



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

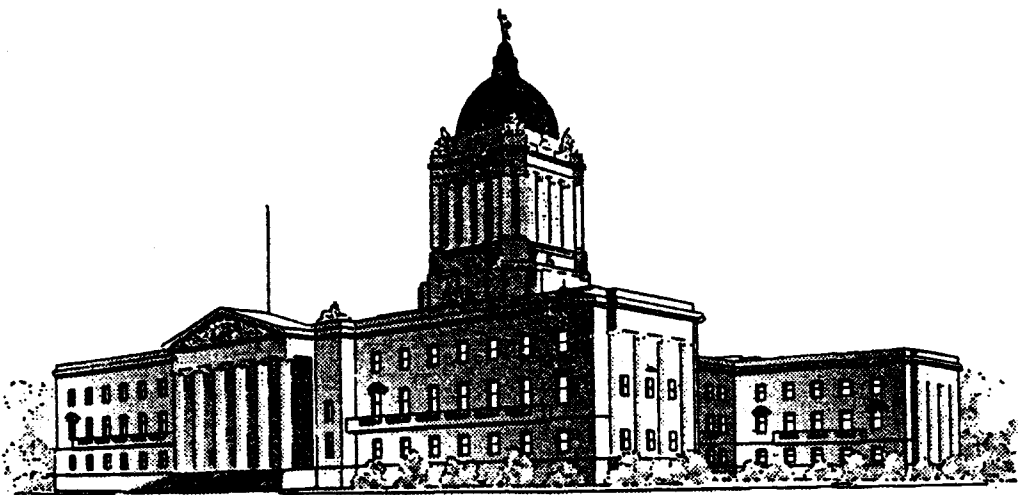
of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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



Vol. XLIII No. 16 - 1:30 p.m., Thursday, April 28, 1994

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 28, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Curran Contract Cancellation and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

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

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: The Clerk will read.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier to personally step in and order the cancellation of the

Connie Curran contract and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

APM Incorporated Remuneration and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

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

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier to personally step in and order the repayment of the \$4 million paid to Connie Curran and her firm APM Incorporated and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND
TABLING OF REPORTS**

Mr. Speaker: I am tabling this afternoon the 1992 Annual Report of The Freedom of Information Act.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table two reports: the 1992-93 Annual Report of the Special Operating Agencies and the 1992-93 Annual Report of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund.

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister responsible for A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd.): Mr. Speaker, with great pleasure, I am tabling the A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. Annual Report for 1993.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table the 39th Annual Progress Review from the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, University of Manitoba, entitled Advancing the Agri-Food Industry, as well as the 19th Annual Report from the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation's Seventh Annual Report for 1993.

* (1335)

**Green Team
Hometown Program**

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House, and I have copies.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce today to my colleagues and members opposite that earlier today my department along with my colleague the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) were joined by two youths from last year's Green Team and a Natural Resources officer to announce a program that increases youth employment opportunities in our province.

More than 700 young adults throughout the province will have jobs with Manitoba government's Green Team. This year the program expands beyond the province's parks to include

municipal and community parks through a new component called Hometown.

The aim of the Hometown component is to encourage local governments to initiate local projects for the benefit of their communities, at the same time providing valuable work experience for Manitoba's young adults in rural areas.

The Rural Economic Development Initiative, REDI, will provide \$1.8 million to the Green Team program and is supported by a contribution from rural municipalities of \$400,000 on the Hometown component, for a total commitment of \$2.2 million.

Since the Green Team program began in 1992, it has provided improvement and enhancements of public parks and includes resource conservation activities, park maintenance and repairs, upgrading and marketing and promotion.

Most provincial park projects will commence on May 20 and end August 31, with approved Hometown projects to commence July 1 and end August 31.

Young adults, ages 16 to 24 years, interested in applying for the Green Team Hometown component will be eligible for up to eight weeks of employment at an average of \$6.35 per hour.

Applications for provincial park projects will soon be available from the Manitoba Youth Job Centres and student employment centres.

Information and applications for community park projects under the Hometown component will be available from municipal community offices. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, commenting for the official opposition, I would like to congratulate the government on their announcement here today.

Any job for our young people is an important job and 700 young people working in this program effective May 20 will help us deal with the very, very high unemployment for young people in this province. Unfortunately, now we are averaging more unemployed young people in Manitoba than the national average. We have a lot of work to do to deal with the challenges that young people have,

particularly when you look at the ever-increasing cost of their education and the ever-increasing cost of completing post-secondary education programs in the province.

I would, however, like to note, and I believe it was the former member of Portage la Prairie that did note a couple of years ago that he was very concerned about full-time people in rural Manitoba being laid off in provincial parks and then having another program announced to take its place. We believe that youth employment programs should supplement the regular workforce, the regular employees working in rural Manitoba. Many communities in rural Manitoba have suffered a loss of full-time employment.

This is positive, but think how much better we would be in many of our communities to have that full-time workforce in place and have our young people working along with employed full-time workers in our parks.

I would also note, Mr. Speaker, that there has been considerable reductions in the Department of Natural Resources over the last number of years.

* (1340)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Tax and spend.

Mr. Doer: Well, the Premier, from his seat, says "tax and spend." Do you know how much revenue we are losing in Manitoba because we do not have snowmobile trails and other things in our provincial parks to help increase our economy? You laugh because you have no ideas left. In northwestern Ontario there is a hundred million dollars of investment in winter recreation, and this government does nothing. You have to start working all year round to create employment in this province.

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is obviously good news for Manitobans, particularly rural Manitobans in this case, to have jobs available for young people over the summer period.

I do note a number of things, however, that I would like to leave on the record today. Firstly, the fact that this does not apply throughout the province but simply in the rural parts of the

province. I would like to see this extended. I think it should be a provincial program.

I leave that on the record, Mr. Speaker, because, clearly, it is important for rural communities, the Hometown program and the conservation aspect. I think those could be extended and could be equally applicable in the urban centre of Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, secondly, I note that this is not for people who are using post-secondary education. It has a limit of eight weeks. We are still awaiting some good news, some sort of similar initiative by this government to make post-secondary education more accessible to our young people in this province to retain them in this province. This is geared towards a maximum of an eight-week work experience. I want to draw your attention to that.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I do note this is a \$2.2-million program. That is good. This is money going back into these communities. It is a far cry from the \$200 million which is being sucked out in profit, not to mention the amount of money that is actually going into the overall expenditures in the Lotteries area. The commitment initially, this government will recall, was to put that money a hundred percent back into those communities.

An Honourable Member: This is part of it.

Mr. Edwards: This is part of it. This is 1 percent. This is less money than the Lotteries Corporation just spent redoing their buildings. This is \$2.2 million; that was \$2.4 million.

The government must acknowledge the millions and millions of dollars that it is taking out of this community through its own policies.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us this afternoon Kate Paul and Kyle Whitfield. They are representing Manitoba youths who are employed with the Green Team working in Manitoba's parks. They are under the direction of Gary Friesen, who is a district supervisor with the Department of Natural Resources with responsibilities for delivering this program.

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

Also with us this afternoon, from St. Paul's Collegiate, we have forty-three Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Barry Skrabek and Mr. Marcel Houde. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns).

Also, from the Home Schooling Program, we have twenty Grades 5 to 12 students under the direction of Ms. Maria Esau. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger).

From the Red River Community College, we have 25 journalism students under the direction of their instructor, Mr. Don Benham. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care System Private Laboratory Services

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, arising out of a controversy in 1990 with one of the private clinics, the government created and had a report commissioned called the Hammond report. Of course, this is a very important issue because in our health care system there is some \$30 million potentially spent on labs in the province of Manitoba.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) was the head of Treasury Board at the time that report was completed and returned to government, and I would like to know what action the government has taken on the Hammond report dealing with labs, given that it received that report in August of 1991.

* (1345)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, over the years I think we have met with only limited success in whatever actions we have taken dealing with—I refer to the previous

government as well as this one—issues relating to the use of laboratory fees, the use of laboratory testing and so on, some duplication going on, suggestions of duplication, and abuse and overuse and misuse and all those things.

We have a unique opportunity now with the new agreement with the Manitoba Medical Association. I think that we would very much appreciate the support of honourable members opposite for this new co-operative approach to the delivery of health care services in Manitoba, breaking down the barriers and working together instead of always protecting turf and fighting. If we could get together and work on things together, I would really appreciate it.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Hammond report that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) received in 1991 as head of Treasury Board—I guess he did not receive very much on health care. He does not really pay much attention to it.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister is up on a point of order, I believe.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): The Leader of the Opposition wants to play smarmy games by trying to imply that every report that comes to every minister in government goes to the Premier and he should have a knowledge of every intimate detail. He is playing political cheap gamesmanship, Mr. Speaker, and his gamesmanship ought to be recognized for what it is.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Doer: I do not mind the Premier standing up and answering a question. It is just the heckling from his seat I find rather rude, Mr. Speaker, in terms of dealing with these questions. If he wants to stand up and answer them, let him do so.

In 1991, when the government received the Hammond committee report, the report stated that the committee is concerned about possible excess costs from private laboratory sectors for the following reasons. It is noted that there is often a

potential conflict of interest situation where laboratory directors of public laboratories are in charge of hospital laboratories.

It goes on to talk about the conflict of interest potentially with physicians and partners, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to know from the government, given that recommendation that was made close to three years ago to the government, what action has the government taken on this \$30-million expenditure in our health care system.

Mr. McCrae: As I said before, Mr. Speaker, over the years, although I think various committees and individuals have identified potential and perhaps real problems, no mechanism has existed in the past to give government the effective tool that it has needed to deal with this, with issues related to walk-ins, with issues related to physician distribution throughout our province, not only by geography but also by specialty.

We never had those kinds of tools that we desperately needed to get a handle, Mr. Speaker, on health care in Manitoba. Other provinces, I dare say, might wish they could have the kind of comprehensive arrangement we have now arrived at.

It gives us the tools we need, through the medical services council, Mr. Speaker. That council is made up of representatives of physicians who also have interest, some of them, in laboratories. It also has representation by government, representation from consumers, representation from professional organizations like the College of Physicians and Surgeons and others.

That mechanism will be there, and I am very hopeful that it will help us succeed in addressing some of these long-standing problems.

Provincial Laboratory Committee Conflict of Interest

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Again, on page 54 of the so-called health reform action plan of the provincial government, the government, again, after 1991, outlines the high costs that are being driven by the provincial labs

and outlines the higher cost increase in private labs than even in the regular health care system in terms of the cost to the consumers and taxpayers of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the government has created another committee in the summer of 1993 called the Provincial Laboratory Committee. One of its specific terms of reference is quote, to objectively examine and comment on possible conflict of interest issues in the provision of laboratory diagnostic services.

I would like to ask the government what role this committee has in the whole area of carrying out the health reform recommendation on page 54 and the Hammond recommendation that was made to the government as early as August of 1991.

* (1350)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the action plan to which the honourable member refers and calls a so-called action plan, I ask him today, is his party in favour of the approach set out in that or is it not? My understanding was that the New Democrats were in favour of the reforms set out in that document.

That was my understanding. I have been saying everywhere that there is unanimous support for the reforms set out in that document. If I am wrong, for goodness sake, I wish the honourable Leader of the Opposition would set me straight on that, rather than calling it a so-called action plan. It is an action plan.

So when we take action, Mr. Speaker, be there to support us. Get after us if we do not do it right, but support the general direction we are taking in Manitoba which is leading the rest of the country. The work being done by the committee referred to by the honourable member and all these other reports, no doubt, will be very helpful as we develop plans in conjunction with the medical services council in the future for laboratories.

Mr. Doer: A new question to the minister: The minister talks about action, but they have had these reports in 1991, 1992, 1993, and, again, they are studying it with one committee over here and one committee over there in 1994.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister. The terms of reference specifically talk about the conflict of interest issues dealing with provincial labs. When the rural report was conducted and again produced to the government last year, another report called the Bass report—no member of the advisory team participates in the ownership of any of the above private facilities, on page 10.

Is that the same kind of advisory committee—are the same terms of reference in existence on the Provincial Laboratory Committee that has also been struck by this provincial government?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, laboratory services are provided by publicly funded organizations, as well as privately run organizations, and they also input and advise on how we ought to address all of the issues. There is not a thing wrong with getting advice from physicians, from people who are working in publicly funded labs.

Is the honourable member trying to tell me that somebody who is involved in a publicly funded lab has no interest in outcomes in terms of looking out for what is right for the patients and health care consumers in this province? I mean, here we go again. Every day, the New Democrats rise in the House. They bootleg in their old-fashioned dogma, and there is no room for that when we are talking about caring for people in our province. Let us do what is right.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, all we are talking about is a little old-fashioned ethics in our questions here.

The minister indicated in answer to the question dealing with the advisory committee representation in the Bass report—it clearly stated that nobody had an interest in a private lab. The minister's committee, the Provincial Laboratory Committee, has five members on the committee who are both involved in public labs and have financial interests in private labs.

Does the minister think it is appropriate for people to be involved in both public labs with financial interests, that they should be the ones to, quote, objectively be reviewing the laboratory policies in Manitoba?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, when I am looking for advice and we receive it, it is very much appreciated if those giving it state who they are and whom they represent and what interests they might have right up front.

The honourable member, I assume, filled out his conflict of interest form. I filled out mine and signed it and let it all be known. My understanding is that all of the members of the committee to which the honourable member refers stated up front what their interests were, whom they represented, and so on. This is not a committee to make decisions but to make recommendations.

In any event, whatever recommendations or whatever work of that committee will also be the subject of review by the medical services council. That council, which is made up of consumers, as I say, medical people and others that I mentioned a few minutes ago, will under the terms of the agreement we have with the Manitoba Medical Association provide advice to the government.

Ultimately the government will have to make decisions and ultimately the government will be accountable for those decisions right here in this place.

* (1355)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, in terms of our own conflict of interest guidelines, we are responsible for disclosure and withdrawing from decisions and recommendations affecting our own financial affairs.

How can you have a standard of reporting and advice to the government throughout the years that talks about the potential conflict of interest between public and private labs and private physicians when you have a standard of an advisory committee on the rural health labs from the Bass report that excludes anybody from private interests and financial interests?

Clearly, why did the government choose to put people on the committee reviewing the conflict of interest between private and public labs with individuals that are by definition involved in both private and public labs in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, what strikes me again is that what we are talking about here has little to do with ethics and everything to do with the socialist philosophy of honourable members opposite. That is what this is all about. It came in earlier when the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) brought in the question about We Care Home Health Services.

They made it clear that they do not care about their fellow Manitobans in their care. They care about their union politics. That is what they are here about.

Foster Families Fee Schedule

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

We have just learned that the government has come out with a new policy on foster care rates in this province. And surprise, surprise, there are drastic reductions in this new policy for foster parents in this province.

But more cruel than the reductions, more backward, is that for the first time there is a distinction that is being drawn between families, relatives of the child that reach out and take in the child, and nonrelatives. That is a new distinction and this government is putting it into place for the first time. For the relatives of the child who reach out and take in the child, there is a 52 percent reduction in the monies that are going to be made available to those families.

My question for the minister: Given the fact that there is no substantiation for this move in terms of what is in the best interests of the child—that has been made clear again and again—why is this minister discriminating against the families of children who take them in and those children for whom that is the best placement?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my honourable friend for that question and clear the record and not accept any of the allegations that he has made in his preamble to the question.

We do care for children and for families in the province of Manitoba. The focus of our child welfare system is going to take a somewhat different and more proactive approach as we move through the next year and the next few years, hopefully, of support for children and for families.

We do believe that the family is the main caregiver and that we do need to look towards family responsibility and extended family responsibility. When we take children into care, move them out of the nuclear family and into other forms of treatment, we want to ensure that we provide quick solutions and early intervention so that those children can very quickly move back into a family situation.

We have put in our budget this year some \$2.5 million in a special family support fund that will indeed refocus the way we do business in child welfare. With the support of the child welfare agencies, we will be moving in a new direction that will try to keep children in their families and not take them into care.

Mr. Edwards: What a load of garbage, Mr. Speaker.

The question is simple. There is a 52 percent reduction in monies that are going to go with a child to their relatives when they reach out and take in the child who has been hurt, beaten and abused. That is what this minister is doing. She is turning the Year of the Family into a joke.

My question for the minister: Seventy five percent of placements in the First Nations communities go to relatives—75 percent, three out of four. That is not the same with the non-First Nations community in this province. Why is this minister actively discriminating against the First Nations communities in this province?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I think my honourable friend should get his facts straight. In fact, in aboriginal communities, 90 percent of support for child welfare comes from the federal government, not the provincial government. So, if he has any concern about the support for children in aboriginal communities, I think he needs to talk to his cousins in Ottawa and ensure that their

commitment is strong to support of children on reserves in Manitoba.

* (1400)

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that the provincial government has always set the rates and that the federal government has followed those rates, and at this point, the provincial government is taking the lead by a 52 percent reduction in the family benefits payable to relatives who take the child.

That is this government's action; this is this government's policy.

My final question for the minister—I want to go back. On what basis is this minister going to build in a disincentive to the child going to relatives in the northern communities—for those children oftentimes having to leave the communities in which they live—when in 1985 Judge Kimelman specifically indicated that to do anything to stop First Nations children staying in their communities amounted to cultural genocide? Those are his words. Those are not mine.

Mr. Speaker, on what basis is this minister bringing in a policy which is going to build in a disincentive for relatives taking on foster children in this province?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, indeed this policy should encourage more families to provide in support, in caring and giving, and nurturing for those children who are in crisis situations within our Manitoba communities. The whole focus of child welfare will take a new direction that will look at family preservation, early intervention, and more money up front to ensure that families can stay together and that they will not have to be removed.

If a situation arises on a short-term basis where we want to take children out of the family and provide some early treatment, that should mean that the positive results of that will be that those children will be reunited with their family on a very timely basis—a new focus, family preservation.

I will reiterate to my honourable friend across the way, if he has an issue in northern remote

communities that are 90 percent funded by the federal government, he should talk to his colleagues in Ottawa and ensure that the services and supports that are there for aboriginal children in those communities are maintained.

Provincial Laboratory Committee Conflict of Interest

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, is the minister not concerned, not aware that there are not adequate conflict of interest guidelines in place and, in fact, the very committees that he cited yesterday and today which are examining these issues have members on the committee, both the lab committee and the medical services committee that he talks about, who have private interests as well as public interests with potential conflict?

Is he not concerned that they do not have adequate conflict of interest guidelines in place and that the committees examining them have conflicts of interest?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the honourable member should know that the provincial laboratory utilization working group has, as one of its mandates, to examine conflict of interest guidelines and propose recommendations regarding private lab services.

Now the honourable member says, well, should people who have a conflict actually be making recommendations about conflict. Where was the honourable member when the legislation was passed in this House by the members of this House dealing with our own potential conflicts of interest? Who did that? We did. Sitting together with other people who might have potential conflicts of interest, we did that.

So the committee, among many, many other things, is examining the issue of conflict of interest. Is the honourable member saying that we should never examine the issue of conflict?—because I think he is wrong if he is. I think we should. I think once we have advice like the kind we might get from an implementation of a working group like this and we put it before the medical review services council and we obtain advice, we

can make improvements that frankly have needed to be made for a very long time.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry the minister obviously does not understand. We are talking about a \$30-million expenditure that, in the government's own report yesterday said, is skimming the cream, and people who are examining it have the same potential that could save the money that the report says could be saved.

My question to the minister: Is he not concerned that the same individuals who are putting in place conflict of interest guidelines to perhaps potentially save \$30 million are the very same ones who were in that conflicting position for potential conflict?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, I guess the honourable member and I should have a longer chat that we cannot really have in Question Period. I ask myself, when a union representative or a union boss makes a case for a union sitting on a panel or a steering committee or a group, is that not a conflict?

When I go to 45 communities in Manitoba talking to nurses, and even though nurses are very, very mindful of their responsibilities to their patients, could we not make some kind of a case that they too have a conflict because they work in the system?

