

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 20 May, 1980

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wolseley.

MR. ROBERT G. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Economic Development.

MR. CLERK: Your Committee met on Tuesday, May 20, 1980, to consider the Annual Report of the Communities Economic Development Fund.

Mr. Hugh J. Jones, Chairman and General Manager of the Communities Economic Development Fund, and members of the staff, provided such information as was required by members of the Committee with respect to the operations of the Fund.

The Report of the Communities Economic Development Fund for the year ended March 31, 1979, was adopted.

MR. WILSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie, that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia) introduced Bill No. 33, An Act to amend The Public Libraries Act.

HON. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James) introduced Bill No. 39, An Act to amend The Social Allowances Act. (Recommended by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time, I should like to draw the honourable members' attention to the gallery where we have 37 students of Grade 8 standing from the Mayville High School in Portland, U.S.A., under the direction of Mr. Don Kerlin.

We also have a group of students from Seneca College, Toronto, on a cross-Canada tour.

We have 42 students of grades 4 and 5 standing from King George V School, under the direction of Mrs. Hart. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

We have 24 students of grade 5 standing from Beaver Lodge School under the direction of Mr. Wayne Thompson. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable First Minister.

And we have 50 students of grades 4 and 5 standing from Royal School under the direction of Mr. Kroeger and Ms Macartney. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable First Minister.

On behalf of all the honourable members we welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Agriculture: Can the Minister of Agriculture confirm that last week he issued a statement supporting the proposed plant breeders' rights legislation that is on the verge of being introduced in the federal House?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I didn't issue a specific statement; that came out of Committee of Supply of the estimates of the Department of Agriculture.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then my question to the Minister: Is he speaking on behalf of his government in announcing support by Manitoba for the introduction of such legislation in Ottawa?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I would also like to say that I think a more critical issue is before the farm community at this particular time and that is the weather conditions and the situation that livestock producers find themselves in, and it's a more important issue that we deal with that at this particular time.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister of Agriculture: Can the Minister of Agriculture indicate whether or not he has undertaken any studies or any analysis on the part of his government as to the additional costs that may be introduced by the processing and passage of such legislation in Ottawa?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, on the issue of plant breeders' rights, the legislation was proposed by the Minister of Agriculture, John Wise, under the last administration; our department staff, long-term people who have worked with the farmers within the province of Manitoba. The plant breeders of the province of Manitoba have been meeting on an ongoing basis and there is support for the type of legislation that is to be introduced. It is not in any way going to jeopardize the farm community but in fact will enhance the opportunities for the farm community, providing them with a larger variety of plant breeds to be produced in this province. A good

example of that are the hybrid corns and other crops that have demonstrated their ability to be grown in Manitoba. That is largely because of the ability for a larger source of funding to be put into the development of varieties.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, since the passage of such legislation involves patents and additional costs, again can the Minister advise whether or not a study has been undertaken in his department as to the potentially adverse cost factors involved in such legislation?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I can't get clear in my mind what the costs would be to the province of Manitoba or to the government of Manitoba. If it's a matter of patenting any particular right, I would think the people who were requesting the patent would have to pay for that, and I think that the information that has been provided from the farmers, from the plant breeders in the province, and from my department, their recommendations and the input that they have had, certainly have looked at all aspects of the introduction of such legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, will the passage of such legislation increase the price of seed or not?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, to be specific, whether it would increase the price of seed would be something that I think we would have to look as far as the overall plants or the seed varieties that have been introduced such as corn varieties, and I would think that, to make an observation at this particular point, no, it wouldn't increase to any large extent if at all the price of seeds that would be provided through the introduction of plant breeders' legislation.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then further to the Minister of Agriculture, is the Minister of Agriculture then confirming that indeed he has not up until this time examined whether or not the passage of such legislation will contribute to higher costs? Is that what the Minister of Agriculture is admitting?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. May I suggest the honourable member is debating rather than seeking information. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know how you could, in all due humility to you, suggest that I was debating the point. I was asking the Minister for a very specific question. I am not seeking a general response, but a very specific question of the Minister, whether or not his department has in fact engaged in such a study, and the Minister can respond yes or no. There is no need for debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, to say that we have done a specific study as far as the increased cost of seed that would be provided through the introduction of plant breeders' rights, I cannot say that such a study has been carried out specifically to look at that particular one point, but I would add that the benefits of plant breeders' rights being introduced, the legislation as it is proposed would be in the best interests of the total agricultural community.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. R. (Pete) ADAM: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, I wonder if he could advise the House at this time if he has been able to find any supplies of pelleted fertilizer to have on hand in case of an extreme emergency that appears to be developing at this time?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, not to be facetious in answering the Member for Ste. Rose, I think he would mean pelleted feed, not pelleted fertilizer. We have, Mr. Speaker, been working on the feed problem, which as the days, like we have today, continue with hot dry winds, it certainly is not helping the livestock feed situation or pasture. In certain areas of the province the feed supplies have been pretty well depleted; however, on a provincial basis there are quantities of feed, particularly in the northern and eastern regions that are available, and we have had something like 40 calls received to the coordinating office in Brandon, which was set up on Friday identifying those feed supplies. We will have a further report to make as today will be the first full day that the Ag Reps will be able to identify feed supplies within their particular districts and make them known to that coordinating office. I would say that the feed supplies, as have been indicated to me, that we have something like a two-week to three-week supply availability, but it is a matter of distribution that could be a major problem.

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary to the same Minister: I was referring, of course, to alfalfa pellets. I would ask the Minister if he has given any consideration to buying up supplies of oats that are available in Manitoba in order to keep that stock here, rather than shipping it out of the province, because we are looking at a very critical development at the present time.

MR. DOWNEY: Again, Mr. Speaker, I am sure the member is referring to a feed bank approach, not specifically speaking about oats. We are looking at the feed-bank type approach that the government may have to look at, making available supplies of screenings, waste product from grains, from the sunflower industry, particularly anything that may supplement feed supplies for the breeding herd. I think the objective will be to maintain as many of the breeding herds that we have in the province as we can, and as the situation develops, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that we are dealing with it on an ongoing basis, and hope that we are able to supply

enough feeds and make those kinds of arrangements so farmers can keep feeds for their livestock, particularly for the dairy herds and the beef breeding herds.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose with a final supplementary.

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Minister if he could clarify whether he is just identifying supplies or whether he is assembling a stock of feed, of all grains, barley, whatever it is, whether it is screenings or not. I am just wondering whether he is just trying to identify where it is, or whether or not the province is getting involved and has a stock on hand, so that it will remain here in Manitoba, rather than be shipped out to the States or wherever.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the process has to identify the types and the location of the feeds that may be available, and that is being done now. As far as the availability of the product, because of the widespread effect of the dry weather from the Thunder Bay region to the Rocky Mountains well down into the United States, there is a certain amount of limitations to the feed products that are available. We have not, and I say have not, at this particular time planned to impose any restrictions on the movement of product within one province to the other, as I feel that we can in fact deal with it within the province, helping one another provincially and not trying to restrict movement from one province to the other. We are in this particular dry weather condition pretty much on the same kind of basis, and I think that meetings which have been held between the federal government and the provinces on Friday have identified and certainly been working towards the making available on a total area feed supplies. We have to work on it cooperatively and not individually as a province. We have to again, say, look at the making available of feed supplies through a feed-bank process. That decision to move in that direction, Mr. Speaker, has not been made. It is a matter of identifying what supplies are available first.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose with a fourth question.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister if he has considered the probability that if we do not buy up the stocks now, that they will escalate in price, and would he not consider that it will be so high within a month's time that no rancher will be able to afford to buy it?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I guess it's a matter of being in a supply and demand situation, and whether or not the government moves in, or whether individuals move in would affect the price somewhat the same. I think it's a matter of trying to make sure there are enough supplies available, and as far as the decision to purchase on a feed bank system has not been made, but if there are certain supplies

