payroll tax for most employers in this province.

Honourable Members are against removing the payroll tax and that surprises me because that was another election promise of the Liberal Party. Here we are on installment two of the removal of the payroll tax and Honourable Members of the Liberal Party want to oppose that. Forgive me if I have trouble understanding their logic. I have to shake my head the more I think about that one. That one is a very, very important disincentive to the creation of work in this province. I am glad to see that the New Democrats are supporting this Budget for whatever shortcomings they think the Budget has. I am glad to see them supporting it because it means with their support Manitoba businesses will be able to help create more jobs, will help to be able to put more money in plant and equipment so that they can put people to work. That is what Manitobans want to do.

Manitobans do not want to receive all of those \$700 million additional spending that the Liberals would have Governments spend in this province. Manitobans do not want that. Manitobans are self-reliant. Manitobans are proud. We do not view ourselves as have-nots, as hard up and weak as the Liberals view us. We are not like that. This is Manitoba and we are proud. Businesses, entrepreneurs and people working for them want to see that payroll tax removed because that payroll tax is a disincentive to putting people to work. I refuse to accept that verdict about the Province of Manitoba.

In terms of our arrangements with other Governments and with Ottawa, yes, we have to accept more than we put in. Do not think for a minute, Mr. Speaker, that makes me proud because it does not. I will do everything in my power, I will join with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and I will join with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to make Manitoba a "have" province, so that we do not have to have people like the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) going around telling us how poor we are all the time. That kind of thinking is an oppressive kind of thinking, and it leads one to some type of depression about what it means to be a Manitoban and what the future means for us and for our children. I want my children to complete their education. I want them to be hopeful about what lays ahead for them and their families. By accepting the negativism thrown across this province by Members of the Liberal Party, we are really not helping our kids very much, and I would say that is the wrong way to go.

I am very happy that the Vision Capital Fund is going to be there, \$30 million to help start or expand businesses in this province. I am very happy that women and rural Manitobans starting in business will be targeted for guarantees on loans up to \$10,000.00. Those are the kinds of initiatives that will bring out that pride that we talked about in the last election, the pride in a job well done in the Province of Manitoba. Honourable Members opposite take on the duty of being pride-busters in this province. I am telling you, that is not going to win them very much in the way of popularity.

I do say, getting back to the direct job creation idea put forward by the Leader of the New Democratic Party, that his position merely reflects a difference in the philosophy between his Party and my Party, and of

course we do not know where the philosophy of the Liberal Party is, so that we have to try to go by something. I say we are both after the same thing. They want to create jobs, I want to create jobs. I want to create real jobs and that is what the difference is.

With respect to the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), he said with respect to the Fiscal Stabilization Fund that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) should have used last year's revenue arising from the mining tax and federal transfer payments to bring in a balanced Budget or a surplus.

Never mind the attention being paid to the future by Honourable Members on this side of the House. Never mind making sure that the tax cuts we want to bring forward are safe. Never mind that there is such a thing as sensitive budgeting. That is not what is on the mind of the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) and his seat-mate, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). What is on their mind is to find themselves over on this side of the House somehow, and they will do it any way they have to. I think Honourable Members present here today in the Liberal Party would do well to try to put the damper on that kind of thinking.

* (1710)

I know that some of the Members of the Liberal Party came here with a genuine interest in helping their neighbours, their friends and their constituents. I know they did, and some Honourable Members are nodding their heads in agreement this afternoon. I know that is why they are here and so I ask them, listen to your constituents, be responsible, raise the matter in caucus again, put in a good fight against your Leader who has her mind set on going in this direction that is leading to who knows where.

I think the Honourable Members listening to me this afternoon know where Manitobans want to go. I say, do you not want to be there with them? Do you not want to be with Manitobans? I say, search your souls. You have a couple more days to do it. As my own Leader, the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Filmon), said, "I believe that they would incur the wrath of the public because I believe this Budget has all the things people in this province are looking for." I do not think the Premier is very far off the mark with that statement. The Honourable Members present in this House today, I am sure, will agree with that.

So I have to ask, what is it? Is it a single-minded wish to self-destruct? Is it the lemming instinct that we see in Liberal Parties across this country? Is it the lemming instinct that we see in Newfoundland? Ah, Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker, the first election after the first Budget after the election of a majority Liberal Government in Newfoundland, and what do they have in their Budget and compare that with the Province of Manitoba's Budget? Tax increases all over the map.