When the honourable member encourages me to consult with members of the medical profession and other health care providers, and when they tell me things, are they in a conflict? Possibly, but throughout all of this conflict that the honourable member makes, there might be some grains of understanding that he and I might gain from the whole process and learn something and provide better services to Manitobans, which is what I am here to do.

Mr. Chomiak: Obviously the minister does not understand it. If he did, he would understand the decision is to declare and withdraw, withdraw, Mr. Speaker, because those are our rules and those are generally the rules in place, and they are not in place in this province.

My final supplementary to the minister: Is he not concerned that many of the heads of public labs, such as chemistry, pathology at Health Sciences; pathology at St. Boniface, chemistry at St. Boniface, et cetera, also have interest in private labs? And in fact, that the reorganization of the labs at Health Sciences Centre could see the head of public labs there having interest in private labs? Does not conflict of interest perhaps extend to these individuals? Is he not aware of that, and should not—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put his question.

Mr. McCrae: I think I have acknowledged a number of times that the potential for conflict does indeed exist, but is it not—[interjection] I think I have said that a whole bunch of times.

What I am saying is, is it not nice that for the first time in years and years in Manitoba we can bring people to the table to talk about these things and address them.

Provincial Judges Early Retirement Package

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): My question is to the Minister of Justice.

The minister has said that dealing with rising youth crimes is a priority in this province. Actions speak much louder than words, Mr. Speaker.

I ask this minister how the government can find \$1 million so that eight judges can retire under a secret deal while it cannot find so much as a lousy looney for the City of Winnipeg to establish youth—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member is raising an issue that I believe I have taken under advisement. I caution the honourable member for St. Johns, and I would ask you to kindly rephrase your question, please. Be ever mindful that I have taken the matter under advisement on your matter of privilege from yesterday.

Mr. Mackintosh: My question, Mr. Speaker, is not with regard to the matter of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: I understand.

Mr. Mackintosh: My question is as to the facts. How can the government find \$1 million to pay to eight judges when it cannot find any money to fund the City of Winnipeg in setting up a youth gang surveillance team which, by the way, was announced in the minister's nine-point plan?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, we are certainly moving on all parts of the nine-point plan. As the member knows, we have a very co-operative working relationship between our prosecutors, City of Winnipeg Police, the representative from education, the representative from child welfare. They are meeting, they are sharing information and it most certainly has proven to be beneficial at this time already.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, how can the minister find a million dollars for eight judges to retire while she is cutting funding for Victims Assistance, for Family Law, cutting Community Corrections? Are the victims in this province? Are the single moms and kids paying for eight judges?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I totally reject what the member has put forward as a question. He is quite wrong. During the process of Estimates, he will have the opportunity to have a very full explanation.

Let us look at the area of Community Corrections and the increase in the funding put forward in that area. The member asked me yesterday, when he makes a mistake, to stand and correct him. Mr. Speaker, I could be on my feet most of Question Period.

* (1410)

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, according to the budget of this government, the funding for Community Corrections is down by \$101,700. So that is the record.

My question to the minister is: How can she find a million dollars so that eight judges can retire, a million dollars when we have record backlogs in the youth court and in the Family Violence Court?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, the member continues to put forward information which is not correct.

However, when we do get to the Estimates, he will find out the increase in the area of probation. He will also find out that, particularly in relation to our initiatives on youth crime and violence, we are looking at a new way to deliver the services of Corrections which not only deals with prevention and deals with our model of boot camp or wilderness camp but also deals with a great deal of increase and support on the probation side.

The member continues to be wrong. He also confuses reductions which may be in the area of administration and also rent in some cases.

Municipal Board Review of Gimli Project

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, we heard a good deal in the throne speech about the importance of small business to the province of Manitoba, and the government has announced a task force to study the impact of regulation on small business in the province.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Rural Development.

The minister has now decided that the Municipal Board should hold a hearing on a small business proposal for the town of Gimli which would see the construction of a new car dealership, a million dollars worth of investment, the possible development of a condominium.

The minister has ordered a review, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of the objection of two people, two Tory supporters in the constituency of Gimli—identified supporters.

Will the Minister of Rural Development now reverse himself, allow the construction of this dealership to go ahead, the 10 jobs to be created, the investment to occur in that community?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the member who asked the question, the member for Flin Flon, that indeed the process that we are following is one that has been historically followed by Ministers of Rural Development when interveners come with respect to planning subdivisions, and we are simply doing that.

A solution has been requested. Mr. Speaker, the Municipal Board has been established to make those kinds of resolutions in situations of this nature.

The member also brings to the floor that we are supporting a Tory family or a group that is making the objection. Well, he should know that both families, I believe, are Tories, so we are simply following the process here to be fair and equitable to both parties.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the town of Gimli, the R.M. of Gimli, the eastern district planning board have given this project their approval. There are two—the member for Gimli's (Mr. Helwer) landlord and the secretary-treasurer of the P.C. association in Gimli are the only two objectors.

My question to the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) is: Does he care about small business development, the creation of 10 jobs in rural Manitoba? Does he care?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I have to say to my honourable friend that I will hold our record of supporting small business against the opposition's any day of the week.

It was the former administration, of which this member was a member of cabinet, which almost destroyed small business in all of rural Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we will support business in every way possible, but we will follow a process that has been established for resolving disputes of this nature, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Small Business Regulations Committee Cancellation

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

Given the fact that the government has announced a task force to study the impact of regulations and the Chamber of Commerce in the community of Gimli says that we see no need for further bureaucratic delays on the part of the government, will the minister now cancel that report?—because they have no intention of living up to the interests of small business in the

province, and particularly this particular project at Gimli, which would create jobs for the city of Gimli.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I am extremely disappointed that it has taken this many days into the session of the Legislature, which the opposition parties were desperately wanting to get back to debate all those important issues, and this is the first opportunity that I have had a chance to answer on a question as it relates to jobs and economic activities in the province of Manitoba. So much for the concerns and the interests of either the Liberals or the New Democratic Party as it relates to the economy of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely pleased that the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister) is chairing a committee of private sector individuals to look, in a meaningful way, at how we can reduce some of the red tape and regulations that prohibit the development of business in Manitoba.

I can assure him—that is if he does not resign sooner than this session ends—before this session ends there will be a report and action taken as it relates to that regulatory reform.

Child and Family Services Per Diems—16- and 17-Year-Olds

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

In my response to the throne speech, I noted that Child and Family Services agencies are being squeezed—

An Honourable Member: And that was some response, that was.

Ms. McCormick: Thank you.

The consequence is of low priority being given to 16- and 17-year-olds who require intervention and support. I expressed my concern that these children and their parents have very little access to other services. This is a serious service gap, and an increasing number of children are showing up in the youth justice system. That is why I am very dismayed to learn, from a policy statement on

service to 16- and 17-year-olds, that per diem support to these young people will be reduced from \$23.07 to \$16.66 per day, by more than 25 percent.

My question to the minister is this: What rationale or reason underlies her decision to reduce the level of support to these vulnerable children?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in previous answers, the focus of our Child and Family Services support is first of all on family support, family preservation and family responsibility. We want to ensure that we put the supports in place to help the most vulnerable children within our society. We have done that and we will continue to do that.

We are focusing \$2.5 million through Child and Family Services into innovative new ways of putting in up-front supports for early intervention, early child development and hopefully ensuring that more children are left in a family circumstance and situation and not taken into the Child and Family Services system through removal from their home care.

Mr. Speaker, we will ensure that those children who are 16 and 17 years old who want to be a part of a program that will provide support and encouragement and help to try to turn their lives around will be supported.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Speaker, it is the first time I have ever heard a defence of the elimination of money to support children already in trouble justified by trying to spend the same money to keep other children from getting in trouble. This policy acknowledges that the purpose of providing support to children is to prevent a child from further entering the Child and Family Services system.

How does this reduction support this goal?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, those children who are troubled and within the system and are wanting to be involved in programs with support surrounding them, will be involved and will receive all of the supports that they need. If there are children within the system

who do not want to be supported, do not want to take any part in any program that will enhance their ability to lead better lives into the future, we are going to have to look at those on an individual basis.

But I want to reiterate that those children who are within the system, who are 16 and 17 years old, who are in programming and need supports, will have those supports, Mr. Speaker.

* (1420)

Ms. McCormick: Can the minister then advise us that those supports will be at the former rate or will they still be given at the reduced rate of 16.66?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I have indicated clearly that all of the supports that are in place presently that are provided through our Child and Family Services system will remain in place for those children who want to be a part of a solution and that want to—

An Honourable Member: At reduced rates.

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, not at reduced rates. Those children who want to be involved in a program and are actively participating in a program that will help to turn their lives around, Mr. Speaker, we are going to ensure that those supports are maintained.

Workplace Safety and Health Budget Reduction

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, today is the day of mourning to recognize workers killed and injured on the job. Yesterday, when I asked the Minister of Labour about enforcing Workplace Safety and Health regulations, he simply said that there are regulations. Well, I would say that regulations are useless without enforcement and enforcement requires staff and the will to enforce those regulations.

I would like to ask the minister, with respect to the budget that was tabled, where the division staff for Workplace Safety and Health has been reduced by \$106,000, how this is going to help workplace safety in the province of Manitoba.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to answer the questions of

the member today, but I am sure we are going to have plenty of opportunity in the course of these questions in our exchange of questions and answers to get into quite a number of facets of this issue.

I have to remind the honourable member about commitment, that when this party came to power in 1988, the very important position of chief occupational medical officer in the department had remained unfilled by the previous administration, that we had filled that particular position. We have worked very hard over the last number of years to improve the service delivery of our department, and I think today we do far better work in the Workplace Safety and Health Branch than has ever been done before in the history of this province.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, the facts are that \$119,000 or more is being eliminated from this division.

I would ask the minister: Where are these cuts being made? How many staff are being eliminated? How can he claim that this is not going to jeopardize the work safety of workers in Manitoba?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am pleased to say that there were no staff in the department who were laid off. There are positions that have changed.

I have to tell the honourable member, one of the most significant things that this government did in Workplace Safety and Health was, a couple of years ago, managed to make a computer link between the Workers Compensation Board and Workplace Safety and Health that is directed and targeted at the work of our inspectors. The results have been very significant in ensuring that the dollars we spend in this province are well spent and that we achieve results, not just put on image as was done before.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister: Which regulations? Are we going to see the right to refuse work not enforced? Are we going to see the WHMIS regulations continue to be not enforced? The working alone regulations, the Workplace Safety and Health committee

regulations, the inspections, the emergency response—which area is going to be affected by these cuts?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the staff of my department would be absolutely offended with the remarks of the member opposite. The Workplace Safety and Health staff are very dedicated, hard-working people, and they enforce the laws and regulations of this province.

I would like to point out to the members opposite that since 1988, the number of accidents in our province has decreased by nearly 30 percent from 53,000 in 1988 to 37,600 last year. What is even more important, Mr. Speaker, is the injury rate has gone from 153 accidents per 1,000 workers to 110 out of 1,000 in 1993. That is progress.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Selkirk has time for one very short question.

Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Advertising Campaign

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Lotteries in the province.

Last week the government admitted spending \$600,000 on promotional advertising in the province of Manitoba. I have an ad here in the Selkirk paper featuring the right honourable Len Derkach and the MLA for Gimli, Mr. Ed Helwer, the dynamic duo mentioned earlier on in Question Period.

I want to ask the Minister responsible for Lotteries whether these ads were submitted to the Provincial Auditor in advance to see whether they should be labelled political ads and paid for by the Conservative Party and not by the taxpayers in the province.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, to quote an outstanding Canadian of my acquaintance, I find it “passing strange” that the member would raise that question when the NDP do not even know what

their policy is with respect to gambling in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, in the *Opasquia Times* of two or three weeks ago, on page 8, we had the member from Selkirk, Mr. Dewar, saying that since 1991 the NDP had wanted a moratorium on gambling in the province of Manitoba.

On the front page of the same paper, we had the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) standing up and saying to the Opaskwayak Cree First Nation, vote for us and we will give you a casino.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): On a point of order, just so the record will be clear, the Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer) did not say any such thing—

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to revert to Introduction of Bills? The honourable Minister of Natural Resources, I believe, would like to introduce a bill.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: There is leave. Okay.

Bill 10—The Wildlife Amendment Act

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to revert back to Introduction of Bills. I was a little enthused with some of the things going on and I missed the point here.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that leave be given to introduce Bill 10, The Wildlife Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

* (1430)

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Workplace Safety—Day of Mourning

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): May I have leave for a nonpolitical statement?

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

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the day of mourning that is designated April 28 to recognize those workers who have been injured or died as they performed their work duties.

I want to talk a little bit about the theme of this day in 1994, which is connected with the 75th anniversary of the 1919 strike in Winnipeg. One of the themes is looking at how far we have come from the situations of those workers that took to the streets and exercised their right to refuse work.

We have to look at how much has changed. We know there is less manual labour, which is one major change in our workforce and economy. We have much more technology and more computerization, and we certainly have a lot more chemical use and dangerous situations because of that.

We still know that workers are being killed and injured at a rate that is unacceptable. There are approximately a million workers injured each year in Canada. Deaths from workplace injuries average nearly a thousand a year. One worker is killed every two hours of each working day. We can see from this that there still needs to be change.

I think we all have to reflect on what we can do in our own workplaces to make them more humane, to make them more safe and to make sure that workers are not sacrificing their health and their lifestyle for the sake of their need to feed themselves and their families.

I think there are new stresses in the workplace that we have to recognize, and our fast pace of life now is another change that has taken place and how that is causing a lot of work-related injuries.

I would like to conclude by saying one thing that has not changed in all the change that has taken

place since 1919 is that too often work-related injuries and work-related deaths go unrecognized and go ignored. That is the reason I think all of us should take the time today to think about April 28 and this day of mourning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Labour have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the member for Radisson, representing members on this side of the House, recognizing today as the day of mourning for those in Canadian society who have been killed or injured in the workplace.

From time to time we have our debates in this House about specific ways of combating this issue, about specific regulations, laws and processes, but there is no doubt, I believe, that all members of this Assembly share in the belief that reducing and eliminating injury and accidents in the workplace is a goal that we must continue to work for.

To all of those who were involved in the celebration today, I commend them. I recommend to all across this province to use this day as an opportunity to rededicate our efforts to safety in our workplaces. I was pleased, as minister, to issue a proclamation recognizing this particular day, and I certainly commend its observance to all the citizens of our province. Thank you.

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

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I, too, am privileged to stand today and to speak on the international day of mourning. This is, of course, my profession. I have come out of a background in workplace safety and health.

I want to say that together we share the responsibility equally as workers, as employees, as employers, as citizens and as government to ensure that workplaces are safe and that each of us work safely within them. Thank you.

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

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all honourable members for leave.

I know that most members in this Chamber, and I hope all members, take this day seriously. This is not an ideological moment, I hope, for any of us. I know that the Workers Compensation Board, for example, has paid for ads to recognize the terrible cost that workplace injuries inflict on individuals and families in our community and our economy. Mr. Speaker, because workplace injuries do significant harm to our gross provincial product, our gross domestic product. But it is not just economic.

There are some 25 deaths annually in the province of Manitoba related to workplace injuries, a significant number. The respect that each of us can show by recognizing this particular day, I think, is important.

In my constituency in the last year, there have been two workplace deaths. There was a workplace death in Leaf Rapids, a mining death, only a few months ago.

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

As people in this Chamber know, Madam Deputy Speaker, mining is inherently a dangerous activity. Over the many decades that the community of Flin Flon, in particular, has been involved in mining, and others like Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids and Snow Lake, there have been many, many deaths.

I believe that it is all of our responsibility. It is a collective responsibility for us to not only recognize this day and the contribution those people have made to the betterment of our community, the sacrifice they made, the ultimate sacrifice they paid, but it behooves us to recognize that each of us, as MLAs, as members of this Chamber responsible for developing laws to protect workers, to make workplaces safe and healthy, that we can do a better job tomorrow than we have done in the past. That is a challenge to all of us.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET DEBATE (Seventh Day of Debate)

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) in amendment thereto and on the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards) and further amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), who has 15 minutes remaining.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the chance to continue with my debate. I was in the midst yesterday of reference to the document prepared by the International Institute for Sustainable Development, which talks about how we can transform government budgets to make them more in line with our environmental and economic goals.

I was referring to, in particular, ecological tax reform, and I just want to briefly finish reading this section. I think that it is unfortunate, as I said, that the government has not paid more attention to some of the recommendations coming from this document.

I do want to give them some credit for instituting the tax on tires, which has gone toward making sure that these are going to be recycled and re-used. There is a benefit from that. I am somewhat concerned, in that vein, about the lack of accountability for those finances generated, but that is one step that has been taken.

They have done some work, too, with used bottles from the Liquor Control Commission and also with the removal of the exemption on disposable diapers.

All of these things are steps in the right direction, but I am disappointed that they have not even made any statements in the budget from this document, or based on this document, that talk

about the kind of inventory that would need to be done in government financing to start moving in this direction.

The document talks about tax reform that would ensure that the tax system offers incentives for economic advancement that is in line with a cleaner and leaner economy, which will be a priority for competitiveness and prosperity in the coming decades.

I think this points to some of the very large grants that this government has given to industries who perhaps are not the most pollution free or sustainable, and who are not moving in that direction. The one in particular that comes to mind is the \$30,000 or \$30-million loan that is going to Abitibi-Price, and we have not had a guarantee that there is going to be a full environmental assessment linked with this.

I think that is one of the areas that concern people. We are still waiting to see that there is going to be justice with fines against the current operator of that mill. I think that people want to see the polluter pay. That is all incumbent in this idea that we can have both a sustainable economy and we can have jobs. We also can have a healthful environment and healthful work places.

This is all based on this principle of the polluter pays which the government claims to subscribe to but has had very much difficulty in putting into practice.

* (1440)

One of the other principles is that pollution taxes drive the further development of zero waste technologies and clean production systems which there are now many examples of. This is another area where I think the economy could be developed tremendously.

We have a huge opportunity in this province because of some of the manufacturing industries that already are strong in our province, where we could have some more co-operation and investment between government and industry to start manufacturing the kind of pollution control technologies and appropriate energy technologies

that we could go so far to improving the environmental sustainability of our economy.

I want to read a quote that was in a journal that talked about free trade as a seductive misnomer. Deregulated international commerce would be more accurate. The free traders seek to maximize profits in production without regard for the hidden social and environmental costs. They argue that when growth has made people wealthy enough they will have the funds to clean up the damage done by growth. But then that does not seem to be happening.

We also know that environmentalists and some economists suspect that growth is actually increasing environmental costs faster than the benefits from production, and it is actually making us much poorer and not richer.

So we cannot subscribe to this idea that we have to simply continue on the path that we have been on with the kind of focus on jobs at any cost. We can no longer subscribe to that approach to the economy, and we have to start being more creative. We have to start developing the tools that are so important for us to be able to truly integrate environment and health and the economy and justice.

That, Madam Deputy Speaker, is the essence as well of the lack of direction and the lack of focus that this government has on real health reform. I am quite distressed that there is nothing in the budget and the throne speech to really show that they are moving in a direction of health reform. Health reform is inseparable from environmental cleanup and protection.

We cannot have health reform without decreasing the amounts of chemicals that are used in our environment. We cannot have health reform without stopping the contamination of water and air and soil that is going on.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are tools that are going to help us do this. That is why I am so concerned that this government ignores over and over again the process of environmental impact assessment, because that is one of the most powerful tools we have to making this integration

between economy, health, environment and justice.

When we, in fact, do have an integrated process of environmental impact assessment, when we get all the information out about the kinds of products that we are manufacturing, when we get all the information out about the environmental effects and we do that up front with development, we are going to see that business will thank us, business wants to have clear standards, business wants to know the rules so they can come and invest here. The approach this government has taken with being wishy-washy and with not being clear—as they have, for example, out in my end of town with General Scrap, which is trying to do something that could be positive. In the meantime, this government has not been clear about what the process is, and we see delays.

The other thing that often happens is all of these developments will get tied up in court as we are seeing over and over again. I would warn this government that is what could happen up north in Swan River.