identified, that may have to be one of the alternatives that are considered.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health. Can the Minister of Health indicate if there are any health hazards posed by the cloud of volcanic dust which is developing here in Manitoba, especially to people suffering from respiratory illnesses? I ask this question in view of the fact that there have been some statements by American authorities indicating there may be some health hazards, and the only inference that one could draw out of their advice was that people with respiratory illnesses should quit breathing. Surely this isn't practical. I am asking the Minister if he has any practical advice to give Manitobans.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, the material that is in the air at the present time has been identified to us as volcanic dust from Mount St. Helen's in Washington. It's being borne on north-easterly winds into Montana, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, that is, it's being borne on winds that are blowing to the north-east into those three areas. We, of course, are in touch with our public health people and with officials in Saskatchewan and Montana to determine what the present situation is.

My advice at this point in time is advice that would be directed primarily to persons suffering from respiratory ailments. I think the best advice would be for them to attempt to stay indoors as much as possible, Mr. Speaker, but I cannot give the honourable member a clinical, medical judgement at this moment. We are asking for one; we are also in touch with my colleague, the Minister of the Environment, to determine conditions and safety levels.

At this juncture, I think persons with respiratory ailments should avoid breathing outside air as much as possible.

MR. PARASIUK: A supplementary, directed probably to the Minister of Environment: Can he indicate if he has any information as to how long the cloud is expected to linger over Manitoba, and if the cloud will be in Manitoba for some time? Has the government made any contingency plans to provide masks or other breathing apparatuses to people with respiratory illnesses, because obviously outside air will get into the houses.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Speaker, it is not anticipated that the levels are going to reach the danger point, but as to the length of time that the dust cloud will remain over Manitoba, I don't think that that is in the hands of the government to determine. It will depend on prevailing winds, and if the winds do shift and blow

the cloud in a southerly direction, well then the time stay in the province will be shorter.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona with a final supplementary.

MR. PARASIUK: I note that the Minister didn't indicate whether in fact there were any contingency plans to have masks or breathing apparatuses for people with respiratory illnesses. I would like to ask the Minister if the volcanic ash is harmful to livestock, especially if it's drunk from water that's outside where the ash is falling into it? Is there any harm that could be done to livestock if they drink water that has, in fact, had volcanic ash in it?

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, one of the precautions that should be taken is that water supplies, at least human water supplies should be covered, if at all possible. I don't think that poses a problem in most areas in this province, but insofar as it applies to livestock, I haven't asked for a particular opinion from the livestock people, but that can be done. I would expect that the same problem would exist as it would with humans.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAM USKIW: I would like to ask the Minister of Finance whether or not he's in a position to indicate just how he will determine the eligibility, under his new CRISP program, to become effective January 1st of 1981.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister, in his Budget address, announced a CRISP program, but he didn't spell out exactly how he was to determine eligibility, since the payments are to be made monthly to eligible participants. I'm wondering whether the Minister has thought out the process and whether he can relate that to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I think the basic eligibility procedures were laid out. One is total family income, the other is the deductible per number of children, and it will be by application to a provincial government department, and will be determined on that basis. Beyond that, of course, there will be, I suppose, procedures that spell out a period of residence and so on, but that it still to be detailed.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, that information is what I had assumed, but how is the Minister going to determine the validity of the applicant, or the information that he supplies to him? Is it going to relate to a statement under affidavit, or is it going to relate to income tax files, or what is the method that the Minister will use to determine the eligibility?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it will be, I suppose, fundamentally, the same as the procedures that are now used, either in the case of the filling out of an income tax form, because it's the hope of the government to use the clause that's contained in the income tax form as the definition of income; and

secondly, I suppose the procedure, since it's by application, you'd run across the same sorts of statements and requirements for information that you run across for social service applications.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would like to pursue that further by asking the Minister just how he is going to be able to follow through with regard to changes in the income position of the applicant from month to month. Obviously incomes vary throughout the course of a 12-month period, Mr. Speaker, and what is the mechanism that the Minister intends to employ to keep track of the changes of one's income on a month-to-month basis?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I suppose I have to answer it in general terms and say that's why we do require a period now of several months to put the machinery into place for that purpose and, in the course of that period, we will also be issuing regulations that will be relevant to the application of the program, so that many of the details will not be available until those regulations are actually put through.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. WARREN STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Education and ask the Minister if the appointment of a former member of this Legislature, Mr. Cy Gonick, to the post of head of the Economics Department at the University of Manitoba was made by him as Minister responsible for University Affairs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I can advise the Member for Crescentwood that the government does not make academic appointments, either at the University of Manitoba or any other university in the province. Our universities are autonomous entities. They have complete jurisdiction in those matters.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Can he advise as to whether the Letter of Intent with IMC, which I understand was signed by the Minister of Finance, whether that was approved or recommended to the government or to the Minister by David S. Robertson and Associates of Toronto, who are the advisers hired by the government on that matter?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think the member's question was whether or not it had been approved by David S. Robertson and Associates; whether or not the letter itself, the general Letter of Intent . . . —(Interjection)— I think, Mr. Speaker, no, that David S. Robertson and Associates, I don't think were engaged at that time. It would be about the same time that they were engaged.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: A question to the Minister of Natural Resources. I had asked him several weeks ago whether tree planting was going to be going on as normal at the Birds Hill Park nursery, and I'm just wondering whether he can supply us with an update on that at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can. We have undertaken a review of the operations there with the object of making our general nursery operations more efficient than has been the case in the past, but I can advise the honourable member that for the upcoming summer, at least, that we don't anticipate any substantial change in our operation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. ABE KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I would direct my question also to the Minister of Natural Resources. Over the week-end when I was out to the farm, I noticed that there had been a small fire in the area of Menisino which had been put out rather quickly by the good staff that there is working in the area. I wonder if the Honourable Minister can advise the House and myself, in particular, the status of the forest fire situation in the province of Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can advise that there have been 42 new fires occur within the last 24 hours, at least up to this morning. Some 15 fires have been extinguished in that period of time, and there are approximately 79 fires burning in the province now, the most serious of which is a fire that started in eastern Saskatchewan and travelled some 15 miles yesterday, across about a 10-mile front, and moved into the Porcupine Provincial Forest. It's now being fought with three heavy water bombers and three helicopters, and a substantial amount of manpower. We have placed complete travel restrictions on the Porcupine Forest area, which means that only people with permission and authority from a conservation officer are able to travel into that area.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. In light of statements made by representatives of Sherritt-Gordon Mines to the effect that northern school boards are savagely slashing budgets and that is resulting in program cuts, and as it has been suggested that that is having a profound impact on hiring practices by the mining companies, is the Minister prepared to meet, along with the Minister of Education, with representatives of mining companies and mining company unions in order to discuss the situation and

try to work out some solutions to what seems to be a very serious problem in regard to the availability of skilled labour from northern Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): There's already been a meeting take place, Mr. Speaker.

MR. COWAN: Thank you. I would only hope that the Minister would update us on that meeting at a later occasion.