I was in Prince Edward Island last week, had the opportunity and the pleasure of meeting the new Minister of Justice for the Province of Newfoundland. The man was embarrassed when he and I talked about our Budgets and compared them, one with the other.

A tax expert by the name of Alan Jacks said, "There has been a lot of focus on the middle-income family.

They have been highly taxed in the past, and this is a readjustment". I know what Manitobans are saying. They are saying it is about time for that readjustment. They are saying, this is the readjustment we have been waiting for. I am saying, where is the Liberal Party when it comes to the kind of readjustment that Manitobans have been waiting for for years? They are slavishly following the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) who does not know where she is taking them. I say that is a problem for Honourable Members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, as John Diefenbaker used to say after 40 minutes, I have just got my throat cleared, but I think my message is clear. I will not ask for any additional time, although I know Honourable Members opposite would more than likely want to grant me that additional time today. I will not ask them for that. I just implore them, put your political agenda aside for now. There is not going to be an election soon anyway. Get onside with the people of Manitoba. Get on there where the people want you to be and provide the leadership that they want you to give.

The people of Brandon want the kind of leadership that has been displayed by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the fact that he has been able to put the finances of the province on track, the fact that he is able, willing and courageous enough to look ahead, make plans for what might not always be sunny days. There may be some rainy days down the road and I think it is important that a Minister of Finance, if he can possibly do it, make arrangements for those days to cushion the impact on Manitobans.

I say to Honourable Members opposite, think about it again, discuss it, discuss it with your Leader and amongst each other. Discuss it with your constituents. Come back to the House, join the other Parties in this House supporting a Budget that is good for Manitoba and good for Manitobans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Indeed, the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) suggested six o'clock, and I indeed then look forward to a task of keeping him advised and interested in his chair over the next some 40 minutes.

One of the things that I look back upon the first Session of this Legislature was my role as Deputy Speaker assisting yourself in the operation of, and smooth operation of, the House. Certainly, as a rookie Member of the Legislature, I found that tenure as Deputy Speaker both valuable and an interesting experience.

One of the things that I even now keep in mind is when a Member of this Legislature rises on a point of order or other matter bringing any matter to the attention of the Speaker, I often began following your own lead, advised that I would thank all Honourable Members for their advice before making a decision ruling on a particular point of order. I think that term and that thought must go into our consideration of the Budget as well, where indeed over the last week or so I have sat in this Chamber and considered the words of Honourable Members who have spoken before me, have given their words, ideas and thoughts grave consideration, as I did all last week while our caucus

was reviewing in some detail the Budget presented by this Government.

A budget setting out the financial direction of a province is an incredibly important Government document and does require study and consideration. That, I believe, is a responsible way of approaching a decision to be made in this House. A budget of some detail, a budget setting out the future direction of this province cannot be read and digested in a short period of time.

When various Members of this Chamber, various members of the press and public were saying, "Oh, we could not make up our mind," it is not that we could not make up our mind. It is that we felt that as a responsible Opposition in this Legislature, we had to review it and consider the impact of the Budget Speech we heard last Monday and consider it, because I have learned over this last year as a first-time Member of this Chamber that Government decisions are not and cannot be taken in isolation from one another, that decisions of Government, I believe, are like a giant jigsaw puzzle. If you were to take out one piece out of that jigsaw puzzle, if you were to change that piece, you have to consider the implication of that change on all the other pieces.

It is with that in mind certainly myself and the other Members of the Liberal Caucus spent several days not only considering and reviewing the Budget Speech, but also the preliminary Estimates of the department's spending. Where we asked and attempted to ask Ministers of this Government questions on the Budget and when you review the answers that we received, Mr. Speaker, to what I believe certainly legitimate questions directed at attempting to consider the further advice that these Ministers have and can call upon in their various departments to provide the answers to attempt to see the direction of this Government beyond the numbers and the figures and facts that are presented, to listen and consider answers to specific questions that we might have, I must say I was disappointed.

I look to a series of questions that I, myself, posed to Ministers of the Government and when I looked to the answers, and I have read them over a number of times to ensure that I would not be mistaken, the answers were not directed to the question. These questions were based on matters that I felt I should raise and allow the Minister responsible to respond and say, listen, you are not quite correct in your preamble or your question in that this is what is said. Yet again, when you look to those answers, there is a blank. Either the Minister chose to seek some other direction or to answer some other question that he would prefer.