The members opposite mentioned the hog industry. Well, I will be happy to talk about the hog industry and what we are learning about the lack of sustainability and the poor trade that is occurring as what we are seeing is these hog operations expanding over the province. The amount of jobs being created is really not as good as it could be, because the amount of production and processing of those hogs in our province is not really occurring. What is happening is far too many of the hogs are simply being transported out of the country without being processed. What ends up happening is, those processing jobs leave the country and we end up having a very few number of farmers who benefit from the increase in production of hogs and we end up also with the environmental damage from the spreading of the manure and from the manure that goes into so many of our creeks and watersheds and aquifers.

The members opposite know this is accurate, and there is a huge amount of concern across this province about the lack of regulations under The Environment Act for these kinds of operations.

They are very concerned about the way these hog operations are expanding. I would say to the members opposite, I like ham, I like pork chops, I just do not want to drink the manure in my water. I think we have to be very careful about what is going on in this province in terms of agricultural development, which I think our party has a strong history of supporting, but we want it to be safe; we want it to be sustainable.

I would ask Madam Deputy Speaker to tell me how much time I have remaining.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has five minutes remaining.

Ms. Cerilli: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I just want to go back and make some comments as well on the idea of health reform and how many risks there are to health now that are not being addressed and how the real focus of health reform, as I think this government has got the message from so many of its committees, is that we have to move to the front end. We have to start focusing on things like prevention and that means focusing on people's diets and focusing on people's fitness and activity level and reducing stress.

I have said before in the House that this is my background. The training that I have is in health education. So I feel very committed and very strong about making sure that we are going to have government policies that are going to be healthful, that we are going to place health more central and primary in our decision making. It relates to things like, for example, Madam Deputy Speaker, how we invest in something like the arena.

We look very carefully at the kind of policy that is where we are supporting with public funds what a lot of people feel is the ongoing hostage taking of our city and our province by this arena debate and the Jets and where we want to have people more and more participating in activities like hockey or other fitness activities. Some of the government money should go into facilities and into programs that are going to encourage that kind of recreation and entertainment where people are not, in a sedentary way, simply spectators, but they are involved in their own health and recreation and

they are participating in activities that are going to make them more healthful. This is the kind of policy that I will be advocating for.

We also have to look at the kind of things that are happening in our food industry. This is why the North American Free Trade Agreement was so dangerous, because it is giving up our own authority to control and regulate our local economy. We are going to not be able to have the same authority to make sure that the food that is sold and bought and eaten by people in Manitoba is going to be regulated in terms of the pesticides that are used to grow it, the kind of food additives, the hormones, the preservatives and the antibiotics that are added to food.

These are all large, global, environment and health and economic issues that this government is failing to even address. This government is negligent on being forward looking in terms of its budgeting. It is negligent on being forward looking in terms of creating a more just and a more fair economy, and they continue to put in place policies that are exacerbating the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

We should not have a society where only people who are above average means have the money to purchase food that is going to be preservative and chemical free. Everyone should be able to access foods that are going to be healthful. I have a real great concern for industries that are putting the shelf life of food ahead of the health of people, so that people are buying food that has a large amount of preservatives and is good for the bottom line for food processors. We are creating more and more food that is less and less nutritious and more and more harmful to our health, and that is not good value for your money. Even if it is cheaper, Madam Deputy Speaker, in the long run if it is not nutritious and it is not going to help us sustain ourselves and our family, we are not getting good value for our money.

With all of that, I am going to have to close. I would like to talk more about the cuts to education and how that is affecting children and young adults throughout our province, how it is robbing them of their ability to be guaranteed of a secure future.

I want to talk about how the corporate agenda of this government, and of the international free marketeers, has got us enmeshed into this race to the bottom and how we must be committed, we must rededicate ourselves, and I know we do on this side of the House.

* (1450)

We must be dedicated to combatting and to speaking the truth about what the agenda of this government really is. We must be very clear that this government is not about making sure that people's health is going to be protected, and that is reflected in their budget and their policies. They are not about making sure that everyone in the province has equal access to education. That is clear in the way that they have cut funding to programs that give people at a disadvantage an opportunity to access education, and it is clear in the way that they are making post-secondary education more and more inaccessible to average families and people throughout the province. Thank you.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Madam Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and to speak to the 1994-95 budget presented by our Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson). I would like to congratulate my colleague on his first budget. In this budget, it shows a thorough understanding of all the serious issues facing not only our province, but our country and the world.

I seriously believe that with this budget we will lead and be the envy of the country. Why? Because we have remained focussed and consistent with my visionary colleague and previous Finance minister, the honourable member for Morris (Mr. Manness). I see this consistency and understanding of all our goals as a government from our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and from all my colleagues.

In a caucus of 29 in number, and soon to increase following the next election, Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to be a part of this

government, a government that is concerned about all Manitobans from border to border.

The recession that has rocked the world, Canada and Manitoba, has been a plague to all people of our province as they struggle to make ends meet during these trying times. However, the light is shining brighter now on the future as the economy of Manitoba and those of most of our trading partners have turned the corner to climb to economic renewal.

I would also like to thank and congratulate our Finance minister on his masterful and caring ethics in preparing this government's seventh budget.

These people who need help will be given every consideration they deserve, but it will also require continued effort on the part of everyone.

As a small-business man, Madam Deputy Speaker, of several businesses, I can attest to the hardships that the people in the businesses of Manitoba have gone through in the past few years. However, what is encouraging is that because we have kept spending under control and because of our will to attract more businesses, our province's economy leads the way across this country. These hardships that we have experienced through no fault of our own, in many instances, can be looked upon as positive in making us better people and better business people.

These experiences can now be used for gain in the days and months ahead as we now pull out of this recession. This budget, presented by our government, is designed with the interests of the people of Manitoba in mind because it is a budget that will speed the recovery of Manitoba's economy by stimulating investment and leaving more money in the pockets of the consumers of our province. It is a budget that provides an opportunity for all Manitobans to take responsibility for their own destinies. This is the key to success, responsibility for one's self. However, some of us might give into defeat and disappointment too soon, without the mastery of success.

You have heard me say this before, Madam Deputy Speaker. If a person is capable of a thought, then there is potential for success of that

thought. There is a saying that I subscribe to: Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a character; sow a character, and you reap your destiny. What this is saying is, why we do not succeed sometimes is because we fail to start to work at it.

The days are gone when people can rely on government handouts. We cannot afford to do that as a government, and the people cannot afford the taxes that it would take to support such legislation. I am sure our opposition friends will have difficulty with this, but this is a fact in all jurisdictions, regardless of party stripe.

Just look in B.C., where they are closing hospital beds by the hundreds and in Saskatchewan where they are closing hospitals in significant numbers. Does anybody think that it would be any different in Manitoba if the opposition members were in power? I do not think so.

As a government, we have taken the approach of dealing with Manitobans with fairness and responsibility. I hope Manitobans will accept that governments cannot be all things to all people. Those days of government spending like the NDP, our former administration, are gone forever. I believe also that the NDP as a government are gone forever. They are a failing and dying breed. I believe Manitobans feel confident in the direction of this government, because we have been fair. We have governed through one of the most difficult times since the recession of the '30s. We are seeing recovery. This recovery has been difficult. Hard decisions have had to be made.

I congratulate all my colleagues who have shared in these decisions. These decisions were made during static revenues, unlike the NDP government in the '80s, when they had revenue growth of 16 and 17 percent. Modern day growth is about 2 to 3 percent. These were facts that governed our decisions and, as a result, these decisions have benefited our province and leave us in a position to emerge from the recession with an economy that is in tune and among the best in the competitive world. In fact, projections by the Conference Board of Canada show Manitoba to be

leading the country in terms of growth well above the national average.

Our credit rating as a province is on the rise and we are well positioned to attract new businesses, investments to create more jobs. Let us not be fooled by the opposition members. It is small and big business that hold that advantage because they are the best and most efficient in creating jobs. They are the real creators of wealth, not governments, not political parties.

Manitoba is positioned well. We as a government must facilitate and take advantage of our many natural advantages that will aid our economic recovery and growth. These advantages, whether in the area of natural resources, the health care industry, aerospace, transportation, mining or other fields will provide for a strong base from which to create and take advantage of economic opportunities.

Jobs for Manitobans are what is needed to create wealth, and the best creator of jobs is small business. I am proud to say and be a part of a government that since receiving the mandate to govern has worked to create an environment for small businesses to succeed and be sustained, not like our Liberal friends in this Chamber who sit idly by while their sisters and brothers in Ottawa make political decisions that undermine this government's progress and move to build a stronger workforce to increase jobs.

What did the Liberal Leader do when the Liberals in Ottawa put the environmental office in Montreal, a city that dumps its sewage in the St. Lawrence river? The honourable Leader of the Liberals, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), stood idly by and said, it was only 10 jobs.

* (1500)

We have been a province that has been striving to see jobs in the private sector, and our Liberal friends keep pushing us to the wall. Last fall when the federal Liberals cancelled the helicopter contract, 150 direct high-tech jobs were cut at Paramax Systems in my constituency.

In spite of my letters to the federal members in the area asking for their support, their reply was

that there would be lots of other jobs. What did our Liberal colleagues do for Manitoba? They did nothing and they said nothing. They allowed 150 high-tech jobs to be cut at one company and did not utter a word in disagreement. My constituency in Sturgeon Creek was adversely affected, and the member for Inkster should realize that as he chirps from his seat. It seems that our federal Liberals and our friend from Inkster are more intent on short-term, pick-and-shovel jobs rather than long-term, meaningful jobs.

One thing for sure we know on this side of the House, these Liberal members here are not going to stand up for Manitobans when it means challenging their federal cousins. One thing that I have noticed about our honourable members in the Liberal Party is that they are famous for beating my colleagues down and trying to build themselves up. They cannot stand on their own initiatives because they do not have any.

My experience with them, just in the last two weeks, has been nothing less than distasteful. They are an embarrassment to the political profession, and I hope that the people will see through their methods of gaining popularity. They have difficulty in seeing their opposition, this government, achieve success. They thrive on other people's success to try and make themselves look good. It is like a wart that thrives on beauty, but no one wants or needs warts.

I have a proposal for my Liberal friends in this Chamber. Each year Manitoba holds the Manitoba Marathon. As a matter of fact, this will be the 16th year for the Manitoba Marathon. This year is in aid of the mentally handicapped. The marathon committee has been trying to get all the parties in the Legislature to participate in this celebrity challenge.

Since coming into this Chamber, I have participated on behalf of my caucus. The NDP has also put in a team of six members, but the Liberals have failed to put even one member in this challenge.

My challenge to them and to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is that they can put all seven of their caucus members to run or to walk,

and I will run against all seven of them myself on behalf of my caucus. I believe I am being more than fair and more than generous in giving them a reasonable chance to do something worthwhile not only for themselves but for this worthy cause.

Stop running on other people's energy and come out and show your own for a change. Our Liberal government in Ottawa is getting a reputation, not only for pork barrelling, but for living by the rule of do as I say, not as I do.

Prior to the last federal election, the Liberals campaigned saying they were going to cancel NAFTA. What happened after they were elected? They stickhandled around the issue and, within weeks after being sworn in as government, asked, where is the pen? We want to sign.

Where was the compassion with the Liberal government and Immigration Minister Sergio Marchi with the deportation of the Olarewaju family to Nigeria? There was not any in this good indication how the Liberals stand up for people, people who have elected them to govern. It took the media. What about our provincial Liberals? They did not say anything. They said nothing, and they have done nothing and will likely do less when they are asked to stand up against their federal cousins. I was quite moved by this family's plight when concern was expressed from my constituency. I am happy to say, this side of the House responded with compassion. I congratulate our Premier (Mr. Filmon) for writing to the federal government on behalf of all Manitobans in support of this family who have been Manitobans for 14 years.

What about our Prime Minister talking about the waste of taxpayers' money by the previous administration when they spent millions on a government jet? I do not condone this type of spending by any government. Responsible fiscal restraint is what people are asking. What did the Prime Minister do when he went on holidays recently? He had a government jet and staff on standby at a cost of \$1 million to the taxpayer—what hypocrisy.

You might ask what this has to do with our budget in Manitoba. Well, Madam Deputy

Speaker, there is only one taxpayer in this province, and if we do not speak out against such waste, who will? We know the provincial Liberals, under their leadership of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), will not. We know the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will not. He has already demonstrated, along with his Leader, time after time. What do I say to that? I say shame on him for not speaking for Manitobans which he was elected to do, the member for Inkster.

They also said they were going to create jobs. Where are their jobs? They cancelled 150 high-tech jobs in my constituency and put an environmental office in Montreal. We cannot afford governments like this anymore, certainly not in Sturgeon Creek, and I do not think in the constituency of Inkster. It is unfortunate, Madam Deputy Speaker, that our provincial Liberals are not standing up but serving their own selfish interests instead of the people in Manitoba. Let us not forget, it seems that a Liberal is a Liberal is a Liberal.

It is often said that once a government is elected, they forget the people that they represent and were elected by, that they do not listen to the people they govern. That seems to be true of our Liberal friends and their federal colleagues, but it is not true of our government.

The people in Manitoba have consistently said, no more taxes. This government has listened to the people we represent. This government has acted and moved legislation in the best interests of all Manitobans. No other jurisdiction in Canada and probably the world can say that they can even come close to this government's record: seven consecutive budgets with no increase in major taxes, no increase in personal income tax, no increase in sales tax, no increase in the payroll tax. In fact we have removed it from 90 percent of Manitoba businesses. This should not be taken lightly.

What this has meant is that instead of paying increasing amounts to the government in taxes, the money has stayed in the pockets of the consumers of this province. That is \$435 more in this budget

as a result of this government not increasing taxes that will stay in the pockets of every average taxpayer in Sturgeon Creek and all Manitoba.

This is about \$36 every month for every taxpayer. Invested at 5 percent interest each year, that will return in a period of 10 years, \$5,744.95; and over 20 years, \$15,102.87. This is the approach we as individuals must take in organizing our finances and investments. This is the same approach we as government must take investing one dollar at a time. It is the same way we build a strong Manitoba in the job market by increasing employment, one job at a time.

* (1510)

Madam Deputy Speaker, we cannot take the attitude of the Liberals in Manitoba when they say those are only 10 jobs or there will be more jobs. We are creating jobs, and we will continue to do that. People do not want promises anymore. They want the real thing. So when our Liberal members make shallow comments like these, do not believe them.

Because of our commitment to creating a positive climate for investment, Manitoba has increased its reputation as being one of the best locations in Canada to invest. That relates in short to more small businesses which in turn results in more jobs. That is our message and that is our road map and that is what we will get while staying the course, more jobs.

Other areas where our government has stayed the course are in the areas of health, education and family services. We have stayed this course because this is what Manitobans continue to tell us, and we have listened and we will continue to listen. While we find it difficult to create efficiencies in these departments to maintain the overall programs, we must continue in that direction or it will not be there for our future generations.

That means change and hard decisions, and that is what I see our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and this government doing better than anyone else across this country. As I have said before, we need the co-operation of all the stakeholders, workers,

administrators, professional people, unions and elected officials, everyone from the grassroots up.

We are in a state of challenge in this province. We saw it in the by-elections last fall, and we saw it in the federal election last fall. What Manitobans saw was the hand of the unions at work in this province and what they are prepared to do to get their self-serving point across. They helped elect members provincially and helped elect a federal government.

Governments cannot compete with the millions that these unions are prepared to spend. In the area of health care, we have the nurses' union. What did they spend in the by-elections? I believe it was in the area of \$300,000. That works out to \$60,000 per constituency.

Then you have the teachers' union, whom, we are told, are prepared to spend millions on advertising to force this government out of power. Madam Deputy Speaker, we are seeing and hearing the advertisements already by the teachers' union. We have the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, as well. These are only three, but there are other unions out there with the same narrow vision.

This government faces a challenge as big as any challenge offered from health care, education or family services, and that bigger challenge is with the unions. These two opposition parties across the way will jump into bed faster than anyone can blink an eye.

What the people in Sturgeon Creek and all Manitoba have to ask now is, do we want the unions running this province, or do we want a government that represents all the people? I would hope that we will look at this government's record and the direction offered with this budget and choose the latter.

We see in this budget, in addition to keeping taxes down and creating jobs, a development in North America to make Manitoba the best in all the areas of taxation, small business development, mining, environment, social programs, education, health and generally just the best place in North America to live and work.

One area that I have not spoken on before in our Budget Address is the area of mining. Mining in this province hit an all-time low, and Manitobans have the NDP to thank for that. Because of legislation introduced by our socialist friends, mining companies left this province in droves.

Now with the recent legislation introduced by our government over the last few years, the mining industry in Manitoba is coming to life. This is an area of opportunity for Manitoba because of what the minister, the honourable member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) and the previous minister, the honourable member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) have created in this industry.

Let me reference a few highlights that are nothing less than exciting.

I would like to start by telling you about some recent developments; in other words, some of the reasons why I like to say this is an exciting time for mining in Manitoba. Last month, for example, the Westarm Mine near Flin Flon re-opened. This copper zinc mine had been idle for nine years but will operate for at least four more years, preserving 56 jobs, a number of them skilled jobs, for the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company workforce.

In addition, Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting is undertaking aggressive exploration in the Snow Lake area for new exploitable orebodies. In the past several months, there have been important developments in the gold mining sector, the first time in more than three years that we have seen gold projects underway in Manitoba.

The first of these in 1993 was the Keystone Gold Project in Lynn Lake. This project of Granduc Mining Corporation is expected to create about 100 mine and mill jobs onsite plus spinoffs in the service field.

In February 1994, High River Gold Mines and TVX Gold reached an agreement under which TVX will acquire a 50 percent interest in High River's Nor-Acme mine in Snow Lake. Since then, they have announced they intend to reopen the mine and expect to employ more than 200 people. This could lead to an annual gold production of more than 100,000 ounces at Snow Lake.

I am very pleased that our government is assisting this venture through exploration assistance under our Mineral Exploration Incentive Program. Rea Gold Corporation is in the process of reopening the San Antonio mine in Bissett. They expect to employ more than 250 people when mine and mill are in full operation.

As of the end of March, Rhonda Mining Corporation of Calgary has filed 6,042 claim applications covering about 1,565,000 hectares in southeastern Manitoba. This included the largest single group of mining claims applications in Manitoba history filed earlier in the month. Next summer, they will explore for diamonds, gold and base metals. Rhonda's strongest interest in diamonds in Manitoba is just one part of the upsurge in mining exploration that is taking place in this province.

Much of the increase reflects growing interest in diamond exploration, and last year alone, more than 1,000 claims directly related to diamonds were filed. Manitoba recognizes that mining is our second largest primary resource industry with preliminary 1993 production value estimated at in excess of \$900 million. One of the most important reasons for the increase in mining activity has been our government's open-for-business policy and innovative incentive programs.

* (1520)

Manitoba's new Mines and Minerals Act stresses facilitating investment and exploration by helping rather than inhibiting the mining industry. It was also the first legislation in Canada to incorporate the principles of sustainable development. To date, 25 programs have been approved and are at various stages of exploration.

Last month we opened a new regional office of the Department of Energy and Mines in Thompson as part of the government's decentralization initiative. This office reflects our strong commitment to the economic development of northern Manitoba, and it will increase the effectiveness of our programs and services.

The 1994-95 budget, tabled on April 20 by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson),

contains significant measures to assist the mining industry of Manitoba. The provincial sales tax will be removed in two stages by April 1, 1995, on electricity used by the mining and manufacturing industries. This is a major reduction in cost for mining and smelting in Manitoba and will make our industry more competitive on the world metal market.

This advantage is designed to sustain jobs and to add further incentive to new capital investment in mining in Manitoba. Coupled with the benefit of our already low electricity rates, this is a significant input cost reduction for the mining industry.

Two additional budget measures are designed to encourage new investment in mining and mineral processing in Manitoba and to expand employment in the industry. There will be a new investment tax credit of 7 percent for expenditures on new mines and processing facilities or major expansions. Repressive taxation under the prior administration hindered mining in the past, and we are righting that wrong now.