My next question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. As the continuing dry spell which we have just talked about is aggravating the already serious forest fire condition in the province, can the Minister confirm that there appears to be a shortage of enough water bombers available to fight fires — and I'm referring in particular to one in northern Manitoba — and can the Minister indicate what action his government is taking in regard to dealing with this serious problem in bringing in more water bombers and more necessary equipment in order to deal with some of the fires that are burning in the province right now?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, at the present time, I believe that our staff are able to deal with the fire situation, as it stands today, in a satisfactory fashion but, as we all know, the circumstances that are prevailing, not only in Manitoba at the moment but in Saskatchewan and in Alberta and into the territories, are extremely dry. If I recall correctly, the situation that we are encountering now is a drought that is probably more severe than any that has been experienced since perhaps 1882, which means that it is very difficult to have enough equipment in place to be able to deal with every fire that occurs, in the manner that the people on the site would like to be able to deal with it.

What it means is that it's going to be necessary to take extreme precautions on the part of all people that are associated with the forests and are travelling in our forests in the province; it may be necessary to curtail forestry operations where they are being undertaken on a commercial basis, as well as to impose more severe travel restrictions. If there are firefighting aircraft available in other jurisdictions, then we will be attempting to get the use of that equipment on an interim basis; but given the circumstances that exist at the moment, it is my understanding that other jurisdictions are perhaps more severely pressed right now than we are.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill with a final supplementary.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was addressing those comments specifically to a call I had received before the question period in regard to a fire burning outside of Thompson, Manitoba, and would hope that the Minister would inquire specifically as to the conditions there and do what he can in order to ensure that that fire is fought adequately and efficiently.

Can the Minister indicate what the government position is in regard to attempting to control and

extinguish bush and forest fires in northern Manitoba? In other words, can the Minister indicate what conditions will determine if a fire is to be fought, or if a fire is to be allowed to burn itself out?

MR. RANSOM: In response to the first question, Mr. Speaker, I would assume and trust that the person who had contacted the Honourable Member for Churchill had first of all contacted my staff in the area who are responsible for fighting forest fires, and that if in fact that has not been the case, I would hope that the Member for Churchill has already passed that information on to staff.

Over the years, Mr. Speaker, for decades, as long as fires have been fought in the province, there have been situations where judgements have been made that certain fires would not be fought. Those, basically have been in more remote areas. As time has passed, we have extended fire fighting activities further into the north, but there are still situations where certain fires will not be fought and it's largely a judgement on the basis of the people in the field as to the value of the timber involved, the value of the caribou range that might be involved, the availability of equipment at the time, and the priority with respect to other fires.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Highways. Some time ago the Minister of Highways received a letter from the Minister of the Environment in relation to the use of 2,4,5-T, and I wonder if the Minister of Highways has yet responded to that letter?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. DON ORCHARD (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, I believe correspondence is going over to the Minister of the Environment this afternoon.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Highways if it's still the intention of himself and his department to use 2,4,5-T, along road right-of-ways in northern Manitoba?

MR. ORCHARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it's our intention to use the supplies that we have on hand.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas with a final supplementary.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact the Minister does intend to use this dangerous chemical for roadside spraying, I wonder if he will be publicly advertising or giving public notice through the various media to people up north who do like to go berry picking along the roadsides, who do dig root along the roadsides; whether he'll be publicly letting people know that this dangerous chemical is being used so they'll be forewarned about their activities in the areas that this spray will be used.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that 2,4,5-T, the chemical in question, is purported to be a dangerous chemical. It is not my

understanding that there is concrete clinical advice from sources indicating its true hazard and, as a result, Mr. Speaker, my department curtails greatly the use of 2,4,5-T as a result of some of the potential problems that have been identified. And furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the use of the chemical is restricted to, as the Member for The Pas mentions, roadsides in northern Manitoba for brush control primarily and it is targetted to areas, Mr. Speaker, where brush control is not possible to achieve through the conventional methods of mowing, etc., etc., that we use in ditches where we don't have rock fill, etc., etc. It's not the intention of the department to undertake widespread use of 2,4,5-T. We will be using the stocks that we have on hand, which is some 250 gallons which is not 100 percent 2,4,5-T, but rather, Mr. Speaker, a 50/50 blend. So in effect we are going to be using some 125 gallons of 2,4,5-T over portions of roadways in northern Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage.

MR. LLOYD G. HYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Could the Minister advise the House whether the abnormal dry spring is likely to have any effect on the number of offshore labourers needed to serve the vegetable growers of the province?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the question of labour for the vegetable industry is one which I'm sure has been answered some time ago by the Minister of Labour. The offshore employees that will be allowed into the province have been agreed upon by the workers organization and the farmers who are in need of the offshore employees. I would think that the vegetable industry, being very important to the province, that they themselves will decide whether they need individuals. I think a lot of the vegetable industry, the area that is in the Portage region, comes under irrigation and I don't anticipate any major change in the numbers of people that would be required for that particular industry.

MR. HYDE: A supplementary question to the same Minister: I wonder if he could advise the House as to the number of offshore labourers that are going to be permitted into the province of Manitoba.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the number that would allowed in was decided upon by government, by the worker's association and by the employees of those particular individuals. I don't have the exact number but I believe it's in excess of 20, but we'll check that out for the honourable member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, a few days ago I was asked by the Member for Lac du Bonnet as to how many Indonesian people had arrived in Manitoba —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I would ask the Honourable Member for St. Boniface to retract that statement. It is very unparliamentary to make direct remarks about the conduct of the speaker.

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): Well, Mr. Chairman, in time of frustration you might say things that you believe are right, that are not parliamentary. For that reason, I will withdraw it but I'm still as frustrated as I have ever been, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I was asked by the Member for Lac du Bonnet, the number of Indonesian Chinese refugees that had arrived in Manitoba. The best number I can get him, from January 1st, 1979, to the end of February, was 2,033. Now there have been some since then. If he wants another update, then I'm sure he is quite capable of getting up and asking for that but that's the number, I think, in the period he was talking about.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Honourable Minister of Health and is pertinent to the questions that were asked by the Honourable Member for Transcona. Over the weekend United States health officials were repeatedly warning people who wear contact lenses not to go outside wearing contact lenses if they were in the area that was being engulfed or overtaken by the volcanic ash and dust. Is that pertinent here? Would the Minister be in a position to make a statement on that or would he find out whether a statement should be made?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I can't make a clinically authoritative statement on that at this juncture but I do want to assure the honourable member and all honourable members of the House through you, Sir, that I am asking for clinical medical opinion as quickly as possible as to what hazards, if any, are posed by the current atmospheric conditions. I think that, in the circumstances, my department's advice to all with visual and respiratory difficulties would be to reduce to an absolute minimum their exposure to outside atmospheric conditions until we have a clinical opinion available. And I will certainly make that opinion available to all members of the House as soon as I get it, regardless of whether the Legislature is sitting at that time, Sir.

MRS. WESTBURY: I thank the Minister for his answer. I have another question on an unrelated subject, a report on accidental deaths in Manitoba completed in March 1979. Could the Minister please inform the House who conducted that report and why it has not been released?

MR. SHERMAN: As I recall, Mr. Speaker, it was undertaken by a research unit based at the

University of Manitoba under a request and under parameters that were laid down by the Department of Health and Community Services, as it was at that time. The report has not been released, although certainly it's my understanding that some time ago substantial parts of it were leaked and became public knowledge, which was regrettable because the report is purely a statistical report. It was purely compiled for statistical information and is not reliable in terms of projecting conditions and projecting existing problems.