I look to the question with respect to the Wang Imaging Centre. Well, were there other Manitoba proposals? The Minister could have got up in the House and responded, well, these are the reasons why we selected Wang. This is that there were no Manitobans prepared to offer those services or no Manitoba companies that had the technological capabilities of performing those duties we required. Yet there were no real reasons given, Mr. Speaker, and that concerns me especially in this period of time when we, as

responsible Members of the Loyal Opposition, reviewed in detail the Budget.

* (1720)

Mr. Speaker, no Member of this House has truly spoken against the liberal tax cuts that this Government has given to people. We saw the way the previous Government dealt with ordinary Manitobans. They taxed them and taxed them, a truly oppressive regime. Indeed certainly, this was addressing a particular problem that Members of this Government when they were in Opposition, were reminding the Members of the New Democratic Party about the heavy taxation load on Manitobans. It is so easy to say, yes, we support the Budget, we support these tax cuts. It is true, we do support the tax cuts, but I believe that there is much more to this Budget than the tax cuts and therein as a couple of the Ministers have mentioned, agree with me that there is more to this Budget than tax cuts, much more.

When we look to these other areas, those lead us to concerns that we have. It is but incredible if you listen to the responses of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in just the recent crisis that is in his department. Incredible, Mr. Speaker, just incredible. Some people say it is good politics when you wait for a crisis to happen in your department, and then you come in and as a saviour and say, this is what we will do, this is how we will correct the action.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health is dealing directly with potential life and death situations, and what do we find? This crisis management, when I believe a responsible Minister would be looking to crises and saying what is wrong here? What could possibly happen wrong? And addressing those problems and saying, yes, I have addressed those problems before they happen, before potential lives were lost, but, no, no, we do not have any of that. When one considers many of the other aspects and the advice offered by Members of the Loyal Opposition, each of the Members have selected from their own critic responsibilities some concerns that they have. As the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) likes to very eloquently talk about excuses, we at least were able to peel away the shell, the very pleasant shell of this Government's tax cuts and look a little deeper at the meat.

Mr. Speaker, there are many dimensions to the development of a business climate in Manitoba. Over the last several months, I have had an opportunity to visit a number of businesses in Manitoba who were surprised that a Member of the Legislature was interested in coming to talk to them. It was the first time they had ever heard of that, and they were pleasantly surprised that a call was made and that somebody was interested in their particular company. I would certainly take this opportunity to applaud this Government on some of the directions they have taken with respect to addressing the critical problems in this business climate in Manitoba as a result of several years of the previous regime's almost destruction of this positive business climate.

I was concerned when I talked to small businesspeople, and it seems that the New Democrats

seem to, when you start talking about corporations, lop into that big corporation a little corner store, which is also a corporation in this province, and has to address some of the concerns that larger corporations have as well. It was interesting and when I spoke to the some small and some medium and some large companies, some of them felt that it seemed that the Governments looked to the small businesses for one purpose, for tax collection. One small businessperson, who is operating a local store, said to me, I am just a tax collector. I was a little taken aback by this statement but, when the same statement kept coming up and being spoken by businessperson after businessperson, that was of some concern.

It is also a concern, Mr. Speaker, when companies have a difficult time in attracting people to their operations in Manitoba. I was surprised where in some situations they have to pay them the differential between taxes paid in Manitoba and that from which province those people were coming, being transferred from, incredible. But when you consider the fact that Manitoba has some of the highest taxes, if not the highest taxes in Canada, that is not so incredible.

Certainly this Government, by reducing the provincial rate from 54 to 52, is partially addressing that concern. I know I have posed this before in speeches in this House, and I would certainly like to be able to hear an answer from perhaps someone who has been around for a while, either from the New Democrats or the Conservatives, as to when you look at the tax forms that we have all recently filled out and have filled out the last couple of years where you have that 2 percent surcharge, where I found interesting was that the 2 percent surcharge applies at a particular line in the tax form. It applies after your deductions for things like RRSPs, tuition and whatnot, but before your own personal deductions.

I was wondering, for a New Democratic Government that seemed to say that they were concerned about an average Manitoban, an ordinary Manitoban as they would like to say—although, as I pointed out in my first speech in the Legislature, there are indeed no ordinary Manitobans in my constituency. They are tradesmen, they are craftsmen, and I am sure Members other than the New Democrats would say the same, that their constituents are indeed not ordinary Manitobans.

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mine are exceptional.

Mr. Minenko: They are exceptional, as the Minister of Energy and Mines says.