As well, the processing allowance under the mining tax will be doubled to 20 percent for new facilities or major expansions. In addition, the special tax on mining profits in The Mining Tax Act was reduced from 1.5 percent to 2.5 percent of profits effective immediately.

These specific taxation measures for the mining industry were contained in the seventh consecutive budget which did not raise the rates of sales tax, personal or corporate taxes.

Manitoba is the only province in Canada with such a record. These new measures follow on the previous initiatives by this government, such as the Prospectors Assistance Program, the Mineral Exploration Incentive Program, and the new mine tax holiday act.

Our government is committed to keeping mining in Manitoba and is leading the nation in changes to policy, legislation and taxation to make this happen. These measures are good for mining communities, for their residents and, most importantly, for the men and women and their families who are employed by the mining industry.

This government, Madam Deputy Speaker, intends to support the jobs and investments in assisting in the creation of wealth by the mining industry in Manitoba. Passage of the 1994-95 budget will assist significantly in achieving this goal in keeping our commitment to sustainable development.

This government is working to create wealth, not spend it. If we do not do that, we are abandoning our children's future. In creating an environment that is healthy for investment in the province we must support that with a workforce to sustain business expansion. With the investment this government is making in our education system to ensure that we have well-trained employees such as our youth, we are moving in the direction with this budget as recommended in the Roblin commission.

As well as maintaining funding for education and training to assist our youth attain skills, our government has broadened the opportunities for employment for our youth.

Our government has maintained the CareerStart program, the REDI youth program that we heard announced today in Question Period, and Partners with Youth. This program will assist mainly young people between the ages of 16 and 24 to establish and create their own opportunities for work and will be co-sponsored by business, local government and nonprofit organizations.

I have in my constituency, Madam Deputy Speaker, a company that is presently working with me in the hopes of hiring 100 university students this summer, and I am pleased to remind everyone that our government has remained committed to the programs and services that Manitobans value as priorities. Our government believes this commitment is necessary at this time to maintain these services and put support where it is most needed.

Since 1988 this government has made competitive taxation one of its primary tools for promoting economic growth measures to improve Manitoba's tax competitiveness, has focused on holding tax rates and providing targeted tax relief.

This is in contrast to most other provinces where tax burdens have generally increased.

Because of this government's initiatives, manufacturing, which is a growing industry in Manitoba, will have continued advantages in establishing growth.

Because of Manitoba's competitiveness with the manufacturing sector I see this as a particularly good message for future growth. This industry is the largest goods producing sector in Manitoba and is exposed to more international competition than most sectors. Lower market costs and moderate overall effective tax rates are positive factors for Manitoba firms. Manitoba's manufacturing firms can compete with firms in other jurisdictions both in Canada and the U.S., where the greatest percentage of our trading is done.

Over the past few years, while other provinces have increased a number of taxes, Manitoba, I am proud to note, has held the line and even reduced some taxes. If these trends continue, the competitive advantages for manufacturing firms in Manitoba will continue.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I feel this budget supplies what Manitoba needs in order to grow throughout the '90s. This budget fulfills the needs of Manitobans by controlling spending yet maintaining and increasing funds through the priority services of health, education and family services and also holds the line on our debt.

I was also pleased to see the home improvement initiatives to help families and strengthen our economy by creating employment. Families of homes built before 1981, which is just about every home in Sturgeon Creek, valued under \$100,000 will qualify for a \$1,000 grant on over \$5,000 spent on work done. Also, a tax rebate of \$2,500 will be earned for new-home, first-time buyers. These initiatives will help families buy a home, renovate and create jobs while promoting the Manitoba home building industry.

Before concluding, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to place on the record for the benefit of my Sturgeon Creek constituents how pleased I am to be a part of this government. I could not ask for a group of more caring and committed colleagues

if they were hand-picked, and I have seen hard decisions made with compassion and dedication to the people represented. To me that is very heart-warming. In the coming election my best hopes for Manitoba would be to see these people continue. That is surely my intention, God willing, as the member for Sturgeon Creek.

In conclusion, Madam Deputy Speaker, the bottom line of this budget is not represented by just a dollar figure alone but rather by the effects that it will have on the people of Manitoba. Quality of life is just as important, which cannot be achieved by throwing more money into a system.

Manitobans will see and feel positive effects of our government's initiatives throughout this budget. They too must accept responsibility in working, in doing absolutely the best they can, working in partnership with my colleagues to improve their own quality of life for the benefit of all Manitobans.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today and respond to this 1994 budget that the government has presented.

I have a few general comments to make, and then I would like to refer specifically to some of the various Estimates of some of the departments, such as Health, Family Services, Urban Affairs, Education and Training.

* (1530)

I first of all, Madam Deputy Speaker, would just like to comment on some of the content of the MLA for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), and I certainly have no intentions of lowering myself to his level of rhetoric and personal attacks. I do not believe in personal attacks. I think what we are here for, as members of the Legislative Assembly, is to discuss policy and, in the case of opposition, to provide constructive criticism, congratulations and comments. A discussion of policy and ideas is very necessary and personal attacks are certainly uncalled for, and I do not think it serves this Legislature or certainly any constituents to be involved in that kind of rhetoric.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I actually am reminded of some students who have been coming to the Legislature this week, and two of the classes happened to be from Grant Park High School in my constituency, and my first question usually to the students after Question Period is: What did you think of Question Period? It certainly came to my attention very starkly when one of the young women, her first comment was, well, you know the Legislature reminds me of a bunch of jungle animals.

I thought that was a very unfortunate comment, but I am sure she felt that. I would hope that, as students come through this Legislature, they will not be saying that this Legislature reminds them of jungle animals and that in fact our decorum can improve.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as we look at this budget speech from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), and we look at the talk about no increase of taxes, I think it is important to point out, however, that we have seen taxes increased directly some 19 times, and that in fact indirectly we have seen taxes increased as well.

When we look at this government's record, we have seen, over a number of years, an increase in gas tax, an increase in sales tax, which actually has not been increased but has been broadened and expanded.

We have seen property tax credits that have been cut, and we have seen pensioners, in the case of elderly people, the school tax assistance—now there is an income test—so that the effect on some seniors is up to \$175 less in their pockets. So those are forms of taxes on the people of Manitoba.

We have also seen the social allowance recipients' tax credits cut. Again, the people in our society who are oftentimes the most vulnerable, who certainly have the least disposable income, we have seen an increase for them indirectly. So for this government to say that there have been no tax increases, I think, is not quite correct. People out living in our constituencies certainly recognize that their disposable income is less and that they are feeling the crunch of difficult economic times.

I would like to specifically comment on some of the various departments and talk about perhaps where government can do a better job, and also congratulate the government on some of the areas where I think they are moving in the right direction.

Again, contrary to the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), I think it is very important that, if we feel that government is moving in an appropriate direction or in the right direction, we should comment on that and congratulate them, and that it is important to look at alternatives rather than just standing in the House and criticizing from day to day.

In the area of the Urban Affairs department, again I think we have seen examples of where this government has oftentimes taken a back seat and perhaps offloaded some problems onto other levels of government, whether that level of government be a municipal level, either rural municipalities or the cities in our province, particularly the City of Winnipeg, or whether that offloading has been to school divisions. Certainly school divisions will tell you that they are facing enormous pressures these days in terms of looking at their limited dollars and trying to decide where they are going to get their revenue from.

That is why, certainly in the city of Winnipeg in the case of Winnipeg No. 1, which is the school division that represents the area that I represent, Crescentwood, we will see an increase of some 2 percent in school taxes as well as an increase of over 3 percent in property taxes, which is a total of over 5 percent of an increase to people living in my constituency and certainly in other parts of the city as well. Those increases have certainly been if not a direct result but certainly an indirect result of actions by this particular government.

I know that the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) has stood up in this House and talked about, as an example, the Handi-Transit program and the fact that less dollars are going into that program. That program of course is managed by the City of Winnipeg. She has made it very clear that the Province of Manitoba has given monies to the City of Winnipeg and that they should be able

to find dollars within that pot of money to actually ensure that the Handi-Transit service can be maintained.

That may be all good and well, but I do believe that this government and in fact the Minister of Urban Affairs have a responsibility as Minister of Urban Affairs to ensure that there are some special programs and needs that are taken into consideration by the City of Winnipeg.

She has some control and should be sitting down with the City of Winnipeg to ensure the money that is handed over to the city is in fact well spent. Even though this province is not directly funding the Handi-Transit program, I believe the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh), the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Mitchelson) all have a responsibility to ensure that a very essential service, that is, transportation, is available and accessible for all of our people here in the city of Winnipeg, and that would include people who are disabled.

So although the funding is not directly from this government, I would still urge those ministers, along with the Executive Policy Committee perhaps from the City of Winnipeg and members of the disabled groups and the seniors groups to sit down and see if there are any solutions that could be looked at to make sure there is a reasonable service that is provided through the Handi-Transit program.

I am really asking for this government, and led by the Minister of Urban Affairs, to take on a leadership role, to facilitate discussion and perhaps some solution rather than to simply stand in this House and say, it is not our problem, we have given money to the City of Winnipeg. It is our responsibility because we are here to serve the needs of all Manitobans across this province, and the disabled community and the seniors are part of our province of Manitoba.

When we look at the Urban Affairs department—and it is an interesting department, because it is a very small department. I think some 13 or 14 staff years are directed to that particular department. It would be interesting possibly to look at again, if we are giving suggestions to the

government, is there any way that the administration of Urban Affairs could be amalgamated with another department? Perhaps there are some ways that we could have some administrative efficiencies, perhaps not.

I think that is something that could be looked at in terms of the Department of Urban Affairs, not that there is not an important function associated with that department, but it is relatively small in terms of staff years. Is there perhaps a better way of delivering those kinds of services? I bring that up as a discussion point only, Madam Deputy Speaker. Obviously the ministers of the Crown and the department have more insight into what exactly is done in those departments and if, in fact, that would be possible, to look at such an amalgamation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I also wanted to comment, albeit briefly, on the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. I must say that I had the opportunity a number of weeks ago to attend a panel discussion that was sponsored by the Manitoba Heritage Federation. I had the opportunity to hear from the Manitoba Heritage Federation and my colleagues in the Legislature about heritage.

What was interesting about that meeting that I attended was that there were representatives from Manitoba who were involved in heritage and were concerned about not only preservation of heritage but promotion of heritage here in Manitoba.

When I looked across that room, and I give credit to all of those individuals who were there as volunteers, the average age of those individuals was probably over 50 years of age. There were very few individuals that were under 50 in that room. My concern was, all these wonderful volunteers, particularly in rural Manitoba, who are providing all of this service and who are very deeply committed to heritage in this province, what will happen when those individuals decide 20, 30 years down the road that in fact they can no longer volunteer all those hours? What is going to happen in rural Manitoba in particular?

* (1540)

I would hope that perhaps the government—and I do not know how the government would actually do this, but how do we instill in our younger people in this province the importance of what heritage is? I think there may be some programs that have occurred in the school system in regard to that. I would certainly hope that in fact we could see more of that. How do we get younger people involved so that the next generation is not going to forget the importance of our heritage, because we need to know where we have come from in order to know where we want to go?

I must say that the MLA for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), who obviously has some background in heritage and history, was quite eloquent in talking about her heritage. I would hope, this is certainly something that I see as a nonpartisan issue that all three parties could look at, if we can come up with suggestions on how we really promote as well as preserve heritage in our province. Again, my emphasis was on rural Manitoba, probably because I am from rural Manitoba, and we have seen young people leaving our rural areas. We have seen that for the last 20, 30 years. I am one of the young people, or I was one of the younger persons, who left rural Manitoba. I was young 20 years ago; now I am not quite that young.

Madam Deputy Speaker, again, I leave those comments about heritage on the record. I was interested in the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, the MLA for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), and his comments the other day regarding heritage. I hope he was not quite taking all the credit for the success of *Crash Test Dummies*, but he had a good point. That point was that there is enormous talent in the province of Manitoba, and there is enormous potential in this province, particularly in the area of film and the arts.

We have many, many talented individuals, many kinds of artists, whether they are in the print media, in the film industry, writers, painters, other visual arts—wonderful, wonderful talented individuals. I would hope, again as a smaller department—and certainly those departments do not always have the showpersonship that we hear about Education and

Health and Family Services, but they are important components of the kinds of services that a government provides.

I would hope that the Manitoba Arts Council and the department would continue to promote artists in Manitoba, and would look at the expansion of the film industry, as an example. I understand that with the Credo film group that there have been some innovative projects that they are looking at, and I would hope to see more of that occur here in Manitoba because, again, that is part of our heritage and that is the part of where we want to go in this province.

I would also ask the minister—and I will have an opportunity to look at this more in detail in Estimates—although I think the Manitoba Arts Council is an important body and does a good job, is there a way that smaller artists, less well-known artists can have opportunities to access some of the dollars that the Manitoba Arts Council does provide in grants? I know this has been an ongoing issue with the artists in the community, and it is something that I think perhaps needs to be looked at, or just to ensure that in fact we are distributing the dollars the best way we can.

I know that there is an application process, but sometimes artists who are in more of an obscure type of art form feel that in fact they are not given the same opportunities as artists who are in the more traditional fields. Be that as it may, it is something the Manitoba Arts Council, I would hope, would look at, and probably it continues to look at as they evaluate their criteria and make the decisions as to how they will give out the grants and how they will give out the dollars.

So I applaud the minister and the staff in the Department of Heritage and Culture for their initiatives, and I hope they will continue to work with the communities as we see culture and heritage as very important components here in the province of Manitoba.

I would like to talk a little bit about education and training, and my colleague, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), spoke extensively about education in his comments. We have a new minister in the Department of Education and

Training, and what we have seen in this budget is a 2.6 percent cut overall in the department. I know that dollars are not endless in the department. I know that dollars are not endless in governments in general. I suppose my real concern is, as I look at this budget, that in two of the key areas, Department of Health and Department of Education and Training, one has received a cut in dollars, and the other department, Health, which has always received an increase, albeit small, has not received an increase this year. It has, in fact, received a decrease. I believe that education and training and health are so very, very key when we are looking at the overall quality of living in a province such as Manitoba.

I must give credit in education and training to a number of professionals, to parents, who have in fact participated to date in looking at how we can reform the education system. I know that there was a wonderful conference forum that was held in Brandon a number of months ago. It was sponsored jointly by the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees and the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents and they also invited parents. They had an opportunity to discuss the issues of education, look at what was important and also look at some solutions and what kinds of reform mechanisms we need to put in place in this province in the area of education.

I also note that in that group were some of the executives of those organizations, who have an opportunity to meet with the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Manness) on a regular basis, and I would hope that the minister would take very seriously the comments and the ideas and the solutions that have been presented by those individuals, and also would look at the blueprint that was developed at that conference in Brandon. There were some very sound ideas that were presented, and I believe that this is what the Minister of Education—he should be listening to those individuals, and there were parents included, as well.

Now, I know that the Minister of Education has decided to hold a separate parents' forum, one

which is this Saturday, which I plan to take the opportunity to attend as an observer for part of the day, and I am very much interested in hearing what the parents have to say, although, certainly, as we talk to our constituents on a regular basis and meet them at the doorways, education is something that is very much on their minds, whether they are students who are attending university, whether they are parents of children in elementary schools or high schools or whether they are grandparents and concerned about the education of their grandchildren. It is very much a key issue for people in Manitoba and, in fact, across Canada. It is very hard to pick up a newspaper or a magazine in Canada without reading something about education in this country.

I would hope that with that parents' forum, the minister would hear what the parents have to say and be able to incorporate that into some of the excellent suggestions that have come out of the conference in Brandon and that can be used as a blueprint to really look at education reform here in Manitoba.

I would hope that the Minister of Education and Training would take a page from the Manitoba health reform, and when I say take a page, not just look at the blueprint that was developed by Manitoba Health but also look at the pitfalls and some of the mistakes that have been made along the way, and I do not make that comment because of this particular government in power.

I think any kind of reform process will have its pitfalls, and there will be mistakes made. I think that is the way oftentimes governments and organizations work, and we are not necessarily going to get around that, but I think we should be able to learn from our mistakes or errors, or perhaps learn how to do something in a different way, and I would hope, again, that the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Manness) would be able to take some lessons from health reform, look at what has worked well, what has not worked well, what have been some of the pitfalls, and would be able to learn from that, because, certainly, we as legislators, that should be one of our goals, to be able to learn from each other and

learn from what has gone on well and what has perhaps not worked so well.

The Minister of Education and Training had commented the other day, and I was pleased to hear that this process had moved along, about the services that have been provided to special needs children in the schools. This government had got a group of deputy ministers together and other senior officials in the Departments of Health and Family Services and Education to look at some jurisdictional issues and some other issues related to special needs children in the school system. It certainly has not been an easy problem, and it is also not a problem that came overnight or that occurred when this government took power in '88. This problem was there long before that. In fact there was probably less co-operation and more fragmentation in the early '80s in regard to what kinds of services we provided to special needs children in the school system and how the departments worked together.

* (1550)

I know we started to see a bit more co-operation amongst the departments, and I think that is positive, where at least we have individual program plans, and we have educational staff and Family Services staff and Health staff who are working together. In this case, there are some very valid questions that were asked by, I think it was, the Manitoba Medical Association, The Manitoba Teachers' Society about what kinds of services can teachers be reasonably expected to provide to these special needs children in schools.

A lot of those services related to medical services, and teachers are feeling uncomfortable in some of the kinds of health needs they feel they are delivering to these children. Then we get into some sort of a jurisdictional discussion or disagreement about who is also going to pay for those kinds of services, if in fact we need a home care attendant who is brought in, or an aide, someone who can provide some of the dressing changes. Sometimes there is medication management. Sometimes there needs to be tube feeding that is done. There are very specific medical services that teachers or teachers' aides are being asked to do, and they are

not feeling qualified. They are feeling uncomfortable in doing that, yet, of course, they recognize the importance of having that child in school and integrating that child into the school classroom.

Those issues need to be sorted out amongst the departments. The Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) did comment that the committee had the recommendations, I believe, the deputy ministers, and that they would be looking at some recommendations or plan, and that we might hear by the end of June on that. I certainly hope that that does come to fruition. I had asked the minister at the time, before that plan was put in place, that he again consult with the stakeholders involved to ensure that what his departments are planning to do makes sense and will be very workable within the schools. So we do look forward to that long-awaited plan on medical services in the needs of special needs children in our school system.

The Roblin report, which we heard, and the Honourable Duff Roblin who presided over that report, certainly had some very interesting recommendations stated within it. We have heard some of the recommendations, the concerns about the recommendations from the students' association, from the universities, but as I have met and talked with the heads of the universities individually, I think there is some agreement that in fact they realize there needs to be more co-operation amongst the universities. They know that there also needs to be more linkages and co-operation with community colleges in our province and the universities.

I think they were pleased when they saw within the Roblin commission the fact that there would be mechanisms established to ensure that what happens in community colleges has a relationship to what goes on in universities, and that we are all on the same wavelength, and we are looking toward providing services to groups of students in the same way. I think that was a positive report, part of a positive report, from the Roblin commission.

The Roblin commission had a number of recommendations. It talked about increasing the

number of spaces at community colleges over the next five years. Although, I certainly believe that the role of community colleges in Manitoba needs to be strengthened, and we need to do a better job, I am a little concerned that that commission, without really studying community colleges, was all of a sudden able to leap to the conclusion that in five years we need to double the spaces.

I would ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) to look at that recommendation in light of, yes, let us look at a move toward expanding the role of community colleges, but let us not just make the decision that in five years enrollment should be doubled. I think we need to, first of all, make sure that our community colleges are providing relevant courses to our students.

In order to do that there have to be intimate discussions with the business and the labour community. We need to ensure that the courses we are providing in community colleges are on the cutting edge and that we are training students for the jobs that will be here in Manitoba. Because we as legislators in this Chamber oftentimes are not on the cutting edge as to what we should be training our students for. By the time that we decide or find out, oh yeah, this is going to be where we need the jobs in the next three years, it is already too late. We need the business community and we need the labour community and we need the community colleges and the universities to take a look at that and to say, here is where we need to start our training, and there does need to be an expansion in our community colleges.