My answer to the third part of the honourable member's question is, Mr. Speaker, that the department does not intend to release it, it was an in-house statistical study.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister responsible for the Environment, and ask him whether he can now report on the 1953 chemical spraying of Winnipeg and the Stony Mountain area?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Cooperate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: No, Mr. Speaker, I still have not had a response from the Department of National Defence to my telex that was sent to him on the day it was first reported here in Winnipeg.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, then I assume that the Minister has no answers, no letters, and no documents, and in particular the American report which has been released in Washington.

MR. JORGENSEN: As I said, I did ask for that information from Ottawa. Up to this date I have not received an answer.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a final supplementary.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Health and ask him whether he has requested a study of the medical records in 1953 and thereafter to see if there is any correlation of medical maladies with the 1953 chemical spraying.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, although in a literal sense the question posed by the honourable member may require a qualified answer. I have asked the Cancer Foundation and our Public Health people to check their records, our records, to determine whether there were any unusual increases in the incidence of illness and disease relative to that experience. I haven't gone beyond that and I am awaiting full answers from them. Up to this point in time the answers would indicate that there was none, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period having expired, the first order is the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance and the amendment as proposed by the

Honourable Leader of the Opposition, and the sub-amendment as proposed by the Honourable Member for Inkster.

BUDGET DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways has five minutes.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to sum up briefly the remarks I made on Friday by pointing out that what we had seen over the past three sessions and in the mini-session, is that we have basically in this province a government that has come to grips with reality coupled with a troubled opposition. Mr. Speaker, I make the observation that we have a troubled observation (sic), and I base it on three criteria, Mr. Speaker.

The opposition is very troubled over the budgets, the successive budgets that the Minister of Finance has brought down in this province. In three successive budgets now the Minister of Finance in this province has managed to undertake several very important measures which are adding strength, adding stability, and adding promise to the economy of the province. He has brought spending under control, Mr. Speaker, under three consecutive budgets. He has managed to reduce taxes in a time when government revenues are very difficult to come into unless you are as Alberta is, blessed with vast petroleum resources.

The Minister of Finance in three successive budgets has succeeded in reducing the deficit. Last year's deficit is predicted at 45 million, Mr. Speaker, and factoring out the Hydro rate adjustment, leaves us with a balanced budget, current and capital, something that our friends in the opposition could not undertake in some eight years.

He has put incentive back into the system — through removing in one area, I will use primarily as an example, in the mining area and the mineral exploration area — the incentive that this government through these budgets has put back into the mining industry has resulted in a level of exploration in northern Manitoba that has been unsurpassed. It has brought oil activity and exploration into the southwest corner of our province, all of which, Mr. Speaker, are going to come to fruition in some short years.

He has given the citizens caring and meaningful social measures, and this budget is the most admirable demonstration of that, Mr. Speaker. We have had from last year's budget the Hydro rate freeze, which was very very important to our fixed income pensioners and our fixed income families. This year we are introducing SAFER, applying not only to our senior citizens, but to people of 55 years of age to single-parent families. We are bringing in the CRISP Program, which is very very important to our families on lower and fixed incomes. Student Employment Programs in this province have been very very important to our students seeking employment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, all of this has been done amidst a scenario in this province of an economy that was winding down under the previous administration; it was an economy that was grinding to a halt. Mr.

Speaker, unlike an electric switch, where you can turn the current on and off, you can't do that to an economy. The measures that the Minister of Finance has brought in in three successive budgets are laying the framework to get our economy rolling again, to bring the incentive back in, to bring our taxation system back in line. Mr. Speaker, the decade of the 1980s will be Manitoba's decade under the stewardship of this government and this Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition is also troubled, because they have offered no alternatives to this government. They have criticized, they have criticized somewhat successfully in certain areas, but they haven't offered to the people of Manitoba an alternative which they can legitimately vote for in the next election. Until they provide that alternative and identify, Mr. Speaker, more importantly how they will finance that alternative, they will remain in opposition.

The third area that they are troubled, is that the opposition is an extremely divided party, Mr. Speaker. We have seen evidence of their division over the past year. We see members of the ND caucus openly supporting the Communist candidate for Mayor in the city of Winnipeg. As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, we have seen such prominent longstanding members of the New Democrat Party leaving their ranks, the most notable I suppose is Mr. Syms. What reasons does he use, Mr. Speaker? He uses the very reasons of infiltration in the party policy, and hierarchy by left-wing factions, etc., etc., and most recently we have seen the Member for Inkster sit as an Independent in this House and cite the same left-wing infiltration into the party hierarchy.

Mr. Speaker, that to me is the death knell for the ND Party in terms of their hopes for forming a government, and unlike most parties I do not believe that they will be able to rally their troops with that kind of division and form a viable alternative for the people of Manitoba. We have other budgets coming, Mr. Speaker, that will in fact provide us with the solid economic base that the people of Manitoba demanded in 1977 and are receiving today.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I think that it is quite clear that the Budget Speech is another indication of panic in the ranks of the government. The No. 1 document of panic was the Throne Speech, and now it is followed by the Budget Speech.

Mr. Speaker, when this party took office, first of all they tried to establish an image, an image of honesty, of sound management, of free enterprise, of responsibility. Immediately, it was something that wasn't supposed to be argued at all. They had made the rules. They set up then, the former government, members of the opposition as very poor and irresponsible managers; that there time in office was full of scandals, that the staff was way out of line; that the government had no role in business at all, they shouldn't be in business, they should leave that to private enterprise; and then that the taxes were

too high, that they were going to lower it; and mostly, that there would be no deficit budgeting while they were in office.

Immediately, they stopped everything. They felt that, because they had been voted in office, the world had to stop. People had to stop being sick; people had to stop getting older; people should stop for awhile before furthering their education. For instance, they stopped the construction of personal care homes which was indeed, very, very good managing. They reinstated that, they had to; practically the same program except the one in the interlake where my friend talked his colleague into building that, contrary to the recommendation of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, for partisan purposes.

If that was good management, I don't agree with that at all, but this apparently is what they think is good management. They withheld money from Ottawa. They received more. The change of government coincided with the change in funding policies or funding style with Ottawa, and they received much more money. That was used to lower their deficit; they'd have a much more higher deficit if it hadn't been the case.

The First Minister tried to come in like a gangbuster. He was supposed to be a man of decision, with the ideology; he was going to be very, very tough. Then, of course, we know the way he treated other members of this House, the members of this rat-infested nest of socialists. And he questioned, how can anybody not agree with him when he made a statement. You know, it was the law. It was the almighty speaking. He was quite stubborn. At least he was consistent for awhile in his first year. He talked about deficit budgeting, when all Canada was kind of disturbed with the budget — even just until late February — was disturbed with the budget that was brought in by Mr. Crosbie; he said that it was good but he had one complaint, it didn't go far enough. That, Sir, the election, I guess was on February 18th, and then, all of a sudden, the writing was on the wall and it became obvious. For the second year in a row, the federal Conservatives at election time lost some of their members here in Manitoba, the by-election provincially. They tried to make it sound as if it was a status quo and it wasn't, when you look at the situation; it ended up with the three parties retaining their seats, but if they had kept their vote for instance in other areas the NDP would have won another seat. But they've lost that. Mr. Speaker, then they started . . . I understand that the rumours are that they had their private polls and the answer wasn't very good. I haven't got all the inside, but these rumours, sometimes what they say, when there's smoke, there's fire.