It is interesting that this Party that seemed to say, or said they represented the interests of the people, would allow people to deduct in RRSPs up to \$7,500 a year before the net tax comes in, when certainly many of the people who they represent in their constituencies at the time of the Budget and many of the people who live in our constituencies whom we have taken from that particular Party either work in a position where they do pay pension and as a result cannot take advantage of that \$7,500—and I believe

in future years even greater deduction for RRSP—and yet that was left on the books. Somehow no one considered it. I would certainly look forward to someone providing me and advising me why that particular anomaly happened.

Mr. Speaker, the business climate in Manitoba has a number of different dimensions to it—investment, job training and retraining, rural development—as well as other issues like schooling and illiteracy. I would just like to address some of the comments today with respect to some of these issues.

* (1730)

If you look to the investment strategy of this Government, they indeed take pride in the programs that they are presenting. I certainly believe they have started in the right direction, recognizing one of the greatest difficulties that certainly small- and medium-sized businesses in Manitoba and indeed right across this country have is that initial financing, and financing also to encourage someone to grow beyond just a small business where oftentimes people feel that if they could have some sort of just a little bit of assistance, a loan, they could just bridge that gap they might have.

Government certainly seemed, in setting out its agenda for investment, to address these concerns that were presented to them in a pre-Budget brief by the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses which set out succinctly some of the concerns of their membership. They set out the Business Start Program, they set out the new Venture Capital system that they wanted put in place, and also briefly touch, as with a stroke of a paint brush, just a little corner in the edge, dealing with the whole Stock Savings Plan issue.

Mr. Speaker, I looked at this program on the day of the Budget and I thought, well, this Government certainly seems to be addressing the problems. They are certainly providing the kind of programs that are necessary for the continued growth in this province, and yet I am indeed glad that we as a caucus took the opportunity of several days to sit down and review what, on first brush, seems to be a good program.

Tied into this is that in order to be able to provide a program you have to get that information out, you have to tell people about it. What do we have in this Budget? Just as an aside, Mr. Speaker, I found in visiting businesses, I tell them the Government has some more than 50 programs that you can tie into to assist you in developing your business, to assist you in consulting. They have the whole sectoral division that assists people in various divisions. These people are saying to me, some small, some one-person operations, other larger operations with more than 10, 15 people, I have never heard about them. I have never heard about these programs. Would it not have been a good idea for me to tap into that consulting when I was looking at expanding my business? I said, what do you mean? You do not see any of this? They do not send you any material, no one ever comes to visit you about this? The answer, Mr. Speaker, right across was no. It seems that for the programs to this day, only those corporations with enough people and expertise and

contacts with Government would be able to take advantage of those programs.

Mr. Enns: I think that is stretching it.

Mr. Minenko: The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) says it is stretching it a little bit. Certainly companies that have been growing in Manitoba have been telling exactly this, that I am certainly not stretching it. They said we certainly would like to hear about that program. I certainly hope that in his department they are telling people who may tap into advice and expertise from his department, what is available. This is one of the things, indeed one of the reasons, the basic reason why I ran in last year's election. Who would have thought that this nobody from Seven Oaks running against the Finance Minister of this province would even have a chance to come in a close second, never mind actually win.

I ran, Mr. Speaker, because I often felt that even though as a Member of the Liberal Party for quite a number of years and what I believe would almost be an active participant, I felt that there was the Government and the people. The Government made the decisions and the people simply follow them. There did not seem to be that bridge. At whatever level one was to consider decisions being made, city, provincially and federally, no one really wanted to ask me, well, what do you think, Minenko? What do you think about this thing?

That was certainly one of the reasons why I ran, in that I felt that through efforts I can maybe get that bridge in place to tell people what is going on and say, listen, you may know what the question is as well as a possible answer but I do not even know what the question is, because I would certainly be the first to admit it. I am sure all Honourable Members would agree that there are many things that we are aware of and are concerned about and there are many other things that we may not be aware of. I think that has to be addressed.

Certainly in the Department of Industry and Trade, as I suggested to the Minister in my speech to the Throne Speech, this was a problem that had to be addressed. When he said, well, wait for my speech, I was indeed looking forward to hearing his comments. As a person who was in his department for the last year -(Interjection)- okay, well correct me—and then when I had reread his comments from last week, I was suddenly disappointed in that the concerns that I tried to raise in my speech to the Throne Speech were not really dealt with. Either he could have said you are wrong or this is the way it is, or you are right and agreed with me and said, okay, well this is how we are looking to address it. But we saw none of that.