I believe that the universities here in this province are quite prepared to work with community colleges to ensure that the goals and the objectives of providing education for students in this province—the goals are the same and the objectives are similar, because certainly we want to educate our students here in Manitoba. We want to ensure that they have jobs available for them once they have completed their education, that they will stay and make their home in this province because we want them to be productive members and to be taxpayers here in this province.

One of the other recommendations of the Roblin commission talked about looking at the whole area of tuition fees and how tuition fees should correspond more to the kind of faculty that a student was enrolled in. Although that was done to some extent, I again would caution the minister when he is looking at this. We do not want to set up a system where the professional degree programs are much more expensive to students than are the other faculties. I think that would set up a two-tier system where only those students with wealth or with financial means would be able to take that professional training. We do not want to see that two-tier system.

There was also the recommendation that tuition fees be frozen until some of the problems and difficulties with student aid and loans and bursaries are sorted out. This government in its budget speech has decided that tuition fees can rise no more than 5 percent. That is contrary to what the Roblin report recommended.

I would hope that the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) would reconsider that and when he is looking at the entire Robin report that he would not just cherry-pick the recommendations that he would like to see implemented and not look at them within the context of the entire report.

What I am finding from students, as I meet them in their homes, as they phone or they meet me in the constituency office, is they are saying it seems to be harder and harder for them to get the financial means to attend university or community college, and I have been impressed by so many young people who are going to university part time. They have started their own businesses.

In one case of a couple of constituents, they started their own cleaning business. They were entrepreneurial in spirit, and they are living communally together so they can save on rent. They have their own business, they are going to university part time, and they really are dedicated to getting an education and to developing a business, but they are finding it tough in terms of the lack of student aid and the difficulties oftentimes in accessing student aid.

I think we have to examine that entire system and make sure student aid is accessible to our students, and it should not become a program that ends up being so bureaucratized that the goal of it becomes to leave students out and to prevent them from going to university. It should be the kind of program that removes barriers and is accessible. That oftentimes is the problem with some of our programs here in government. They become so systematized and bureaucratized that rather than assisting the client, the individual, the consumer, we spend more time figuring out a reason as to how do we not help that person. That is a product, not of individual civil servants or of any governments, it is a product of bureaucratization, which we need to look at changing within all of the departments.

* (1600)

One of the other concerns with post-secondary education has been the limiting of dollars to the ACCESS program, and in speaking with a number of students who are involved in the ACCESS program and a number of professors, they have said that even now, even since the changes in the ACCESS program last year, they are starting to see a different kind of student that is going into the ACCESS program or is being accepted, and those students who are now being accepted are students who actually have more financial resources available to them, because the professors do not want to see students in that program who are going to fail the program because they do not have the financial resources and they end up having to drop out.

So they are starting to see students going into that program that used to or might normally have gone through the University of Manitoba in the other programs. They have already in the last year started to see a shift and seeing people who are at the lower end of the economic scale, who have disadvantages, that those individuals are being left out and are not getting accepted into ACCESS programs.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Again, I do not want to see us as a province setting up a two-tier educational system where you

have to be wealthy in order to attend post-secondary education. That is not what we want to see in our province of Manitoba.

I know the Minister of Education, I do not quite know how to make him understand. He talks about fairness, and he wants to be fair when he is looking at education in the system, and the only thing fair, f-a-i-r, the only thing I can think that it means for the Minister of Education is for an individual who is rich, because that seems to me how they are spelling fair, because he does not seem to understand that in order to have an equal, fair system you have to put in place some programs and some services and some opportunities for those people who are, by nature of finances or socioeconomic status, disadvantaged, and that is what creating a fair system is.

Because we were all, when we were born, created equally but because of our environment, how we have lived and where we lived, oftentimes there are disadvantages that affect some of us more than others. We need to redress those disadvantages and that is what a fair system is. That is what equal opportunity is here in Manitoba.

I did want to comment briefly on the boot camp issue as presented by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey). My colleague the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) was meeting with some children today who were in group homes through the Children's Home of Winnipeg, and some of them were telling him that they were in boot camps in British Columbia when they were 13 and 14 and what they got out of the boot camp was that they were able to meet a whole other group of kids who had gone throughout the same system and who were involved in criminal activity, and they formed a network so that when they got out of the boot camps, instead of just being on your own to go do break-and-enters, they had a little group of people that could go into the homes and do break-and-enters.

So in fact, rather than creating a positive attitude and in fact rehabilitating those individuals, it really was a networking system, similar to what we find in our prisons here in Canada, where in fact prisons, rather than attempting to rehabilitate

individuals, they oftentimes are allowed to network with other inmates and end up coming out of prisons and creating more crimes.

The Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) asks: What is the answer? I will give her what I think is the answer. It is not an easy answer, and it is not a short-term answer. The answer to young offenders and violence in our society—it is a long-term problem. It is related to unemployment. Again, people who have been in the city police for years will tell you that the kids that they arrest as juveniles and the ones that they arrest as adults, those same kids they arrest as adults will be the ones who are unemployed and do not have a job. The students they arrest or the kids that they arrest as juveniles whom they do not ever see in an adult correctional system or arrest are the ones who have been able to get employment, and they are more stable. Those are the ones they do not see again. So the root to a lot of issues in our province and in our country is related to unemployment and is related to jobs. So they are not easy solutions, and they are not necessarily short-term solutions. [interjection]

The Minister responsible for MTS and Highways (Mr. Findlay) talks about, how do you motivate some people to work? That is not an easy answer either as to how you motivate those people to work, but you have to start slowly because, again, those very same kids will say—if their families are working, or their older brothers or their mother and father, they at least see some hope if they see people in their own family working. So we have to start somewhere in trying to lower unemployment and create jobs. I commend the government; albeit short-term, the REDI program that they talked about today, at least it is a start. It is something to get young people, in this case, working, to know what it is to go to work every day. We have to keep instilling that kind of hope into our young people. It is a generational thing.

I do not think it is going to change overnight, but I think we have to start looking more at the root causes of violence and of poor health. Our health status as a province is directly related to poverty. We know that. We know that the poorer regions of

our province, that people there are less healthy than people in other regions of our province. We know that it is directly related to poverty. They are not easy answers, but it has to be done on the long-term basis.

I wanted to—

An Honourable Member: They will stay poor as long as that is the case, as long as you are in government. As long as you guys are in government our areas will stay poor. He does not remember. When we are in government, your areas, we are going to turn the clock back on you—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I am sure I heard, I am most certain I heard the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) say that once their party comes to power the southern constituencies and/or areas that we represent, the clock will be turned back and they will be made poor. I cannot—that was a threat, an unconscionable threat. I ask the member for Dauphin to withdraw that remark.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): On the same point of order, I am glad that the member and the other member sitting there who has been getting all the favouritism of treatment by this government recognize that there will be a New Democratic government in Manitoba after the next election who will ensure fairness for all Manitobans in this province and distribution of wealth in a way that is fairer for all our Manitoba constituencies in this province. That is what they are afraid of—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised by the honourable Minister of Education and Training, I believe the remarks that the honourable minister was referring to came from across the way and the remarks from the honourable member for Dauphin, unfortunately, are not on Hansard and there is no way that I can rule on something that I did not hear.

Therefore, the honourable minister does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Now getting back to the honourable member for Crescentwood. [interjection] Order, please. The honourable member for Crescentwood has the floor.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Speaker, I must comment on the comment from the MLA for Dauphin. One of the main reasons that I decided to run in 1988 for political office was because I was a civil servant, and I could not stand the unfairness of the NDP government. That was one of the reasons that I decided to run, because I thought we needed changes in the Civil Service.

Mr. Speaker, I only have a few minutes left. I have not touched on one of the major departments, and that is the Department of Health. I will have the opportunity to debate with the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) in detail as we go into the spending Estimates on Monday—but in my last few minutes I would like to put a few comments on the record.

I have to give credit to this government and under the former Minister of Health and continued on with this minister for at least attempting to look at the reform of the health care system. We have seen it occur across the provinces in Canada that there needs to be reform, and if we can do a better job of delivering health care to Manitobans then we should do that and there should be changes.

I noted in the blueprint that the government put out that they really emphasize consultation and community-based care. I wanted to comment a little bit on that. I think we have started to see, hopefully, some more consultation in terms of the various stakeholders who are involved in health. We have seen that with this new Minister of Health, at least he has taken a renewed interest in meeting with these groups. What I do not want to see, however, with this health care reform is a standstill as we wait for a provincial election, which could be Friday, Tuesday, or could be next year, but I do not want to see a total standstill.

What we are finding from staff that we have talked to in the hospitals, particularly Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface, is that morale is very low. One of the reasons the morale is very low is because everyone is in limbo and they do not exactly know what is going to happen and what is going to occur in the future in regard to their jobs. Will they have a job? Will their job functions change? The hospitals, the staff in the hospitals, need to know exactly what is going to happen and what is going to occur. I would hope that the minister would allow the hospitals to go ahead and to work with the staff to make those kinds of changes.

* (1610)

One of my disappointments in this budget, Mr. Speaker, was what I saw as a lack of emphasis put on community-based services. I know the Minister of Health has said there is a \$2.6 million increase in Home Care, but when you look at the overall Home Care budget in this province, and when you look at if in fact the Home Care budget was overspent last year—which we will not know until we get into Estimates—2.6 percent is not much of an increase.

If we are really looking at changing home care services, if we are really looking at expanding community-based care, if we are really discharging people sooner, if we are really ensuring that people stay longer in their homes and do not end up in emergency and do not end up in acute care hospital beds, there has to be more of an expansion for home care services. We need to look at nurse-managed centres in the community. We need to start looking at how we can utilize other professionals in the system—nurse practitioners, midwives—in order to provide services. I would really like to see an emphasis on the community based care and a real increase to the area of nurse-managed centres. The Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses have some excellent pilot projects they would like to try to see if we can actually provide a better form of care, more cost effective, right in the communities where people live.

I want to address further with the minister next week and in Question Period the whole issue of Bill 22 and the impact that it is having on hospitals and community care. I think the government is missing the point when they think that they are saving so much on salary lines, because the cost in other lines of the various departments are actually increasing. I think that is obvious when you look at discharge as an example, in the rural hospitals in particular where they cannot discharge on Fridays because there is no home care staff, so in fact that individual stays in hospital Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In the case of rural areas, because the resource co-ordinators are only part time, the person may stay on a Monday as well. So we spend four days on one person in a hospital bed at a cost to the system when that individual could have been at home if in fact there were home care staff that were available to work to provide the service and put in place the supports so that person could go home.

These are some of the issues that we will be dealing with in the Estimates process, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to debating all of those issues with the Minister of Health, and I thank you for your attention.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and pride that I do stand in my place today in this Legislature and speak in support of our seventh budget as government in this House and commend our Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) for the fine job that he has done in presentation and in all the deliberations that had to be undertaken.

An awful lot of work and time and effort goes into the budget process not only by ministers and their respective departments, but also by members of the Treasury Board, who spend tireless hours going through each department, making very difficult decisions in some circumstances, but trying to look at the whole picture and to end up with a budget that is fair, and fair for all Manitobans, taking into consideration the debt load that we already experience as Manitobans, and to look at a way that we might come to grips with spending more than we take in on a yearly

basis and ensuring that we are not adding to the burden or to the tax load of Manitobans who have come to understand that this government is not here for that purpose but here, in fact, to provide programming to meet the needs of individual Manitobans and groups of Manitobans in a fair way without increasing the tax burden. I think we have done an excellent job and have set the groundwork for increased opportunity for economic activity in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat limited in my ability to take a lot of time to make my comments today speaking on the budget, but there are a few points that I want to highlight and explain in a little more time than we may have the opportunity to in Question Period as a result of questions from the opposition. I believe the Department of Family Services, the staff in the department, and our government's direction in the area of Family Services have presented a very balanced approach through this budgetary process. I am very pleased that we have the ability to look at reform of our social safety net, look at our ability to take people off welfare and get them into the workforce. There have already been some things announced that will decrease the numbers of people on welfare, one being the infrastructure program that does focus \$10 million on initiatives that will encourage those on welfare to come off those roles and be gainfully employed.

So I commend the Minister of Finance for all of his hard work that he has done with the federal government to ensure that we have a program, and we are taking into consideration some of the people that are most needy in our community and in need of feeling good about themselves and creating the opportunity for them to contribute in a positive manner to our Manitoba society.

Mr. Speaker, we also have pilot projects that we will be announcing in the very near future that will look at single moms and opportunities for them to build self-esteem, to receive some training, possibly some on-the-job training and some positive work experience, with supports and services that need to be put in surrounding them, working with the private sector, with the service

providers, and also with community volunteers to see how we can augment services to this group of people in our society.

I want to take some time to talk about the issues that arose in Question Period today around the refocussing of our child welfare system. We have seen over the last number of years, not only since this government has been in power, but through previous administrations, that the number of cases on our child welfare system have increased year by year in unacceptable amounts. It tells me when we are putting more dollars into a system to deal with children and troubled children, and we see our caseloads increasing—it tells me that we are doing something wrong, that the services that we are providing today are not meeting the needs of the kids who most need those services.

We have worked very hard over the last few years, my predecessor and the Minister of Family Services, in amalgamation of the Winnipeg region from six agencies into one agency to deliver child welfare services and this year with the refocus of the dollars that we spend into new and innovative and creative ways of doing things. These were not decisions that government made in isolation, that the department sat down and said, we will do this. We worked very closely, Mr. Speaker, with Winnipeg Child and Family in the development of a new management plan that would refocus our energies and our enthusiasm and our support for children.

A key part of that change and focus and redirection of those dollars, Mr. Speaker, is strategically to look at and place emphasis upon family support, family preservation and family responsibility—I think those are three key components—and a vision that those who are providing the front-line support services to children in need and government have developed together. It has been a partnership, I think, that has really come to grips with the issue of the increasing caseloads; and, as a result, we will be implementing new and innovative ways in partnership with the agencies that deliver the services to try to make a difference.

We all know that we have to look at early intervention, early child development and services at the front end, so that we do not experience at the far end the situation that we have today where kids are coming into care and kids are very troubled and very disturbed at a very early age. It becomes earlier and earlier where we see children involved in the justice system as a result of a lack of direction at the age of 10 and 11 and 12 years old. Mr. Speaker, that is unacceptable, and we have to change the way we do things.

I think it is very appropriate in International Year of the Family that we look at that focus on the family and say, how do parents accept responsibility for parenting? If they are having difficulty accepting that responsibility or understanding what their role is as a parent, how do we direct the resources that we presently spend and refocus those into supports around that family so that we can help parents learn how to parent, that we can help parents understand that there is a responsibility with having a child or children, and how do we put the supports within that family so that in fact we do not have to take them out of that family and put them into foster care at the other end?

* (1620)

The system that has been in place for many, many years—it was there under the NDP administration and it has been there until this year—focuses on providing dollars to Child and Family Services agencies only when you take a child out of a family circumstance or situation and put them into a foster home. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, those who are working on the front lines have made the decision that, in order to get the dollars that they believe they need to support those children, they have taken children out of family circumstances and family settings and put them into foster care so that they could receive the per diems. We do not want that to continue. What we want to see is the focus and the dollars redirected in the area of keeping families together, helping parents parent, helping parents understand their responsibility and their commitment when they decide to have children.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, as a result of questioning today, that the answers are not that we have cut money out of the child welfare system because in fact we have put more dollars in this budget into the child welfare system. We have \$2.5 million more in a special Family Support Innovations Fund that will allow agencies, will allow the community to access that money to try to keep families together, to do the up-front, early intervention, early child development and early child support so that we do not have to take them out of those families.

We have also made the decision to free up money within the agencies. As I indicated just earlier, agencies have indicated in the past that they have had to take children out of homes and put them into foster care to get money to provide support. We have said to agencies today that we are going to free up money. No longer will you have to take kids into care in order to get the dollars that you need to provide the support. We have redirected and refocused Level I money and freed it up for agencies to take creative approaches to solving family problems.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of foster parent rates, we have clearly indicated and worked with Winnipeg Child and Family Services around the whole issue of foster parent rates. The decisions that have been made have been made in consultation with Child and Family Services, and the dollars that are saved on relative rates are redirected within the agencies for other kinds of supports, with our ultimate goal being to have less kids coming into care and more children being supported in their family circumstances, in their family situation, with not only supports to the child but supports to families.

We have taken a new direction. I make no apologies for that new direction because I believe in working with the agency. We have determined that we can have our caseloads decrease and have children be better served with the new approaches.

On the issue, Mr. Speaker, of the 16- and 17-year-olds receiving less support, what I want to say is that there are many 16- and 17-year-olds within the system who are accepting treatment and

wanting to be part of a plan that will help them to better be able to cope with daily life as a result. We want to continue that support. We will continue, and there will be no decrease.

We have been paying rates well over the minimum basic foster care rate to agencies that are delivering services to children who are on the run, who do not want to be part of a treatment program, who run away from the agency that is trying to meet their needs. We are saying today that if a child who is sixteen or seventeen years old does not want to be an active partner in finding a solution we are not going to provide the major dollars any longer to support them with treatment.

If they make the determination on their own that they want to be a part of the process we will put the supports around them and we will place the dollars around them to provide those supports. But if they do not want to be a part of the solution they will no longer receive the supports with major amounts of dollars. They will receive a basic rate, somewhat equivalent to a welfare rate, and that is the only support that will be there for them.

So, Mr. Speaker, we make no excuses for those who do not want to be a part of a solution when they become 16 or 17 years old. What we want to do is ensure that the dollars that we are spending are spent in support of those children at that age who do want to make a difference, who do want to change their lives around. We will continue to work in that direction, and I know that we are going to see positive results as a result of some of the changes and some of the decisions that we have made.

I want to speak very quickly about services to the mentally disabled that have seen fairly significant increases in my department. I indicated in my response to the throne speech that this was an area within my department that I had much sensitivity towards. The people who are mentally disabled, for no reason of their own, are some of the most vulnerable people within Manitoba society.

I heard from parents of mentally disabled who are now in their 70s and had a 50-year-old disabled child living with them that they could no longer

cope, that they could no longer care for those children, and they needed additional supports.

Mr. Speaker, we have responded to their concerns and to their requests, and we have put over \$4 million in the budget, in the Community Living side of things, to ensure that children and adults with a mental disability will have additional support so that we can enhance their community living and their day programming as a result.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have touched on those two areas specifically because there has been an increase. We have attempted to look very thoroughly in the Department of Family Services and see where increases were needed, where extra resources could be allocated, how we could adjust in those areas where we believe we should be able to accomplish savings.

Those are in the areas on welfare, where we honestly believe, because of this budget and this government's commitment to keeping taxes down and creating a positive economic environment in our province, that we will see the numbers on the welfare rolls decreasing as job opportunities become available, as businesses decide and determine that they want to move to Manitoba and create jobs because Manitoba is a good place to work, to live, to raise a family.

* (1630)

So I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to stand here in support of this budget.

I would encourage members opposite to think very seriously about voting against the initiatives in this budget that are going to provide additional supports to those Manitobans that are the most vulnerable in our community and a deficit and an agenda that will look at a balanced budget by 1997. I encourage them all to think seriously before they vote against the initiatives in this budget that will serve Manitobans well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise and add my comments to the Budget Debate and to talk a bit about how the programs that were announced will affect the

people in my community and, of course, others in Manitoba. Of course, some of the—

I am not sure that the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) will be happy with some of the comments that I am going to make about education and how it relates to my community, so I think he should hold his comments on whether or not I am his type of person or not until after he has heard what I have got to say.

Before I get into the content of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting to note that there was a communique that was just released on April 25 from the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, and it made reference to the throne speech and the philosophy that it has taken. I would like to quote from that document. The heading of the Chamber News is: Throne speech short on substance.

You would think, Mr. Speaker, that if the government and their friends were along the same philosophical lines that there would have been something more positive said about the government's throne speech, but the quote from the document says: The throne speech was long on philosophy but short on substance, according to chamber chairperson Terry Cristall. Mr. Cristall goes on to say: I am comfortable with the philosophical approach that was taken, but I was looking for more initiatives to sustain long-term employment.