Then of course, there was somebody that was brought in to change the image of the First Minister. So what happened? Panic Document No. 1, the Throne Speech, the 18th, just early in February, the First Minister said the Crosbie budget doesn't go far enough. They have complained since then also that the federal Liberals should cut the deficit funding. That was the first thing that happened, and then on the 18th there was the election, and lo and behold, then the answer was given on the 21st. That didn't give the government much time to prepare their Throne Speech. That's why it wasn't so well

prepared. You are adding something in the budget now that's announcing more programs, for instance, in Community Services. The normal thing, if this had been the normal route of planning, this would have been in the budget; the programs would have been in the budget. You wouldn't announce another 5 million all of a sudden, and especially that the Minister of Community Services made a statement in this House saying this was the answer, this is what they were going to do for day care. This is a clear indication that there was no planning and that it's just panic, Mr. Speaker.

All of a sudden there was this complete change; complete change. What were the reasons that they had to have this restraint, this tightening of the belt; why? Well, the cost of living was the highest that it's ever been. The inflation was the highest. The unemployment was higher. More people were leaving the province. This one I added; they, of course, will not subscribe to that, but the total outmigration is certainly worse than ever. And also, the high cost of borrowing. Those were the reasons.

At least, the Clark government went down swinging, and had the guts . . . If they felt that there should be that kind of budgeting, they stayed with it, and if they're proven right, they will come back, but they stayed. But this government of action, this government of leadership, this image of arrogance that they were right and nobody else, all of a sudden started to change; that all of a sudden, the time, just by a statement, the time is now. All of a sudden we can go back now and we could stop this restraint, we could stop worrying about the cost first and the need second, we could start construction, we could catch up. And if you look at the budget, especially the department that I've been involved with, you'd see the complete freeze, practically, in the first year, and then there was all these flying of kites to see what the people felt. When there was too much pressure, they would give a little more, they would cut the staff, and this year, all of a sudden it's much more. This year, it's a catch-up estimate. It looks so good. And no longer do we say what is the increase, the percentage increase. They don't go back to 1977, Mr. Speaker, they go back to last year, and they say: Well, what's the increase, the increase is 10 percent. But 10 percent of what?

Like the Minister of Health stood in his place here a little while ago and he said that there was more for hospitals and in the Department of Health there was a larger increase than in other provinces, and he said there were about 5 percent or 4 percent. But he didn't tell us, Mr. Speaker, that this was following a year of practically no increase, in fact a decrease; following the year that the increase was 2.9 percent announced in this House and then it was found out, when everything was calculated, that it was 2.2 percent increase for hospitals. And that was the following year that he said he had as much as the other provinces, not two years in a row.

So why this change? Why this about face? Why did we go in a complete circle? Mr. Speaker, is there less unemployment today; is the inflation lower today than it was before? Is the public debt eliminated or reduced? That's another way to mislead the public. We have this press release — deficit slashed — the majority of people reading that feel that it is the deficit of the former government. But they aren't

talking about their deficit reduced — good news — they aren't talking about their own yearly deficit. This is what they've been doing for three years, and this year after making so much noise about a deficit financing, this is, they announced, the largest ever, Mr. Speaker, and these things are still existing. There is more unemployment also. It costs more money than ever to borrow money, and this government made it respectable all of a sudden. The things that we did — the member that just spoke says we had no alternative. They tried to take the alternative to try to take the programs that we had, that they were saying are no good; that they were trying to eliminate or let die or boycott or sabotage like the dental program, like home care, and like day care until we hear this news, and we want to hear more about that, Mr. Speaker. They are talking, all of a sudden — look at this complete, even anyone who is non partisan at all can clearly see this about turn, this complete circle. Now the government is a partner in business. These were the same people that were saying government has no business — leave it to free enterprise. Now they are partners. They had brought in — and what about, when they came in they froze everything, they set up a bunch of commissions. They tried to rule by commission, tried to bribe people with their own money, or tried to scare them. At first, it was scare them; the second, it was whitewash, which some of these commissions which meant nothing, that just meant a lot of money, to spend time. Then there was flying kites. Boy that's a government of decision — flying kites.

The Minister of Health has been continually on every side of every issue, maybe yes, no, I don't know, maybe later. For instance look at what he said in day care when I was sitting on that side. He criticized so much that we hadn't done enough about day care. He changed places and he became the Minister responsible. The first year, what did he say? He said well yes, I don't go back on my words, but now I am sitting on this side and I know that it's a good program and I congratulate the former Minister for that and the former government, and it is taken care of; I think that we'll plateau — oh, I don't think we'll need too much, and that is my reason why I'm not spending more money. All of a sudden, lo and behold, look at what is announced, another 5 million, I think they say.

Mr. Speaker, none of the conditions, not a single condition that they gave as reason for a hard line has changed since they took office — correction, correction — has been bettered; they are all worse. We owe more money. This is the higher plan, deficit budgeting. There are more unemployed people. Inflation is higher. The cost of borrowing money is more. There is more unemployment. Everything is worse, but all of a sudden they say to the public, we're responsible people. And this is the time — they make the statement, this is the time and nobody should argue that. It's not fair game to argue because they made the statement that now is the time. So nothing has changed, and all of a sudden there is this complete turn-around. Something that wasn't planned, it's obvious, because I never — I've been here 22 years and must have heard 25 Throne Speeches and Budget Speeches, and I don't remember, unless there was something unforeseen, but a program that was announced in a Throne

Speech, that is shown in the Estimates, and before the Estimates, before we've even passed this item and all of a sudden there's an announcement in the Budget Speech that another 5 million will be added to that, when there were delegations making statements and nothing was done, but there's a little pressure and the time of election is getting a little closer, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, then we talked — what else did they say — that they were going to lower taxes? And there was a time of restraint, and you know who suffered, who tightened the belt. It wasn't the big corporations, they immediately got their tax lowered. That was a concession, that's something the government brag about — that's the corporations. This is fine, but they came first. Second were the succession duties, those would have to be in excess of 1/4 million before they're — how much? — 600,000. In excess of that before it's — that was brought in and that is something that is supposed to be a feather in their hat.

And then they brought in something that was supposed to look after senior citizens. They brought in the question of a tax rebate on schools for senior citizens. It didn't matter if a fellow had a mansion in Winnipeg, a summer home in Clear Lake, a villa in Mexico, and all that, if he was over 65, he could have had millions of dollars but he was getting his tax refunded, an extra 100, and now — and in fact, one of the members, the Member for Roblin, said that this wasn't right. He mentioned that during the Estimates of the Department of Health.

Mr. Speaker, that was the first thing they did. Now they said well — oh, another thing I forgot — before they were going to change anything, bring any more programs, they were also going to lower taxes, and these are the kind of taxes that they lowered. But then all of a sudden — they've increased taxes. First of all they get much more money from Ottawa, that they withheld, especially from the Health programs to help with their deficit. That's No. 1. Because of the change they could start now charging patients in hospitals, if they have been panelled as personal care. That is one. They raised three times, I think, the per diem rate in personal care homes. They increased the pharmacare deduction — the limit before there was any deduction, that was another thing. They wanted to show where Autopac was going, so they took 2 percent — they say that's not going to pay for Autopac any more — sales tax — but they kept that, that was an increase in taxes immediately. And now their cigarettes. When are the programs going to start — we don't know, but the tax is starting immediately. Oh yes, they must pay for their programs so they are starting immediately. There are taxes on — not on booze, what is it, on gasoline and on cigarettes to start. So these are the programs. This is the government that gave them so much leadership.