Mr. Speaker, I am indeed very concerned when I looked to the Estimates and I looked to some of the divisions of the Department of Industry and Trade, that should be at the sharp end of the stick, that should be in contact and have that contact with Manitobans, to tell them about what services their Government can provide to them and what assistance the Government can provide. What do we have? The Sectoral

Development Branch of this Industry, Trade and Tourism Department last year, \$1.233 million, this year, \$1.169 million—a drop, a drop. Maybe there are other reasons for this drop and I am sure during the Estimates the Minister will probably address those concerns.

I am saying, if people right now are telling me they are not aware of what is available to assist them, then how are we going to be able to get the \$2 million that is set aside in this Business Start Program out to people? How are we going to be able to do it? Sectoral development officers are those officers who should be going out and visiting businesses and attempting to address various industrial sectors in this province, those concerns.

We looked at the Business Resource Centre and even in the Main Estimates, Mr. Speaker, this Government says, provides consulting business information, library training development, including the Business Start Program to Manitoba entrepreneurs and businesses. Yet with this major initiative of this Government, \$2 million potential loan guarantees, there is barely an extra trickle, especially when this Government says it is directed to women and rural development in the rural areas. We already have seen in our short year in office how people outside the perimeter of this city feel they are being treated by Government.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways): Why do you not ask them?

Mr. Minenko: The Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) says, why do you not ask them? That is exactly what we did, Mr. Speaker. That is why we did spend four rather chilly days and evenings in a northern tour, to ask people what are some of your concerns.

Mr. Albert Driedger: It was more to get acquainted among yourselves than anything else.

Mr. Minenko: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) seems to say, and I hope he does not necessarily totally agree with his statement, that we did it to better acquaint ourselves with one another. I could tell them that over the last several months before we went on a trip, we met with each other on a regular basis. We learned to understand one another. Indeed it may be worthwhile for his Government, for his Premier (Mr. Filmon), for his caucus to say, let us go on a tour, let us become better acquainted, let us become better acquainted with Manitobans. We felt that was a need we had to address.

* (1740)

This is what they are telling us, these people that the Government represent many of the people outside the perimeter, and yet what do we have in these Main Estimates? Not only is there a rather minimal increase for this major initiative of this Government in Business Resource Centre, but let us just look to the Rural Development Department, rural economic development. When this Government made a campaign promise to put business development money into regional development corporations, what do we see here—

salaries down, other expenditures slightly down. Maybe they will buy fewer desks or something, grants down again. How is that encouraging rural economic development? I realize what the Minister's responses were to my questions last week and I acknowledge them.

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner), on a point of order.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note that the Member across the way, if and when he speaks on anybody's Budget, needs to put the correct figures on record. I would suggest to the Honourable Member that the budget of Rural Development has been increased by \$5 million or 7 percentage points.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister is quite aware, a dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Mr. Minenko: Mr. Speaker, the Minister's comments certainly do not surprise me considering his reply to what I thought was a rather innocent question saying exactly what I have suggested now. Why has this Government reduced funding to those regional development corporations when they promised something else in the last election? He said exactly the same thing. That is fine. I would agree then, there has been an increase.

When you look to this point, and maybe he does not even understand his own Main Estimates, or did he draft them up, or was the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) only involved in his Estimates? We will certainly find out during the actual Estimates process how well he is familiar with these, because I am sure he can read just as well as anybody else, or perhaps the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) needs to address the Minister's particular concern and problem.

When you look at it in black and white, when you look to the rural economic development, there is a reduction. As the Latin expression goes, res ipse loquitur, things are as they appear to be. When you put it in black and white, they cannot be any plainer than that.

Again I was concerned with the response to my question by the Minister when I asked him last Thursday, why is there this cutback? He could have just said, the Member for Seven Oaks has a good question and it sets out this is why we feel there is a change in orientation, a simple question. He must have some idea of why these figures appear here. I would certainly hope that he knows what is happening in his department, but lo and behold, what kind of answer and the same kind of answer today. So how are they planning to get this out? How are they planning to tell Manitobans? How are they planning to tell rural Manitoba about this Business Start Program when the programs they have in place, people still do not know about them?

Perhaps my earlier comments that maybe they had to know somebody in Government, they would find out

about the programs. I am certainly, Mr. Speaker, and my householder is trying to address that problem by setting out some of the programs that are available to Manitobans to take advantage of, so the people in the constituency of Seven Oaks have equal access to that.