So even the Chamber of Commerce in Winnipeg recognizes the government's failure to create or to in some way stimulate the economy that will create employment for the people of our province.

That is the same message, Mr. Speaker, that we have essentially been delivering to this government now for a number of budgets and throne speeches that they have brought to this Chamber, that they have not taken the initiatives and the steps to stimulate the economy.

We only have two engines of our economy. One of the those is the private sector; the other is the public sector. The private sector was more or less stalemated for a number of years and we were only left with the public sector, which the government refused to use as a stimulant for the economy.

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

The government—

An Honourable Member: Daryl, where is your other brother?

Mr. Reid: Well, that is a well-worn and, I am sure, worn-out phrase by now, and it has absolutely no effect or any bearing on me. I have heard it so many times over the years. I can assure the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) that even before I came to this House, there were others in my previous work career who tried the same lines on me, and they had no effect on me at that time. I am not that concerned about it.

I will not try to relate to personal attacks like the members opposite try to do from time to time, although I should maybe qualify that. Going back to the comments that the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard) said just a short time ago, where one of our colleagues in the House here was talking about the underprivileged people, the poor people of our province, and the minister at that time said that maybe it was the way the people in those communities vote since it was NDP representation and that the people and the NDP representatives were cementheads.

I find it unusual that the Minister of Energy and Mines would make comments like that about the people of central and northern Manitoba, the communities that are represented by New Democrats. These people freely and democratically elected members to this House, and I do not see why the Minister of Energy and Mines should take runs or shots at the representation and the people who chose that representation. [interjection] The Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Manness) should keep in mind too that when those discussions were taking place, there were a lot of interjections and a lot of very rude comments that were being placed on the record by members on his side at that time. I felt it my duty and my responsibility to call that member to order and I did just that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, at the same time, when the members opposite talk about comments that are being made in the House here, I go back to a time,

just a short time ago, when I was at a public meeting down in the St. Pierre area, and we were talking about Highway 59 where the communities and their representatives wanted to have some twinning of those highways down there. The former Minister of Highways went and made comments on the record that I found highly unusual at the time since I thought, maybe naively so, that when we were elected to this House, we were elected to represent not just the people who supported us but all the members of the community, and as ministers, we were chosen to represent all of the province for the departments for which we were charged with the responsibility.

At that public meeting, the former Minister of Highways and Transportation said that, as former Minister of Highways, he was very proud that, as minister, he had paved more miles of highways in southern Manitoba than any other Minister of Highways and Transportation in the history of the Province of Manitoba, to the exclusion of the maintenance and the repair and the upgrade of hundreds of kilometres of highways in central and northern Manitoba. The problem is, Mr. Acting Speaker, that this minister meant that it was all the miles that he had paved as minister south of the Trans-Canada Highway. What happened to all the highways in the rest of the province for which he was charged with the responsibility of maintaining and upgrading? Why did he exclude other parts of the province?

Point of Order

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): The honourable member is putting misleading information on the record, and it is against the rules to do so. I want it plainly put on the record that in my tenure twice as Minister of Highways spanning several decades, I actually paved more roads in southern Manitoba than my colleague the last Minister of Highways did.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): I am sorry. The minister did not have a point of order. It was clearly a dispute of the facts.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Acting Speaker, well, I do not think I have to say any more about that. Two former ministers of Highways and Transportation have just confirmed the comments that I just put on the record, and I think that it is only fair that the opportunities to pave other roads in our province should be given to other communities as well, not just the communities and roads south of No. 1 Highway.

Well, I do not want to spend any more time on that, Mr. Acting Speaker. I would like to go on with the comments more directly pertinent to the budget itself.

We have seen some changes in this budget, and there are some programs or initiatives that the government has brought forward in this budget that do have a small amount of merit. In those programs, I can tell the members opposite that I have had some phone calls, not a lot, but I have had some phone calls and people dropping into my offices asking me about these programs. The program in particular is the Home Renovation Program. Unfortunately, this program, in the estimation of my constituents—their words—falls far short of their ability to meet the criteria set down for this program.

Just today, I received a letter from one of my constituents talking about this particular program. What it says in this letter here is: Although I will examine this program more closely when I receive the details—this is a quote—that you are sending me, I have come to the conclusion at this time that this is nothing more than a pre-election gimmick.

Those are the comments in a letter sent to me today by one of my constituents.

This is a senior in my community, and you can attack the senior if you choose. I mean, you did last year in the budget where you took back \$175 in the senior school tax assistance and another \$75 from other taxpayers. So for a total of \$250, you attack seniors. Do you want to attack them again? Well, that is at your peril. I am not going to do that. I think the seniors have contributed far too much for our province already and that they deserve some

respect and that these programs are not targeted to them. I think you better take some steps.

Point of Order

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Acting Speaker, when a letter is referred to by a member in the House, I believe it is tradition that that letter should be tabled. I would just ask the member to table it if he would, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): It has been brought to my attention that under Rule 29.1, if a letter is referred to in a debate, it is to be tabled by the member.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Acting Speaker, I had the opportunity to talk to my constituent this morning. I asked him if he would be agreeable to my tabling this letter in the Chamber, and he has agreed to it. If the Chamber staff are willing to take photocopies of this and return the original, I would appreciate that.

* (1640)

The unfortunate part about this program, the Home Renovation Program—and this is from my seniors and other people in my community, the occasional young family that would call me on this said that the \$5,000 criteria you set down was too high for them. They could not afford to meet that criteria level. A lot of them had work that they needed to have done that did not meet that level of funding required.

On top of that, I have had seniors in my community call me and ask in the past about the Critical Home Repair Program. The unusual part about this budget and the unfortunate part, I suppose, is that this government has chosen to cut the Critical Home Repair Program from I believe \$400,000 a year down to \$30,000 a year, making it impossible to meet the needs in the communities of our province when it comes to this Critical Home Repair Program.

If the people do not have the \$5,000 that is set down by the Home Renovation Program, either by way of dollars or meeting the criteria of the

program, then they may not be eligible because there is not enough money in the Critical Home Repair Program to get their homes fixed when they absolutely need it to be done. I think the government should go back and rethink the home repair program and look at the criteria that they have set down.

The government has also brought forward a sales tax rebate program for first-time purchasers. I think that will go some way towards stimulating the new home construction within our province. That is one of, I believe, the highlights of this budget, but I believe it is not a sole reason why anyone should look at either supporting or not supporting this budget. There are many other considerations that should be taken into mind. A lot of them have to do with health and education as well.

I look at what has taken place with the education in particular for my own community, wherein I drew to the minister's attention during the Throne Speech Debate and of course during Question Period the erosion of programs in my own community, Transcona-Springfield School Division. Of course the minister chose not to assist the trustees for that, and it has caused further erosion in public education. At the same time, the minister has given increases to the private elite schools in our province.

I have parents calling me now and asking me why we should be giving more money to these private elite schools, some 20 percent over two years.

An Honourable Member: St. Joseph The Worker.

Mr. Reid: St. Joseph The Worker is not in my community, not in the bounds of my community. The minister across the way is saying that St. Joseph The Worker School is one of the private elite schools and that it should be held along the same lines as the St. John's-Ravenscourts and the Balmoral Halls. I think that is not the same category that we are talking about here. I am talking about the St. John's-Ravenscourt type of school.

I know, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the Liberal Party supports increased funding to the private elite schools of our province, but I can tell you, at the risk of losing an election, I will not support further cuts to public education in this province. We must support public education in this province. If the Liberal Party wants to support increased funding to private schools while the funding to public schools is being eroded, that is to their peril. I think that is the wrong position for them to take, and I can tell the Liberal Party that I will be taking that message to my constituents in the upcoming provincial election campaign.

Mr. Acting Speaker, for nearly four years I have been calling on the government to recognize the disastrous consequences that their education legislation and policies have had on the Transcona-Springfield School Division No. 12. From the unfair funding formula to the loss of teachers and support staff, Transcona has witnessed a systematic dismantling of public education. If left unchecked, the Filmon government's education policies will further dismantle public education creating what I believe is a two-tiered education system in our province. Unfortunately, the Liberals support increasing funding to the private elite schools which are beyond the financial reach of most Transcona families.

Point of Order

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Speaker, on a point of order, I would just like to point out to the member who is speaking that the MLA for Kildonan, in a meeting last year to Seven Oaks teachers, when asked if he would decrease funding to private schools specifically said no.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): The honourable member for Crescentwood did not have a point of order. It was clearly a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Acting Speaker, it almost sounds like the member for Crescentwood is now renouncing the policies that her former Leader, the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) has

said for a number of years, that she wanted to increase the funding for private schools in our province up to a level of 80 percent.

An Honourable Member: You do not know what our policy is on that.

Mr. Reid: That is true. Maybe we do not know what the Liberal policy is. Maybe it is a flip-flop policy—this way one day and the next day it is some other different policy. Maybe if the members opposite in the Liberal Party want to have the chance to stand up and put their comments about education and private school financing on the record, be my guest. The next time you have a chance to talk, stand up and tell us what your policies are.

Mr. Acting Speaker, even if it means my loss at the election polls, I will continue to defend public education and a fair deal for the Transcona School Division. I will refuse to sit idly by while this government, supported by the Liberal Party, undermines public education in favour of private elite schools in our province.

In the budget the government talks about changes to transportation within our province and within the country. At the same time, they have over the last three budgets reduced the level of diesel fuel taxation that is charged to the railways operating through our province and in our province. While that has meant that there has been a loss of revenue for the province itself, I find that we are continuing to see further erosion in the employment opportunities for those that are employed within the railway industry in Manitoba.

I just this morning met with many of the railway people in my community. One of the things that they told me that they wanted to see was that if this government or any government, whichever government is in power in Manitoba, is going to look at reducing the level of diesel fuel taxation in this province that they need to receive some assurances and preferably some guarantees from the railways themselves that certain employment levels will be maintained within the province of Manitoba. Now, that is the employees of the railways themselves telling me that.

I agree with that position 100 percent, because if we are going to give something away by way of revenue reductions for the province, by way of rebates and taxation levels, that we should be getting something in return, a quid pro quo for that. That is something that has not occurred.

I can tell the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) who is here today that we are—and I was told this this morning again—going to see more losses of railway jobs in this province. The number that I heard this morning was another 100 jobs out of the Transcona plant itself.

An Honourable Member: Two hundred and fifty.

Mr. Reid: Two hundred and fifty more jobs reduced at CN? Because if that is what the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) is saying—[interjection] Okay, I will get to that in a minute.

I can tell the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) that there is going to be another hundred jobs lost at CN Transcona Shops. Now, it may be by way of buyouts or it may be by layoffs, but those are the numbers that the employees are telling me this morning.

* (1650)

So if this minister is considering, and should have considered in the past, and his colleague the former Minister of Finance should have considered getting some job assurances for railway employees in our province, I think it is only fair if you are going to give up something, you get something in return.

During this government's term of office over 3,000 railway jobs have been lost in Manitoba. The Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay) has refused to intercede on behalf of the railway employees, saying that it is a decision of both CP and CN Rail and the federal government and that this Minister of Highways and Transportation will not interfere.

We do not need another caretaker minister who is just sitting there and letting the jobs get eroded from our province. We need a minister who is going to take action to defend and protect

Manitoba jobs and interests in the railway industry.

The Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) just spoke a few minutes ago. He indicated, even though I have not seen the press announcement on this, and I find it unusual that he would not have had some press announcement indicating that there were further job creations, that Palliser Furniture manufacturing, if I understand the Deputy Premier correctly, is going to receive I believe a repayable loan from the provincial government to expand their facilities in the Transcona area, hopefully for the Logic Division, which is the furniture manufacturing portion.

There have been a lot of problems with the particle board manufacturing process that Palliser has in operation in my community. I know I have asked a number of questions on this. I have had a number of meetings [interjection] The Deputy Premier here is trying to trade off environment for the jobs. This is what he is trying to do, and he is trying to trade off health for jobs.

I can tell the Deputy Premier that this is something that is not going to work within my community. I have talked too long and many, many times with the residents of my community about this, and they are determined that they want this issue, this environmental issue resolved.

An Honourable Member: It has been.

Mr. Reid: It has not been. I can tell the Deputy Premier that there is certain documentation that is available, that he should at least have available to his eyes, that shows that there is still environmental concerns within that plant. If he is not aware of it, then he should be doing something to make sure that he is aware of it, because it can be a serious embarrassment for his government if that information comes out, particularly for his Minister of Environment.

I can tell the Deputy Premier that the members of my public who are on the community team, Transcona residents against pollution, who are meeting with the Palliser plant owners, know of this information. The Minister of Environment

(Mr. Cummings) should make himself aware of it as well.

The by-product emissions from this particle board manufacturing process have seriously impacted the health and the quality of life for most of the residents that live near to the plant or are in the path of the contaminant emissions. The Department of Environment and the minister have at every opportunity stonewalled the affected residents and myself in our efforts to have the polluting stopped. Instead, the minister and the department have come perilously close to dereliction of duty as the Minister of Environment. I dare say, Mr. Acting Speaker, this Minister of Environment has almost been negligent in the performance of his duties by not looking after the environmental interests of the residents of my community as it relates to this plant.

There are many other areas that I would like to talk about, and I can see that my time is running short. I am sure there will be other opportunities for me to talk about this budget. I hope the government will listen to the words that the residents of my community have indicated to me which I have brought forward on their behalf, one of them in written form, and that there will be opportunities for the government to improve on this program to make it more available to residents.

The government went ahead by their infrastructure program announcements in the budget for a rural gasification program, some \$33 million, which will improve services to homes and industries. While this is welcome I am sure for rural Manitoba, the government should have included more communities in this agreement, and there should be at least a strategic long-term plan to bring the supply of natural gas to these rural communities. I think a rural gasification program is a good idea, but unfortunately there were many communities that were left out of the program and that does not seem to be a long-term strategy for gasification to bring natural gas to these communities.

The government has said many times—and there was a quote. I looked back in their 1992 budget and it says here in a quote from the budget

document: "Deficits are not the answer. They add to the future costs, squeezing out services and adding to the tax burdens." That is a direct quote from the 1992 budget document, and yet during the government's term of office they have run up a deficit of over \$2 billion, \$2 billion of deficit in this province during their term of office.

When we left office in 1988, I believe the Auditor has said there was some \$58.7 million left in the bank to the positive, to the good. Yet since that time, we are seeing historical high levels of deficit, and we have had no changes in the position even though the government, even though the government makes long-term promises to balance the budget over a period of time.

I find that this is one budget, while it has a few small points to it, that the government attempted to move in the right direction. They did not go far enough with the intent of these programs, and it left many people excluded from the opportunity to take advantage of these programs.

Considering the ramifications of this government's health care reform and what they have done to dismantle public education in our province, and, of course, underfund public education in my community, this is a budget that will not be worthy of support.

On that, Mr. Acting Speaker, I thank you for my opportunity to put my remarks on the record.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Just before I make some further comments on the '94-95 budget, I did not speak on the throne speech, so at the outset I would like to, first of all, indicate to our Speaker that I look forward to his continued wisdom and guidance in this session. I also want to welcome the Pages to the Legislative Chamber, and I am sure they will find this both an interesting and gratifying and excellent learning experience. I do as well want to offer my best wishes to the new members who were elected in September of last year and wish them all the best as they continue to contribute to the daily activities here in the Legislature and their commitments to their constituents in the province of Manitoba. I do wish them well.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to not only have introduced the budget last Wednesday and put a great deal of information on the record, but I now have the opportunity to respond to many of the comments that have taken place over the last week, and as well to respond to the two motions that are tabled by both opposition parties.

I am very pleased to have this opportunity, as I mentioned, to address the budgetary policy of the government. I have followed the debate on the budget with great interest, and I thank all honourable members for their contributions.

I know they are motivated by a desire to ensure that government policies serve Manitobans well. I am, of course, dismayed to discover that some members opposite are not very enthusiastic about my first budget. On the other hand, I must say that I am quite pleased by the response from the public, that is, the Manitobans. That response is well summarized by the headline in the Winnipeg Sun which read: "Good for average person." The article went on to quote a variety of Manitobans, all of whom had something positive to say about this budget or the fiscal track record of this government.

One individual said: It feels like you are getting a break when they do not raise taxes. It is a good budget for the average person.

A doughnut shop owner said: The Premier is doing a good job with the province's finances.

A food store clerk said: Filmon has done a tremendous job of keeping taxes down during a recession. He has done everything anyone could expect of a government.

A waitress said: the budget is good, very good. Mr. Acting Speaker, the budget was also highly praised by many representatives of the business community. Now I know that this carries no weight with many members opposite, members who complain that not enough jobs have been created and then also complain whenever any action is taken which helps companies to create jobs.

Many business people believe that they will be creating more jobs as a result of the measures in this budget. For example, the owner of one home renovation company was quoted in the Free Press as saying: the Manitoba Home Renovation Program—and I quote—will be fantastic. I can see where I will have to do some hiring. As well, in that same article a representative of the Urban Development Institute of Manitoba said: I think this is just positive. As well, at the same time, an official from the public affairs director for the Winnipeg Real Estate Board indicated that the two programs should help families buy a home and create jobs by promoting the Manitoba home-building industry.

* (1700)

Other comments from Manitobans, I quote from an individual: to have renovations like this, this is what seniors would be interested in because it would mean a great deal to people who want to stay at home. On and on it went, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I have had the opportunity over the course of the last week to meet with all kinds of Manitobans, to speak to Manitobans about this budget, and I tell you that the response from Manitobans is very positive.

The Leader of the Second Opposition (Mr. Edwards) referred to a meeting he had, and he very selectively quoted from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I too had the opportunity to meet with that organization in advance of the budget and have discussions with them, and they tabled with me various documentation, various positions, and some of the comments that they made, Mr. Acting Speaker, is: the Canadian Federation of Independent Business recognition and support of past budget achievements. This is recognizing the past: the continuing six-year freeze on all major tax rates and various progressive rollbacks of payroll tax exemptions—and they go on and on.

But more importantly they talk about their themes for this coming budget, the '94-95 budget. The kind of themes that they put forward—I felt the Leader of the second opposition party should have given the entire picture and put all of their

themes on the record—themes like, hold the line against new taxes; themes like, be open, creative and entrepreneurial in developing new approaches and alternatives to system delivery in provincial public services; themes like, stimulate competitiveness and confidence for small business growth and job creation through a number of new low-cost initiatives.

Then if you take that presentation given several weeks ago in advance of the budget and look in the media and see the response of the representative from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, and I wish the Leader of the Second Opposition had taken the time to do that, because quotes from Mr. Botting of the CFIB say: there are a lot of things that are not big-ticket items, phasing out the sales tax in electricity and mining and manufacturing, reducing the railway fuel tax and continuing to cut the small business corporation income tax which will help stimulate small business. As well, organizations like the various chambers of commerce—and a colleague earlier referred to Mr. Terry Cristall. Well, Mr. Terry Cristall, chair of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce said he is pleased by the general message from the government: let us make Manitoba a place people want to do business. As well, Botting went on to say, again from the CFIB: the government has handed business a competitive edge through tax stability, no major tax increases in seven years.

Mr. Wilson of the Manitoba Chamber refers to the budget as being: that is good. It makes the province attractive to business. Representatives from the Power Users Group said that electricity is one of Manitoba's best resources and he is tickled pink with the budget, Mr. Acting Speaker, and that goes on and on. These are reactions from Manitobans, people doing business in Manitoba, the day after the budget. The Association of Manitoba Taxpayers, they went on to welcome the continued freeze in provincial taxes and again spoke positively about many of the initiatives in the budget. Again, various organizations representing Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting in the North spoke positively in the media about the

initiatives in this budget. A representative from the Canadian Manufacturers Association, again spoke positively and said they were very pleased with some of the incentives contained in Wednesday's budget.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I could go on and on and on reading from clips through the media, through various media sources, all quoting Manitobans involved in business, leaders of organizations who spoke very positively about this budget. Again, to quote Mr. Cristall of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce: We have been arguing that what we need to do in this province is create an environment in which business flourishes. I was particularly pleased to see the initiatives for small business.