Now they congratulate themselves, because they pulled a real fast one on the opposition, because they borrowed — the member said that we had no ideas — they borrowed from our programs, from the policy, the ideology, and all of a sudden, they are partners in business, and they are interested in hospitals, they're interested in day care, they're interested in all these things that not one single Conservative government anywhere in Canada

brought any of these programs, in fact they're trying to do away with these programs.

But, Mr. Speaker, this is fine. We're not going to criticize the ideas of these programs. We're not going to criticize the ideas of these programs, we are not going to criticize that at all, but we are going to show and other speakers following me will show that you cannot believe in the credibility of this government, because these are not honest programs. When it comes down to brass tacks, they are not honest programs the way they are bringing it in, Mr. Speaker. For instance, there was no planning at all. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I will be very surprised if next year when I stand here and ask the Minister of Community Services if they spent all their money, the new money also, on day care, if he is going to say, yes. You know, we had a staff of 21 in day care, to make sure that there was the proper planning. They cut down to 10 and then to 8, and they are going to start now with this lack of organization, they are going to have all these programs in place for this year, they are going to spend this money this year. If they do, it is going to be poor management; it is not physically possible to do it with the lack of staff, the lack of preparation, and the lack of planning.

The Minister himself said that there is no planners, very little planning in his department, that the planning is done by the people in the field. I don't think that there is a full-time Director of Day Care. If there is, the person was just named, because we have been criticizing the government for that; so you might have an Acting Director when you are going to spend what? What are they talking about? 20 million or whatever. That is the kind of planning that we have, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, their policies, their ideas, and they themselves have been a complete failure, to my disappointment, more than anything else, that they haven't the guts to stand up for what they said they believed. Either they didn't believe in those things or they are ready, just because they fear they are going to be turned out of office, because their private polls and their image makers tell them that they have got to change, this is what they are going to do at this time. Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that this is too honest, and I don't think it is going to work, and I think that the main thing is that the people in Manitoba do not believe in the credibility of this government and of this First Minister and of his Ministers, Mr. Speaker.

In this Budget Speech, you would think that they would be so proud of announcing what they were going to do. What kind of speeches did we hear? Talking about dissension in the ND Party, it is a broadly based party that somebody doesn't like, not what is being done in this House but something that was done at the Annual Meeting; something that we are not bringing in. He spoke for it, and they are using that and they think this is good.

I could say, Mr. Speaker, that there must be all kinds of dissension. I heard the Member for Gladstone last Friday accuse the Member for St. Matthews of sharing a political bed with the Member for Fort Rouge. That must be dissension. I heard, and I know that this is a non-caucus participant, the Member for Wolseley, and both of them are not here today — are they starting a movement? Are they

going for the leadership or are you? Because you were known. Excuse me, I should go like this, Mr. Speaker, I am not . . . He was known. I remember statements that he made when the forces of Walter Weir won, and they got rid of Lyon. And you remember these city slickers, what they thought about the city slickers.

I remember that, but that is a long time ago. Mr. Speaker, for a party of back-stabbers to talk about that. You know, Walter Weir was stabbed in the back by Sidney Spivak; Sidney Spivak was stabbed in the back by the present Premier and, as soon as he has a chance, he runs in his office because he thinks he is going to be stabbed in the back next. We have had brothers against brothers in this party in their supporting. I am not going to name anybody, I think you know who they are, brothers against brothers, and they have got the gall . . . Because this is a party that puts their cards on the table; if you are not happy, you say so, and you say so out loud. You know, that is the kind of dissension. They had to talk about that; that was their main thing. They are so afraid that they are ready to do anything, Mr. Speaker.

And the lack of leadership . . . We have tried, I think, something that makes sense; we tried to have a debate on national unity, above partisan politics. This is a country that we all love, the best country in the world that might be going down the drain, and we have had no leadership at all from this government or from the Premier, nothing at all. He has contradicted himself repeatedly. First, he didn't want to see the Constitution changed, now he is for it. He didn't want certain rights in there, now he is for it.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke in this House, and, you know, my words were twisted purposely. I said that I believe in the strategy of saying we are not going to negotiate sovereignty association, but if there is a change . . . You know, don't just say that which sounds negative to people, say something positive. Let us discuss it so the people of Quebec, the people of the rest of Canada, will show that we are ready to try to compromise to accept everybody and to mold this group of Canadians into a strong force, a strong country, the best country in the world, Mr. Speaker.

We have talked about the United States and if they go . . . We need Quebec as much as Quebec needs us; if they go we will be probably the 51st state. After what I read constantly about this progress and about this materialistic ideas and about the almighty dollar and what is happening in Florida, for instance, I don't want to be an American, I want to be a Canadian.

Then because I dare suggest that we discuss this in a non-partisan manner, the Minister of Finance felt that he had to stand up, he who is afraid to even send some material, propaganda stuff that he has got to stuff in the envelopes, that he won't even have that bilingual. A government that forgot about the nature . . . You know, the government has always said when there were battles in certain schools, they say, you elect, there is another level of government, the school division. It is up to them, and if you don't like them, the democratic right is to throw them out of office, and all of sudden at Ile des Chenes they have got everybody in favour, but this is being stopped by the government. I don't know why. You

know, because they haven't got the guts, because they worry as I said about the McKenzies of this world, and the red-necks that want to divide Canada, that want to criticize, Mr. Speaker.

Instead of all that, the Minister of Finance got up and he tried to give the impression that I said that they should negotiate sovereignty association. That didn't wash, because it was very clear that I never believed in negotiating sovereignty. If there is a separation, I said, if there is a separation, then they will try to negotiate association, if there is. We will never negotiate and let them get out of the country, but if they are out then are we going to declare war on them. I was trying to illustrate a point I was saying, that you don't want just something negative, because the people do not want . . . They are all in agreement, no matter what happens today.

You know, there are a lot of things that could happen today. There could be a No vote win by a slim majority. It won't mean a damn thing, Mr. Speaker; it will be just step number one, and it will go. In fact, I, as a Canadian that loves this country, I think I would sooner have, if that is the case, if it is not a resounding No vote . . . And that is also dangerous, because some people think it is the status quo and go back to sleep for another hundred years, and nobody will stand for that. The people of Quebec, all of them, those voting for No and those voting Yes, want to see some change, Mr. Speaker. So maybe the best thing would be for a Yes vote to win with a what kind of a minority, because then I would imagine that we would wake up and we would have to present an alternative. We would have to get out and do something before the next provincial election to defeat the PQ. Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the Minister of Finance is going to follow me and try to mix my words again. There is no doubt where I stand on this issue, but I certainly intend to follow up with the criticism I made earlier, the day that we both spoke, where I said there was lack of leadership, and that there was no indication, that we didn't have the guts to stand up and say, okay, especially a province who is wrong, a part of the Canadian minority of the official languages for over 100 years in this province. You know, all of a sudden you think that they'd want to do something, but nothing is said, but then . . . What do you think the people of Quebec think of Premier Lyon of Manitoba? Or the people of the rest of Canada? He is probably the least popular of all the premiers. And there is no leadership, he has no programs at all. He follows Lougheed. He has no idea at all. There is no leadership in this province at all. There is arrogance, Mr. Chairman, and they have said, this is the same group that said that I wanted a confrontation with certain people. They ignore people, the certain group; if they're below a certain rank, they ignore them. But boy, the others, there is no confrontation with them.