We then look to the Venture Capital Program and I believe, Mr. Speaker, the same concerns I raised with respect to the Business Start. With the Business Start Program, we find the same concerns, same problems. I would next like to relook and consider the whole job training and retraining program of this Government.

Mr. Albert Driedger: What about highways?

Mr. Minenko: The Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) says what about highways? I have full confidence that any concerns that this Party has on highways shall be adequately addressed by my honourable colleague, the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake). I indeed think the Honourable Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) who earlier raised some comments about whether indeed this Government is capable of bringing those two sections of highway from two opposite ends actually together in the same place. I guess we will have to see. I wonder how many bends in the roads there are going to have to be to make sure they end up together.

Mr. Speaker, I think this Government and I certainly hope, and seeming they like to come across as being managers for Manitoba, and I think an important element to being a manager, an effective manager, is to be able to look forward and plan for things ahead of time.

An Honourable Member: Right.

Mr. Minenko: I hear a "right" from one of the Ministers and certainly, when you look to the actions of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), I think we have got grave concerns on that point.

I think even they acknowledge that the Free Trade Agreement is not a bed of roses. There are certainly some thorns in that Free Trade Agreement. I think, Mr. Speaker, they do recognize that perhaps there are some industries, and I would certainly hope they would recognize that there are some industries in Manitoba that will be negatively affected. There are many sources that show exactly that point, say exactly that point.

One of the things that the Budget looks at, the Department of Education and retraining has a vital role in the continuing education in Manitoba, to ensure that all Manitobans are better able to take advantage of any of the positive results of the Free Trade Agreement.

When you certainly look to their campaign promises from last year's election, they promised to co-operate with the federal Government in applying for existing economic adjustment measures to ensure that workers who are unemployed for whatever reason, that problem can adequately be addressed. It is a little difficult to participate and co-operate with the federal Government in applying for these existing adjustment programs when the feds do not even have any.

I am sure all of the Ministers of the Crown have reviewed in some detail the Adjusting to Win Report, commonly referred to as de Grandpre. Well, Mr. Speaker, some of the Members of the Chamber may well remember my comments on the Throne Speech when I said the Throne Speech was like a dull thud. The Adjusting to Win de Grandpre Report has the same sound, a dull thud. They seem to have been given a parameter within which they were supposed to do some research. They seem to have come up with their own ideas as to what their parameter should be. I have been advised, from various sources and myself giving it some due consideration to the recommendations, that it will be very difficult in living up to the expectations built up in that de Grandpre Report. I certainly look forward to the federal Government in seeing how they are going to be using some of the recommendations from that report. Yet there is nothing really in place.

What we see happening is with respect to their promise for assisting older workers. They recognized that problem when some of the larger employers in Manitoba began closing their doors for various reasons. They said, well geez, I guess we need an industrial strategy to address this need for older workers. We are still waiting. We are still waiting and I am sure we will see the same problem next year. How about a joint program, a youth strategy? How about a joint youth strategy? We certainly do not see anything coming out of the feds on that, so I guess there is nothing to joint with so this Government is not taking any initiatives on that.

* (1750)

I agree that in their election excitement they said that we have got to co-ordinate programs and I am sure no Member of this Chamber would object to saying that we need to co-ordinate our programs so that the city, the province, and the federal Government know what each of them are doing, how they are addressing the problems that we all see before us every day. I applaud that but I think when there is a certain lack of programming available that the province has to come in and take that leadership. Those older workers, and I think the youth, are still waiting for that strategy.

They also talk about supporting Manitoba industry. They say, let us develop the research and development to assist the universities. Universities are great depositories of knowledge, information and new research. What is critical is to get that information out of the universities and into the workplace and businesses to ensure that we can apply that knowledge. How does this Government apply it? They hire Wang to set up an Imaging Centre and then you have cuts in the Infotech section of the Department of Industry and Trade.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are indeed many more concerns that I, as but a simple Member in this Legislature, have about this Budget. It goes beyond what some of these Members have said, that there is more to the Budget than the tax cut. That is where the concerns are when you look beyond the tax cuts, which the Liberal Party indeed supports, to the substance of this Budget and the operation of various departments.

Monday, June 12, 1989

Finally, I certainly would hope that the Government comes up with an effective strategy to deal with illiteracy which the impact is felt in various areas, including the workplace.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member's time has expired.

Mr. Helmut Pankratz (La Verendrye): Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? (Agreed)

When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) will have 40 minutes.

The hour being 6 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 8 p.m. tonight.