Mr. Botting again from the CFIB: Well, obviously you can sense my satisfaction with the level of priority they have assigned to small business in this budget.

And that goes on and on and on in terms of reaction.

I know the members opposite are interested in listening to more and more of this, but because I am restricted for time, I will move on to some other themes that I would like to touch on, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I want to deal with some economic forecasts. In their respective speeches, both the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and the Leader of the Second Opposition (Mr. Edwards) took me to task for providing economic growth forecasts which they allege are misleading or selective or wrong. It amazes me that they could be so badly informed about such a long-standing practice of governments in Manitoba, but I will once again try to explain to them how those growth forecasts are produced.

I want them to understand that there is absolutely no bias or political interference in those numbers, Mr. Acting Speaker. The government of Manitoba does not produce economic growth forecasts. Instead, the Department of Finance monitors the provincial forecasts of seven private sector forecasters. These are the Conference

Board, Inforemetrica, and the five largest chartered banks.

I should add for the benefit of the Leader of the second opposition party that Dominion Bond Rating Service is, as their name would suggest to most people, a bond rating service. They do not, as he indicated in his speech, produce economic forecasts.

The growth forecast published in the budget is always the average of the forecasts from these seven firms. We do not pick and choose. The same seven firms are always in. If some other firm comes with a very positive forecast for Manitoba it is not added to the average, and a low forecast is never taken out.

It is true that sometimes in speeches particular reference is made to the forecasts of the Conference Board simply because they are the biggest and best-known forecaster and are widely respected. The fact remains that there is no political interference in the production of forecast numbers. We present the numbers, Mr. Acting Speaker, as they are presented to us.

I want to touch on the issue of economic performance. Both opposition leaders also accused me of using statistics selectively to suggest that the economy is performing well. Then they did a little selecting of their own to argue that the economy is not doing well.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I categorically reject the charge that we have been selective in our presentation of statistics. If you look at Budget Paper A on the economy you will learn about the things that went well economically, and you will learn about the disappointments. Certainly we highlight the positive achievements of Manitoba, such as our relatively strong job creation record, the surge in manufacturing investment, the dramatic increase in mineral exploration, housing starts which grew above the national average over the last two years, increases in research and development spending that far outstripped the national average and the gains in retail trade, amongst others.

At the same time, the areas of weakness are clearly identified: the unemployment rate that

remains too high, although it is still even at today's rate the fourth lowest in Canada; the weakness in a few manufacturing industries; the low prices for nickel and for wheat.

Using only the data in Budget Paper A, an unbiased analysis can easily identify both the strengths and the weaknesses in our current economic performance. In fact, it is the members opposite who are being selective when they speak of the Manitoba economy as if it was not part of the larger world. For example, they criticize our job creation record. Certainly, all of us would always like to have more jobs created, but if you compare our job creation record with the record in other jurisdictions in 1993, you find that we did better than seven other provinces. You also find that we did better than all but one of the leading industrial nations in the world.

Similarly, if you look at our total capital investment in 1993, you find that our 2.4 percent growth was better than in all but one of the leading industrial nations. The fact is that 1993 was not a good year for the world economy. In addition, we had some unusual weather in Manitoba which affected agriculture, house construction and tourism, but in spite of all of those conditions we did comparatively well.

Of course, the real issue here is not whether we ranked first or third or eighth in any particular category. The real issue is what policy should the government of Manitoba pursue in order to promote the highest sustainable rate of growth, in particular, what set of fiscal priorities is most conducive to growth? This is where there is a fundamental difference between the members on this side of the House and the members on the opposite side, where it is clear to us that an ever-rising debt burden and ever rising taxes—you will recognize here that I am describing the fiscal policy of the previous NDP administration—will cripple the growth potential of the economy, even if there is some short-term unsustainable boost from government spending.

On the other hand, Mr. Acting Speaker, a policy of making government live within the means of the taxpayer, of providing important services

cost-effectively, of keeping taxes stable and affordable will ensure that the hard work and skills of Manitobans will carry us forward. That is the most important thing that government can do, the essential thing it must do.

In addition, there are a variety of ways we can promote economic development while keeping taxes and the deficit down. A comprehensive strategy to promote economic development was set out last year in the framework for economic growth, and we are acting on that strategy.

The list of things in this budget alone that contribute to this effort is impressive, and I will list some of them for you and for the members opposite: the Home Renovation Program, the sales tax rebate on new homes purchased by first-time home buyers, additional projects under the Community Places Program, the extension of the Business Start Program, the manufacturing tax credit extension, the phase-out of sales tax on electricity used in mining and manufacturing, the broadening of the sales tax exemption on direct agents used in manufacturing processes, the small business capital tax exemption, the reduction in the corporate income tax rate for small business, the mining investment tax credit, the doubling of the processing allowance under The Mining Tax Act and the reduction of the railway diesel fuel tax rate.

These initiatives are all in addition to the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Works Agreement, the tripartite Winnipeg Development Agreement and over \$1 billion in provincial public sector capital investments.

With respect to these last three items, let me remind members that public sector investment in Manitoba is expected to be 9.6 percent higher in 1994, a growth rate more than double the national average.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have just listed 15 examples of current initiatives of this government, two of them in co-operation with other orders of government which will create jobs and energize the economy. Yet the Leader of the second opposition party states in his amendment to the motion now before the House that the government

has failed to put in place programs that would get Manitobans back to work.

* (1710)

The inescapable conclusion is that the honourable member drafted his amendment before he read the budget.

In fact, I am pretty sure that he just keeps a standardized list of stock criticisms in his computer and prints out a selection of them whenever he needs a speech or a resolution.

Come to think of it, maybe it would be more efficient for all concerned if the honourable Leader of the second opposition party just gave us a copy of the list with a number beside each criticism. Then he could just rise in the House and say, Nos. 1, 5, 7 and 15. Such brevity would be consistent with the amount of work that he does before he criticizes government policy.

I want to discuss briefly the issue of deficits. It is rather curious to hear the Leader of the official opposition criticizing this government for running a deficit. I am not referring to the usual contradiction in his position which calls for more spending, lower taxes and magically a reduced deficit. I am referring to the fact that the previous government in which he was a minister was responsible for creating most of the fiscal problem that has bedevilled this government and will bedevil governments in Manitoba for years to come.

His government, and it is incredible when you stop to think about it, increased the debt burden on Manitoba taxpayers by an average of 24 percent for each year of their term in office. This, Mr. Acting Speaker, is despite the fact that their term coincided with a period of general expansion in the Canadian economy. Their 24 percent average increase compares, I was asked by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), with an average increase of under 5 percent during our term of office which coincided with a period of considerable difficulty in the Canadian economy and indeed in the global economy.

In fact, public debt costs from April 1, 1988, to March 31, 1994, totalled more than \$3 billion. With

responsible fiscal management this administration was able to hold the increase in debt to \$1.7 billion over this period. Without the carrying costs of the debt inherited from the previous administration, Manitoba would have been able to pay off the debt which existed when the NDP took office in 1981.

Without the excesses of the NDP, today we would be debt free. We would not be budgeting to pay \$567 million in public debt costs. We would have lowered taxes, and we would have a surplus we could direct to priority services.

That increase in debt is the legacy of the NDP administration. It is what they bequeathed to future generations of taxpayers, and it is costing today's taxpayers well over \$500 million every year. As I showed in Budget Paper B, we would have had a budget surplus in five of our six years in office had interest payments stayed at the level they were at before the NDP took office in 1982.

Mr. Plohman: What about your \$862-million deficit?

Mr. Stefanson: Obviously the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) did not listen to a word I said, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I want to talk now about transfer payments and equalization. The Leader of the second opposition party raised the matter of the equalization ceiling in his remarks. He says he doesn't understand why I have been critical of the ceiling. He says the ceiling should not cause Manitoba any problem, so long as our economy grows.

Well, the honourable member's comments indicate that he does not understand the nature of the equalization ceiling. The ceiling is not applied to any individual province's equalization entitlement but, rather, to the national total of equalization entitlements, with all the provinces losing equalization if the ceiling should apply.

This means, Mr. Acting Speaker, that should growth of equalization entitlements to Quebec or the Atlantic provinces or to Saskatchewan and Manitoba cause the total national equalization entitlements to exceed the rate of growth allowed under the ceiling, all recipients would lose transfer from the ceiling. That is why Manitoba and in fact

the Liberal Leaders in all the other recipient provinces object to the ceiling.

As well, the whole issue of the ceiling contradicts the fundamental principles of equalization, that is, to provide reasonably comparable levels of service at reasonably comparable levels of taxation.

The Leader of the second opposition party should not let his friendship with the federal Liberal Party prevent him from standing up for Manitoba. He should examine the facts and the proposals of his federal Liberal friends.

On the matter of federal transfer reduction, I wish to draw the member's attention to page 20 of the Manitoba budget. Note that the reductions in federal transfers to Manitoba, over the most recent five-year period, have cost us about \$300 million annually. That is a hit to our treasury of about \$1.5 billion since 1990-91. Think what we could have achieved in the absence of those reductions, Mr. Acting Speaker, about 90 percent of this offloading related to Established Program Financing for health and higher education.

Does my honourable friend realize that to restore 50-50, federal-provincial funding to these areas, Health and higher education budgets would have to be cut by about \$700 million or federal transfers would have to be increased by \$350 million? Does he realize that the new federal administration, which the Leader of the second opposition party seems prone to defend, has dropped the equalization ceiling to an all-time, historical low? Has he not studied the recent federal budget, which introduced further cuts of \$1.5 billion to federal transfers in support of post-secondary education and social welfare by 1996-97? Was the Leader of the second opposition party not paying attention when the federal Finance minister talked recently of massive cuts to come in transfer payments to the provinces?

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to speak briefly about the issue of capital markets. The Leader of the second opposition party raised the matter of capital markets. He believes it is important to retain our own investment dollars in this province. Let me note, first of all, that his comments dealt

with only one-half of the issue, with the supply side. He is concerned that there should be an adequate local supply of capital.

I certainly agree that we must do what we can to ensure that viable business ventures do not languish for lack of capital, but we must be careful to deal with the demand side of the matter as well. By that I mean that we must create an economic climate in which businesses can be born, expand and thrive. If the business climate is hostile due to high taxes, out-of-control government debt or a lack of trained people, then all efforts to supply more capital locally will be doomed, because no one will want to invest.

On the other hand, we have created an environment in which businesses can prosper. Therefore, they will usually be able to attract the capital they need on their own merit, Mr. Acting Speaker. With that proviso, I would agree with the Leader of the second opposition party that we should be working to make local capital markets as deep and efficient as possible. In fact, capital market formation was one of the 10 points in the Framework for Economic Growth which the Premier (Mr. Filmon) released almost a year ago. To that end, we have established Builder Bonds and Grow Bonds. In co-operation with private investors, we established the Vision Capital Fund. In co-operation with the Manitoba Federation of Labour, we established the Crocus Fund. Each of these initiatives has been successful in helping Manitobans find ways to invest their savings locally.

The Leader of the second opposition party specifically mentions the idea of a prairie stock exchange. The idea certainly has some merit, Mr. Acting Speaker. However, I would caution the member that the three existing stock exchanges in the West are private institutions, and we are hardly in a position to mandate a prairie exchange. Moreover, the larger exchanges in Vancouver and Calgary might not see a prairie exchange as being entirely in keeping with their own best interests. As members know, we have appointed a task force on capital markets, which is giving due consideration to this and other ideas for improving

local access to local capital. We intend to do whatever we can to pursue any worthy proposals that come forward.

I want to touch, Mr. Acting Speaker, on the Home Renovation Program. I listened with interest to the Leader of the Opposition's (Mr. Doer's) comments on the Home Renovation Program. He complains about the program's fairness. He seems to think that lower-income people will not have access to the program because they do not have \$5,000 to spend. It seems he did not bother to learn the facts before making any assertions.

* (1720)

There are two income-tested programs, one federal and one provincial, available to lower-income people who need to make repairs to their homes. Under the federal Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, lower-income homeowners qualify for loans that are partly or wholly forgivable depending on income. Manitoba's home emergency loan program provides interest-free loans up to \$3,000 for lower-income people whose homes require emergency repairs.

People who qualify for assistance under these two programs will also qualify for the home repair program even if the repairs they undertake cost less than \$5,000. Under the Home Renovation Program, these people will receive 40 percent of their out-of-pocket costs. I am sure that most Manitobans would view these as reasonable support, and I do not think our government has to apologize for limiting assistance on these terms to the most essential home repairs, nor do we have to look to members across the floor for any other advice on the issue of fairness. The program was designed to create jobs and to provide an incentive for Manitobans to improve the condition and value of their homes. Because the program applies to homes built prior to 1981, the renovations are more likely to involve improvements that need to be made. The program is also limited to homes assessed at less than \$100,000, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The types of renovations allowed or not allowed are also very clear cut. The Leader of the

Opposition (Mr. Doer) suggested that we model the program after Saskatchewan. In fact, we looked at Saskatchewan's program only to avoid making the same mistakes they made. The Saskatchewan program had no restrictions on the kind of house that qualified or the kinds of renovations that qualified. Virtually every item that is listed as ineligible under our program was eligible under Saskatchewan's. The \$5,000 threshold is there because we want the program to generate bona fide renovation projects, not just routine repairs that every prudent homeowner will make in any case.

We want the program to generate jobs in the renovation industry, and through spinoffs from projects that might not have taken place otherwise. These are jobs for Manitobans, hard-working taxpayers of our province. What is the Leader of the Opposition's problem with this? Does he want all applicants to fill out forms showing their income, their assets and what they want to do and then wait for someone to tell them whether they qualify and for how much? At the end of the day, it seems the Leader of the Opposition would rather create jobs in bureaucracy than in the home renovation industry. This is what he means when he says, take away the \$5,000 and make it more focused for social goals.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the Leader of the second opposition party has stated that he would stimulate the economy with a temporary sales tax reduction. I will allow that the idea has some appeal at first glance; however, a closer look turns up some serious problems. The first problem is cost. We expect the 7 percent retail sales tax to raise about \$660 million this year. That works out to \$7.9 million per month for each point of tax. So if you reduce the tax rate by 3 percentage points for three months, you have a revenue loss of about \$70 million. The loss would be even greater if people shifted their buying forward into the tax-reduction period and purchased less in the month or two thereafter.

In light of this calculation, I was quite surprised to hear the Leader of the second opposition party claim in his speech that a short-term cut in the sales

tax would not have cost the coffers of this province one dime. I say the cost is \$70 million plus, and he says it is nothing. We do have a small discrepancy here. Perhaps he thinks that the cut will stimulate retail sales so strongly that the province will earn the same revenue at the smaller rate. But for that to happen I calculate that the annual retail sales, or more precisely sales of all the things on which retail sales tax is levied, would have to rise by an additional 12 percentage points beyond the rate of growth that is already forecast. That means retail sales would have to rise by roughly 16 or 17 percent. How realistic does that seem to you? I would suggest anybody looking at that issue would say that is not very realistic. Thus, the Liberal proposal would cost the government a great deal of money.

Another problem, an even more serious one, is a temporary sales tax reduction does not work—a temporary reduction does not work. I base this statement on two previous examples of temporary sales tax reduction—in Ontario in 1975 and in Manitoba in 1978. Tried twice in the history of Canada—this kind of a reduction was tried twice. In the first case the growth rate of retail sales in Ontario did not increase in 1975. It actually decreased by about the same proportion as the rest of Canada, and in Manitoba in 1978 the sales tax rate was reduced from 5 percent to 2 percent for six months.

In the first five of those months retail sales did not grow any faster than they had previously, and in the final month of the reduction period there was a sharp increase in sales, but it was followed by a sharp reduction in the following month. This means that people merely shifted some of their spending forward in time. There was no longer-term boost to retail sales, nor was there any evident boost to the broader economy. Manitoba's real growth rate fell from 2 percent in 1977 to 1 percent in 1978, the year of the temporary sales tax reduction. Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the issue speaks for itself in terms of having been tried in two other provinces, in terms of what the cost can be and in terms of the nonimpact in terms of benefiting the economy here in Manitoba.

The Leader of the second opposition party, he criticized me for cutting program spending in this budget. He listed off various important departments, cited the amount by which their spending would decline and asked rhetorically how they could be priority areas for this government if their funding was declining. Clearly, the Leader of the second opposition party, his thinking has not kept up with the times. He still believes that there is just one measure of the success of a government program, and that measure is how much money was spent on it. This is precisely the kind of thinking that got Canada and Manitoba into a fiscal quagmire in the 1980s, a quagmire from which we are struggling to emerge, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Whenever there is a problem or a need, the old-style thinkers like the Leader of the second opposition party believe the solution is simply to pour more money all over it, and the more the better. Whether the money is achieving any results, whether it is being spent efficiently or not, these things do not matter, Mr. Acting Speaker. So long as you can say that you have increased funding over the last year, you can claim to be doing a good job.

Our view, Mr. Acting Speaker, is that a significant amount of the taxpayers' money was not being spent wisely, as wisely as it could be. We have looked for ways to reduce spending while maintaining or improving the delivery of services that Manitobans really want. I gave several examples in my Budget Address. By converting two government branches to Special Operating Agencies, we are saving nearly \$3 million per year. By sharing administration and personnel functions between departments, we are saving \$1 million. By reducing overtime work last year, we saved \$3 million. By looking more closely at how we were using rented space, we saved \$2.2 million over the last two years; and with our reduced workweek program, we are saving nearly \$20 million a year and preserving jobs as well.

I emphasize that these are just examples. We have found many ways, some small, some large, to reduce costs by preserving the level of service. It

may be hard for some members opposite to understand the concept of providing better value for the taxpayers' dollar, but I assure them that the ordinary taxpayers understand and support our efforts to make government work better.

Let me also remind honourable members that there have been very substantial increases in spending on services for Manitobans under our administration. Programs spending has increased by \$1.1 billion since 1987, and 92 percent of that increase has been devoted to the priority areas of Health, Education and Training, and Family Services.

Once again the Leader of the second opposition party alleges that we increase taxes 34 times and that the estimated effect is \$790 for a family of four. We are beginning to see a pattern in the Leader of the second opposition party's estimates—a costless three months sales tax holiday, 34 tax increases, \$790 per family, and on and on it goes. There is no question whether or not he is in the ballpark. I think more appropriately the question is that he might be lost at sea, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Let me set the record straight. Our 1988 and 1989 budgets cut personal income taxes by a \$113 million or over \$450 each year for a family of four. Sales taxes were reduced by almost \$50 million or \$200 annually for a family of four. Let me be clear that this includes our decision not to include the GST when the retail sales tax is calculated. This was a real cut.

* (1730)

Honourable members may recall that the GST replaced the old federal sales tax paid by manufacturers. The federal sales tax was buried in prices when stores purchased goods and was included in prices when people paid the retail sales tax. Manitoba was the first province to say it would not tax the GST. The five easternmost provinces do in fact tax the GST.

Payroll tax cuts targeted primarily to small businesses totalled \$64 million, or over \$250 per family of four. Our government completely rejects the artificial division between people taxes and

business taxes. They are all people taxes, and nowhere is this more evident than with the payroll tax. A tax on payroll is a tax on jobs and reduces the wages that working people can earn. It is a tax on families.

I could go on and list about \$250 million of tax cuts or \$1,000 per family of four, but if I listed only tax cuts without acknowledging that some taxes were increased from time to time, I would be just as guilty of misrepresenting the facts as the Leader of the second opposition party. If we do the fair thing, which is to add up all the tax decreases and then subtract all of the increases in minor taxes, we find that on balance Manitoba's taxes have been reduced by \$58 million or \$230 per family of four.

The Leader of the second opposition party also includes reductions in program benefits, the tax credit adjustments we made last year, in estimating his total. Again, the argument is just as deceptive as before. In 1988, for example, we budgeted \$1.46 billion for Health. This year we expect to spend \$1.86 billion for Health. This is an increase of \$400 million or \$1,600 for each family of four. Why did he not include this in his estimate? The increase in Health alone is over twice as much as he could scrape together with his entire list of the so-called 34 tax increases.