That's another thing. There's good legislation. There is an election coming, and these people think, so we'll change the law to have more money in the kitty for this election that they're afraid to lose. This is going to be quite helpful. This is one of the most important things, they're going to bring this at this time, Mr. Speaker.

We've had restraint, and what did they do for us? The corporations were taken care of, the

professionals were taken care of, and then what about the MLAs, the Cabinet Ministers? Well, the pension was changed last year. Every member, even a member that's a full-time member of the Cabinet, he gets what? 40 or 50 a day during the session, a full-time member, a Cabinet Minister. Then they will ask for an increase. I've never claimed that they were overpaid, and apparently there's money in this new thing for an increase for MLAs. What they are going to do, they are going to annul the showboat thing that they did two years ago when all of a sudden they froze the MLA to show to the people how sincere and honest and human they were, which was a damn joke. Because it was set up, Mr. Speaker, in an honest way; it was approved in the cost; it was rising with the cost of living, and it made sense. That was frozen, now you're going to catch up in one year. You forget all these things, Mr. Speaker.

And all of a sudden there's more staff coming in. Mr. Speaker, it is pathetic to see a group that came in with so much vim and vinegar, so much arrogance, so sure of themselves, the saviours of the world. You know, what's that tax proposition in California? I think they invented that.

I could go on arguing with them and say, well, be human. Cost is an important thing, be human, but you are wrong. And I would respect them. But can I respect them now, when every single reason . . . I defy and I challenge the Minister of Finance to tell me today, why is it now, today; you know, was there a vision from heaven, today's the day? Did they point it at the Minister and say, hey, today's the day, you can start spending money; loosen your belt, today's the day?

Mr. Speaker, tell me one of the reasons that they gave when they formed this government of why they had to have restraint, why they had to stop the world. People were told, don't grow old, don't get sick, because we've got to stop the world, we're following these awful managers. Why, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, inflation, deficit budgeting, high taxes and so on? And what has been done? They're all there. This government has tried to mislead; they tried, and it was kind of cute. It was cute if you didn't know any better and say, well, they disarmed us. They disarmed the NDP, you know, they've been talking about richer program, need, then cost, and all of a sudden we're taking the rug right from under them. And I can just see in the caucus room, they're slapping each other on the back, and boy, we've got them now, what the hell are they going to do? — (Interjection)— Yes, by the short ones. Mr. Speaker, I was going to say Shorty but you'll probably tell me that's not parliamentary.

Mr. Speaker, this is the situation today, but I don't think there are too many people — I think I can give you a scenario, the way it's going to develop, the way I think it's going to happen. We'll probably be called, you see, this goes out now with all this publicity. The taxes are going to come in. The programs won't come in right away. They haven't got the staff, they are not ready, and a lot of that money will not be spent. Okay. They're going to say, look, we're good managers. We reduced the deficit, the deficit, meaning the deficit of the former government. It is their deficit. Look at how good managers we are. Now, that's going to be the first thing. Then, we'll probably be called in some time in November

for a Throne Speech and that will be another goodie. A real good speech, a Throne Speech in November. Then we'll adjourn for Christmas and we'll come back. The cheques will start coming in around January for these programs, and then we'll find, oh, you thought of this idea, and all of a sudden there'll be some kind of a reason or an excuse; maybe it'll be, well, there's a meeting that will be called, a constitutional conference with all the First Ministers, and we need a mandate —(Interjection)— That'll be the thing.

Well, why don't you have the guts to call an election now? You've got your programs. Call an election, we challenge you. If you want a mandate to play around, call an election, you're so sure. Call an election. —(Interjection)— Oh, we're ready. We're ready. Because the people told you. You saw what happened in your private polls; you saw what happened to the image of your First Minister. You see his popularity across Canada, you see all that, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)— What's that? —(Interjection)— 47 percent are voting Oui, for what? For separatism? —(Interjection)— Well, it's the same waste of their vote as voting Oui in Quebec today.

So you know, be honest. Stand up and call an election now. Don't wait for some excuse of their . . . Be honest about it. And if you were honest, you would have to say, well, we were a complete failure. This just brought sufferings to many people, many people. You've left the province of Manitoba, you've got a deficit. —(Interjection)— It is a good idea; it is a good idea. Call an election and stand up on your record of the last three years. Stand up on your record of the last three years and see what conditions you have better. Is there one that you have better? Is there anything that is better now? Is there less people on unemployment? I'm not talking about those that left the province? Are there less? Did you stop the deficit, the overall net debt for each woman, man and child? What was it with your caucus? —(Interjection)— Okay, 3,200 to 4,000. Is it easier to borrow money?

See, a dissenter just came in. He was probably formulating something to take over Lyon with his friend from Wolseley. After all, he was in political bed with my honourable friend here, as was stated. —(Interjection)— What's that? I don't know, I heard my name, Larry, so this is why I asked the member. Because although I don't believe him a damn bit, I still like the guy; he's a funny little guy. He's a funny little guy, in fact, they're all funny little guys with a funny budget. The funnies. —(Interjection)— Funny, but spelled phony, Mr. Speaker. That's what I meant all along.

So, there is no reason at all. It is a complete abdication, a complete recognition of failure and of course, utter panic. Because they love their jobs; you know, after all, the role of a Cabinet member, there's going to be an increase in the Cabinet pay, they're getting 40 a day more, even the members, and we'll get more money. It's a good thing in this House. You know, we had too many Cabinet Ministers; well, they got more. We had too many Legislative Assistants; they got more. We had too many people on boards and commissions; they got more, Mr. Speaker.

You know, we take care of ourselves first and then we talk about restraint. You know, we still drink our Crown Royal, drive our cars, but it hurts —

(Interjection)— Well, you don't like Crown Royal; you're a Scotch drinker. Mr. Speaker, this is the situation today and this government, all of a sudden, you know, show piety with their hand on their heart and looking at the flag or the cross, or, no, excuse me, the money sign, and say, you know, now is the time, now is the time. You know, like Moses. It's the time. I expect that there'll be two, I don't know if it's horns or lights sticking out from the Minister of Finance.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I certainly think that they should have the guts if they feel they're a failure, let's fight the next election on their credibility, and let's call it now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. KOVNATS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recall, when I was playing football that the idea of the game is to intimidate the opposition. I've been listening to the Honourable Member for St. Boniface making his remarks over the last 40 minutes and I really didn't get too much out of it, but he did make his remarks and he did try to intimidate the Conservative government. I guess, with him asking us to call an election and how we stab each other in the back has really got through to me; I'm almost too frightened to continue but I'm going to try, Mr. Speaker.

He was talking about how the Conservatives stab each other in the back. Have you ever seen a group of New Democratic Party members together, where they put their arms around each other's shoulders? They're looking for the soft spot to put the knife in each other's back, as we can see where we've had people leaving the New Democratic Party, who claim to still be New Democratic Party members but they have left. I guess it's the only way they can protect the soft part in their back.

Mr. Speaker, I have divided my little speech into three parts. I'm going to speak about the young people, the middle-aged people, and the elderly, and I'm going to make some remarks —(Interjection)— Father Malinowski's age, yes, and I am going to make some remarks about the newspaper reporting in the article written by — I've got her name here — Miss Ingeborg Boyens. I'll be making some remarks about her and the manner in which she writes. —(Interjection)— She's criticizing us for not being here and she's not here herself. That's fine.