A family of four earning \$40,000 will pay \$423 less in personal income taxes this year than it did in 1987, and that includes the tax credit adjustments made last year. This is a bigger decrease than in any other province in Canada. In fact, no other province can match our overall record on taxes.

Statistics Canada concluded that Manitoba families' disposable incomes, after taxes, grew by 7.8 percent in 1992, four times the national increase. The Conference Board of Canada expects personal disposable income to rise by \$435 per person in 1994. Our government is proud of our record and faces the future with confidence. I am sure that Manitobans will not be fooled by the Leader of the second opposition party's estimates.

Just while I am on the issue of taxes, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not just remind Manitobans of what happened to taxes for the period 1982 to 1987. Because time is running short

I do not have time to run through them, but for those six budgets taxes went up in Manitoba under the NDP administration by \$820 million. That is all part of the legacy of the NDP administration.

When I talk about personal income taxes I wish I had more time to give all the examples of personal income taxes in Manitoba. One very interesting table is, we ran examples of a single person in Manitoba, a married person with two children, a single senior and a senior couple, and we picked the cutoff point where you are still paying no taxes in Manitoba. If you take a senior couple in Manitoba, when they are still paying no taxes, if they lived in any other province in Canada they would be paying taxes—every other province. If they lived in New Brunswick—they would be paying zero in Manitoba—they would be paying \$640 in New Brunswick. If they lived even in Alberta they would be paying \$406 in taxes. This list goes on and on to show how many dollars are being left in the pockets and the hands of Manitobans who know how to spend that money best.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that the 1994 Manitoba budget marked a number of achievements for the government. It also set forth a number of initiatives to build on the progress we have made over the past six years. The government and Crown corporations and agencies will spend \$1 billion on capital programs this year. This will provide a major economic stimulus and further our province's infrastructure for future generations.

I am particularly proud of the new Manitoba Home Renovation Program and the sales tax initiative on new home purchases, in large part because they address the needs of Manitoba families for housing. In these and other ways we are fulfilling our commitment to provide Manitobans with a quality of life to be envied across the world.

In this year's budget we included a new focus on the Manitoba advantage. It points out that Manitoba is attracting firms and individuals with vision and a desire to achieve the competitive edge necessary to maintain and win markets. The Manitoba advantage means growth and it means

prosperity but most importantly it means productive, durable jobs.

Our young people have the skills and the fortitude to participate in the vision of a prosperous Manitoba. The Manitoba advantage means continuing opportunities for them. It means more employment in the growth industries that will take Manitoba into the 21st Century.

Our support of the Manitoba advantage reflected in this budget includes lowering the small-business income tax rate, extending the manufacturing investment tax credit, mining tax initiatives, extending the corporation capital tax exemption. To build on one of Manitoba's greatest economic resources, the sales tax rate for electricity used in mining and manufacturing will be reduced by half this year and eliminated completely in 1995.

Finally, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have supported the Manitoba advantage by continuing for the seventh straight budget our freeze on major tax rates. We have changed one of the most onerous tax regimes in the country into what is among the most fair and supportive.

In conclusion, I am proud of the fiscal record of the Filmon government and I am proud of this budget. I call on all members to vote for a prosperous future in Manitoba by voting for this budget.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Acting Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this Budget Debate of 1994 and listened with a great deal of interest to the Minister of Finance try to do his very best to put a good light on a rather sad situation. The fact is, when the government members were on this side in the opposition they used to talk about how they were going to eliminate the deficit in Manitoba. The fact is this is their seventh budget, I believe, and we have still got deficits. In fact, we have had serious deficits over the years, and the only reason we have got the minister showing a bit of a lowering of the deficit per capita, let us say, is because he is projecting a higher operating revenue.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

This is really hinging on this increase in operating revenue that the minister expects to have. Because if he does not get that, if we have flat revenue, as we have had for two or three years now, we are not going to have a small operating deficit, we are not going to have a small budgetary deficit, we are going to have a big budgetary deficit.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the budgetary deficit per capita—[interjection] If the Minister of Telephones and whatever chooses to—I wish he would take his chance and give me an opportunity to speak. I did not interrupt the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson). I gave him the courtesy of listening as carefully as I could, and I would just expect the courtesy from members opposite. I know the honourable member is a good guy, and really when I see him around, he is a very fine guy. Sometimes there is a personality change that goes on in this place, a real personality change.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, the reason this government has had such difficulty in trying to balance this budget is because we have not had the revenue growth, and we have not had the revenue growth essentially because we have not had the economic growths. If you have masses of people unemployed, if you have people who are worried about losing their job, and if you do not have the investment from business and other types of commercial investment and so on, you simply do not get the revenue growth.

This has been the problem in this province under this administration. In fact, the operating revenue per capita fell between '91-92 and '92-93, and '93-94 was hardly any larger than '92-93. It was really flat.

As I said, the only reason the minister can stand up and say we are going to have a lower deficit this year is because he is projecting higher revenues, and those higher revenues are based on an estimate that his department has made about economic growth.

* (1740)

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a pre-election budget. It is probably the last we are going

to see. It is likely the last we are going to see before an election is called. One does not have perfect knowledge of the future, but at any rate, this seems to be very much in the cards.

I normally would not get into other side topics in a Budget Debate. I do want to spend most of my time dealing with the fundamental problems of the budget, but after many years of asking ministers responsible for McKenzie Seeds in the committee whether the government had any attention of selling that company and being reassured year after year after year that there was no intention to sell it, I was really flabbergasted, honestly was, I was just so surprised that the government had changed its mind.

Really, I would remind members of the turmoil in the community of Brandon, 14, 15 years ago, when the decision was made to sell it at that time. There was a great deal of uproar in the community. There was a great deal of concern, and I would like to share some of that historical fact with you as briefly as I can.

I was very surprised at the minister responsible for McKenzie Seeds today, again a very fine man, school principal, one who comes from an education background, and yet he made some statements that really, truly in his heart I am sure he does not believe himself.

I am quoting what he says about me on page 502 of Hansard, April 21. He says: "The member for Brandon East is saying, this company should be in Toronto . . ."

I never said that, Mr. Speaker. I do not want it to be in Toronto. I want it to be in Brandon and I have fought for 25 years to keep it in Brandon. I really worked hard for that. I am not against private enterprise. You know maybe private investment is good and I am not against that. I am concerned that the best way to get the insurance to keep it in Brandon is to have it provincially controlled.

Also, he says that I was bad-mouthing the city that has given me support over the last few years. I have worked most of my working life, 25 years as an MLA, I have worked for Brandon. I used to be Minister of Industry. We put out all kinds of

documents showing the advantages of being in Brandon, all kinds of material.

I can give you some facts about the grants we gave to private enterprise when I was Minister of Industry in the Schreyer government, Minister of Community Services and other portfolios in the Pawley government.

The minister responsible for McKenzie Seeds, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer) says that I am saying that Brandon is not a viable place to do business. Mr. Speaker, Brandon is a viable place for McKenzie Seeds to do business. If I did not think that, I would not have been able to in my own heart persuade the Schreyer government to reverse the decision of Walter Weir's government, which was to sell or liquidate the company.

This was a decision made and I have a cabinet memorandum here. The decision was actually made on November 3, 1967, and they hired a consulting company, Mr. Swanson and company, a very fine man. I did not know him very well, but he was a good guy. They brought it to the point of bringing it for sale to Ferry Morris Incorporated of the United States. That company would only guarantee to keep it in Brandon for two years and they wanted to pay \$200,000 for it.

Our government considered this matter. I worked very, very hard to dissuade because the company had been losing money ever since old Dr. McKenzie died. Ever since the founder died, it had lost money, unfortunately. The government said, we cannot go on with this and this is what we are going to do. We are going to sell it or liquidate it. It is a rational type of decision for the Weir government to make. It is not irrational, it is rational.

I felt that we should give the company another chance. I had an economist study the thing. He came back and said, look, even if we break even it is worth keeping it in Brandon. I was very pleased that I was successful in persuading the Schreyer government to keep it in Brandon. If I did not believe it was viable I would not have done that.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, we authorized the board of directors to buy out Steele-Briggs and move 65

positions, not the people, but the positions from Toronto to Brandon. If I did not think it was viable, I certainly would not have pushed for that and agreed with the board.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would have not urged that we refinance the company in 1982 to save it if I did not think it was viable in the city of Brandon. As a matter of fact, it had difficulties before. Here, 1979, under the Lyon government, Bob Banman, minister responsible, sets McKenzie's 1979 loss at \$750,000—a lot of money to be lost. I mean this was under a Conservative administration.

So do not perpetrate the myth that it only lost money under the NDP. As a matter of fact, in 1987, under an NDP government, and there are other years as well, there was a net income. There were profits in NDP years, and there were losses in Conservative years. Thank goodness there have been good profits the last few years, and I congratulate everybody—the minister, the chairman of the board, the board, the management, the employees. They have done a good job. They have.

I have visited that company many a time. I do not know how many tours I have taken of the place. I know the members across have been there, and that is good. We have got something good in Brandon, and we want to keep it. But I, as I said, was disturbed by those statements, and I am sure that members opposite, if they were thinking carefully and privately talking to me, I do not think they would say these things.

For instance, they also said I said about GWE, when the company announced they would be moving to Brandon that it was not a viable place to do business. Well, that is nonsense. I am sure Brandon is a very viable place for GWE to do business, and I am glad the jobs are there, and it is very viable.

I have two other concerns, and I can go into them, but that was what I was talking about, not the jobs there. I was talking about the political advertising, and I was questioning the amount of grant, whether it was necessary.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have been part and parcel of the government that had given grants to

industry, so it is not as though we are against giving grants. God knows we have given many including some big ones in Brandon. Canadian Occidental was one example. A lot of money was given to that company for its last expansion which was in the mid to late '80s. I had the privilege of representing the Minister of Industry at that particular announcement with the company.

There are other examples. I was just looking at some of my files years back. We gave business grants, I remember in '82-83 I was checking files. There were nine firms, small firms received a total of \$146,000. Small grants you might say, but it was important to those firms. We used to have Burns. We were trying to keep Burns foods in Brandon. We gave them a grant of \$331,000 when they were operating there and tried to keep the 60 jobs. And there were other kinds of programs for small business, wage assistance programs and so on. [interjection]

I am saying that there were many programs for small business, but we did give grants to big business. We did give grants to Canadian Occidental which is not small, and Burns was not small. [interjection] We did not put them out of business. I am sorry. There were some certain fundamental factors in the meat-packing industry, and you can study it across the country, and you will see what has been happening. There have been plant closures across the country which is really unfortunate.

But you know, I am not against private enterprise. I have helped private enterprise. I was Minister of Industry for eight years, longer than anyone living or dead. I do not know whether to hang my head in shame or boast from the rooftops. But the fact is that I want more private investment in this country, in this province, and in this city of Brandon.

* (1750)

I say to the members that they should know—[interjection] Well, I am going to get to the budget. They should know that the people in Brandon were very upset the last time. There was a committee formed: Help keep McKenzie Seeds in

Brandon. There was a petition here. How many people do you think signed the petition?

An Honourable Member: 8,000.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I told you yesterday, right—8,000 people signed that petition. I told you yesterday. Not only did they sign the petition, Mr. Speaker, but three bus loads of people came from Brandon. Those are real voters incidentally, Jim. Those are real voters. Those are real people from all parties. We had Mr. Banman, Mr. Pawley and a citizen of Brandon at that time, Barry Brooking, who was the co-chair.

Front page of the Brandon Sun. This is August 8, 1979. Then here are some people marching around the building in front of the building before they came in for the speeches. We even had editorials from the Brandon Sun criticizing the government for trying to sell it.

Here is an editorial of the Brandon Sun, Saturday, June 30, 1979. I will just read from it. It says: Now the government-owned seed firm is to be sold for reasons which are frankly ideological. As the ruling Manitoba Progressive Conservative Party has long preached but never actually practised, industry and government simply do not mix.

They go on and on and on, but they say for a fact: The fact is that privately owned industry is customarily free to do what it feels to do to maximize sufficiency, and if maximizing sufficiency means moving closer to where its major markets are, Ontario and Quebec, then governments in practice have been powerless to stop it.

That is the Brandon Sun editorial. I did not write that. The 8,000 people who signed that petition had that view. They shared that view.

I say I do not know where the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) was at that time. I am not criticizing because he used to live in Ottawa. It is a great place. I am not sure whether he was there then, so he may not know.

The fact is, there were people who were very upset. The chairman of the board at that time, Mr. Bob Clement, who certainly was not a supporter of

the New Democratic Party—that is for sure—who had been the chairman of the board, actually said he preferred government ownership for the same reason, to keep it in the city of Brandon.

Mr. Speaker, I am really surprised that the government has moved at this time to put it on the market, so to speak, and to jeopardize its continued existence in Brandon. I hope they change their mind. Maybe they will, but I really am concerned.

You know, I have a clipping here from Mr. Bob Banman, former Minister of Industry, in charge of McKenzie's, who was quoted in the Tribune at that time. Do you remember the Winnipeg Tribune? I do not have it with me, but I have it in my office. He said: Even though they would do their best to guarantee it staying in Brandon, they could not really give you a hundred percent guarantee. They could not do that. That man was telling the truth. He was interviewed by a Tribune reporter, and he said what he really thought. He said: We are going to try. We are going to put all the conditions to keep the jobs in Brandon, but I cannot guarantee that it will stay there under private ownership.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I have spent 25 years of my life working for Brandon. I go back and, you know, you talk about trying to get industry for Brandon.

You know, one of the most important things that I was involved with when I was first elected in 1969 was to get the Brandon boundaries expanded. In fact, I made that a commitment in the 1969 election. You can read the Brandon Sun and you can see what I said. I was quoted.

I said that Brandon needed to be expanded because we had a lot of urban population south of Richmond, you had an urban population on the north side and so on and that it was appropriate, but also to give the city of Brandon a proper industrial tax base. It did not get a nickel from Simplot or from the Manitoba Hydro thermal plant and Cornwallis had the biggest bank account in Manitoba and Brandon was really starved for tax revenue from industry.

So that move, we brought it in here by way of legislation. I believe it was '70 or maybe '71, it was passed and the Brandon boundaries were

expanded. It gave the city a good industrial tax base, but it also gave the city of Brandon a large industrial park that industry could move into. Without that industrial park, Mr. Speaker, you cannot expect the city to capture the benefits of expanding industry.

We did other things, Mr. Speaker, to assist the city in growing. We brought all kinds of jobs there through regional operations. The western regional office of Manitoba Hydro was put in Brandon. We established the General Insurance program of MPIC in Brandon. I think there were 40 to 50 jobs at that time. Pioneer Electric, some of you may not remember it from the Westman area, but Pioneer Electric was a great company making electrical apparatus. Unfortunately, it had a fire. It was burned down and there was danger of it leaving. As Minister of Industry, through the Manitoba Development Corporation, we put up a building for Pioneer Electric to keep it in the city of Brandon. It operated there for many a year.

Mr. Speaker, we could go on giving you other examples, and I said, we put out all kinds of material on the advantages of living in Brandon and the advantages of doing business in Brandon. This was excellent material which was used to help the Brandon industrial commission at that time and to generally encourage private enterprise to invest in the city of Brandon.

You know, it is good to have direct manufacturing industries, but you also have to have infrastructure, and we put up some very basic infrastructure to help industry. The First Street bridge, four lanes on the First Street bridge, that was a large investment. It could have been a simple one-way road, but we doubled.

There were other things that we did to provide infrastructure. We built up the university, built the science building, the dormitory building. The Crocus Plains School was developed, the Regional Secondary School. [interjection] The library that the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) refers to, we made a \$7-million capital investment promise to the Brandon University, including a heating plant, including the library and some other, and I delivered the first million-dollar cheque. I gave

them the cheque personally, \$1 million. Thank you very much, and you are committed to building it.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, there were other important infrastructure buildings and so on that we put up there to develop the city. The neighbourhood improvement program was an urban renewal program in the north end of the city. We doubled the ACC. We doubled the size of the Assiniboine Community College, and we built the Manitoba Fire College, the emergency services training. I know it is being expanded now, which is great, but we built the first one. Same thing with the Keystone. We built the first Keystone and we put quite a bit of money into expanding it, and I am very delighted that this government has put more money in for further expansion. I congratulate you. I am not criticizing you for that, but just recognize some of the things that we have done over the years to make Brandon the great city that it is. As I said, it is not just a matter of trying to attract industry and having the manufacturing jobs which are needed and so on, but it is the matter of putting in the appropriate infrastructure and support services.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I could go on at some length, talking about developments in Brandon over the years. It is Manitoba's second city. It is a city that has a lot of potential. It is blessed with some fine educational institutions. Not only the Assiniboine College, there is the Brandon University. In fact, in many ways it is a luxury. I mean, it is; it is a great institution. I had the privilege of teaching there some many years back. It has grown. It has developed. It has some fine faculty. I think it could provide the base, nationwide, music school.

In fact, I can tell you a little story. I was at a conference, as a minister, in St. John's, Newfoundland, and just before the supper we were to have the last day, there was some music. Just before the music, the pianist, I just said hi to her, and what is your career like and so on. She said, well, I am going on to study, to do graduate work in music. I said, oh, where are you going? I am going to Brandon, Manitoba. I thought that was great. Here is a young lady from St. John's coming

to Brandon to do her graduate work in music. So the city has some fine facilities, educational. We have health facilities. The Keystone Centre has been invaluable. There is a lot of commercial growth that is possible because of the Keystone Centre, and it has been utilized.

Just another one people seem to forget about is the Sportsplex, and I should tell you a story about that, about how I ensured that we got for Brandon, because it was all set to go to Thompson, but do not tell the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) that. We got the Sportsplex in Brandon because we were the most competitive. We just opened it. I wanted to make sure it was fair and square opened for competition. I knew Brandon would win it on that round, and it did. I know it is busy all the time; it is going all the time, seven days a week, I think almost around the clock. I go there a lot of times. My wife likes to swim. It is always occupied, hockey, swimming and other sporting activities. [interjection]

* (1800)

Mr. Speaker, that is a very good question. That is a sensible question asked by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey). So I would like to get on now to talk about the budget, which we have a concern about on this side, because there are some messages in here. I think what you see in this budget is further contraction of social services and health and education. Well, all you have to do is look at the numbers. There is a listing. All you have to do is go through the budget document, and you will see where there are monies being cut right down the line. On the one hand you have this cut, yet on the other hand, you have an economic policy that is not working.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) will have 16 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 28, 1994

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Reading and Receiving Petitions		Provincial Laboratory Committee Doer; McCrae	737
Curran Contract Cancellation and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement		Foster Families Edwards; Mitchelson	739
C. Evans	733	Provincial Laboratory Committee	
Barrett	733	Chomiak; McCrae	741
APM Incorporated Remuneration and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement		Provincial Judges Mackintosh; Vodrey	742
Hickes	734	Municipal Board Storie; Derkach	743
Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports		Small Business Regulations Committee Storie; Downey	743
Annual Report, Freedom of Information Act		Child and Family Services McConnick; Mitchelson	744
Rocan	734	Workplace Safety and Health Cerilli; Praznik	745
Annual Reports: Special Operating Agencies; Fiscal Stabilization Fund		Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Dewar; Ernst	746
Stefanson	734	Nonpolitical Statements	
Annual Report, A. E. McKenzie Co. Ltd.		Workplace Safety—Day of Mourning	
Gilleshammer	734	Cerilli	747
Annual Progress Review, University of Manitoba Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences		Praznik	747
Enns	734	McCormick	747
Annual Report, Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation		Storie	748
Cummings	734		
Green Team, Hometown Program			
Derkach	734		
Doer	735		
Edwards	735		
Introduction of Bills			
Bill 10, Wildlife Amendment Act			
Driedger	746		
Oral Questions			
Health Care System			
Doer; McCrae	736		

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Budget Debate

(Seventh Day of Debate)

Cerilli	748
McAlpine	751
Gray	758
Mitchelson	768
Reid	771
Stefanson	777
L. Evans	786