I'm going to criticize some remarks made by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, so be prepared, and the manner in which we spent 45 minutes last Friday. I'm going to criticize what's happening in Quebec today and the far-reaching results which will take place after the referendum either is passed or not passed, and I'm going to speak on the fantastic budget that the Minister of Finance has brought in. —(Interjection)— It's not because of the budget, it's because of that volcano that the skies are not blue, because the skies up above are blue.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my views and the views of some of my constituents on what has happened in the province of Manitoba over the last two-and-a-half years when the lights went on in the province of Manitoba, after eight years of New Democratic Party government.

During the election campaign of 1977, when the Conservatives were trying to change the politics of Manitoba, I had the opportunity to meet many people from every walk of life. I listened to their problems and their suggestions on how Manitoba could be a better place to bring up our families. I spoke to the young, the middle-aged, the senior citizens, and received information that I have encouraged my government to instill in the legislative workings of this province. I made many commitments and many promises wherein I promised the young that I would do my best to see that Manitoba would be the best place in Canada to raise families and create a better climate for all Manitobans.

As you know, I am completely committed to the young, particularly in my area of Windsor Park and Southdale, where I coach a midget football team, and I have a close association with most of the students in that area. I know their problems and their feelings, and I have been able to sit down with them on an individual basis and our views have been passed from one to another. I know that a student coming out of school wants the opportunity to be self-sufficient, and contribute to this society. I also know that they are not looking for handouts, and they are not looking for a government to tie their shoelaces and to wipe their noses. They want the opportunity to contribute to the culture and well-being of their own group, and also the opportunity to be competitive and self-reliant. They want to be able to reap the fruits of their labours, and when it is all over, retire in dignity after their working careers have been completed.

They know that as their representative, I will look after their interests, and the Conservatives will look after their interests in a manner in which the New Democratic Party could never do. Mr. Speaker, I would assume that there is a complete belief and trust in me, particularly, inasmuch as when I have had to make decisions concerning these young people, I have gone directly to them to obtain their views.

One of the first decisions I had to make, as a newly-elected member of this Legislature was whether I would support raising the age of majority to 19 years. It was really on raising the drinking age. On surveys in my area, I found that almost unanimous decision of the people who would be directly affected was that the age of drinking be not raised, but more stringent controls be put on the under-aged group, thus allowing juveniles to make up their own minds, and I believe to a large extent relieving the problems of the juveniles in that age group.

Mr. Speaker, my decisions and my support of resolutions are all based on how they will affect this age group in the future. We are making the laws for them. I am not about to place unwarranted restrictions upon them, but on the other hand, with their approval, controls of such a nature that will allow them to follow the laws of the land, which must be maintained. I believe that a program of support for physical recreation must be strongly supported by us legislators so that the health and well-being of this group will not be hindered in any way, and this includes the pre-schoolers, the primary, secondary and high school students. If there are problems, let's find out about them when they can be corrected.

The government of the province of Manitoba has created and is creating programs that will detect problems at an early age, when these people can have their problems corrected wherever possible, and thus be accepted into the flow of society in which they were intended to enter.

I believe that the morality could be upgraded, and this can be done through the community at large by setting examples and assisting these young people with programs beneficial to them. These programs can be supplied through church groups, the schools, community groups, and not the least, through the home. I do not believe that there is any better way of teaching future generations than by example.

I will move to the middle-aged group. When the youth group gets into the workforce and starts to raise their families and enlarge their position in society, there has to be an opportunity for them to carry out their desires, work at gainful employment, and encounter the same problems we all did when we entered the workforce. They don't want the opportunity to be handed to them on a platter and to be told, help yourself. They are prepared to put their shoulders to the wheel so that they can gain benefits of our society. They want the opportunity to buy a home at a rate of interest that will allow them some funds left over for the niceties of ordinary living. We must endeavour to do everything in our power to see that the federal government considers these problems and encourage the federal government either to subsidize or encourage the money lending agencies to control the rate of interest at a fairer rate.

We must allow these families with children the benefits of day care centres and lunch after school programs, so that they can, if they so desire, have both parents be part of the working force. In the instance of a single parent family and people of lower income, additional assistance must be forthcoming. I am not talking about handouts, I am talking about assistance where necessary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, now we get to the group which is the most deserving. I am not just talking about the group that is the most deserving, I am talking about a group that the Minister of Finance, the government of the province of Manitoba, and all of the members of the Progressive Conservative Party consider to be the most deserving. Mr. Speaker, I am speaking about the senior citizens, those people on fixed income, and those people who are not capable of earning a family income to provide them with the necessities to which they are entitled. The 1980 Manitoba Budget brought in by the Finance Minister last Tuesday, May 13th, highlights many of these programs. It is not a matter of changing our philosophy, it is a matter of providing programs that are for the best interests of the province.

In 1980, the general Property Tax Credit has been increased by 100, from 375 to 475.00. The minimum has already been raised 100, from 225 to 325.00. The Minister also announced the Property Tax Credit maximum for elderly up 150 to 525, with an extra 175 assistance announced last April 9th. Senior citizen homeowners can get a total property tax relief of up to 700. Senior citizen tenants will receive equivalent benefits. The Minister of Finance has also considered the Property and Cost of Living Tax

Credits to be calculated on a fair base of family income, like the Federal Child Tax Credit. The new Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners will double maximum benefits under the Manitoba Supplement for the Elderly and extend benefits to those between 55 and 65 years of age. —(Interjection)— If you think it's a great program and you want to take credit for it, be my guest. The Shelter Allowance for the Elderly Renters, the SAFER Program, is to be enriched and extended to pensioners between 55 and 65, and also provided to low income families with children.

Mr. Speaker, I do recall speaking to many people of that senior citizens age group when I was campaigning in 1977, and the fear and indecision that these people have had to live with, I am sure is now somewhat relieved. They asked me to see if we could allow them to live in dignities in their own homes, which they worked so many hard years to acquire, and not be shunted to locations to which they were unaccustomed. They are the people who worked so hard to allow us the good times which we now enjoy. We owe them the right not to have to pay school taxes for which they are now receiving no benefits. They have the right to the security of knowing that their hydro rates will not be increased every six months, because of poor planning of the previous administration. They have the right to the security of staying in the homes that they worked so hard to acquire. They have the right to remain in an area in which they feel secure and have a close association with the many friends they have cultivated over a long period of time.

Mr. Speaker, let's be a little mercenary; in extending these benefits to these people to remain in their homes, we in turn do not have to provide alternative facilities at great expense to the taxpayers of Manitoba, but where necessary we will provide alternative facilities. I believe that this Conservative Government is allowing the senior citizen to live in dignity in Manitoba.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we must be in close contact with this group as the changing times change the problems, and we must be prepared to act quickly to allow these people to at least maintain their status quo. I recall in 1977 when I visited two aunties at a personal care home — and I am speaking from what they have told me — they told me at that point that the NDP candidate had been around and told them that if they didn't vote NDP they would be out on the streets.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Prove it, prove it.

MR. KOVNATS: No proof, I am just telling you exactly what they told me. No matter what I said, I could not relieve their anxieties. Mr. Speaker, does this Budget appear to be the type of a budget that will be putting these people out on the street? I believe that their anxieties have been relieved, but in the case of my two aunties, a little late.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the same NDP candidate will be running in the next provincial election, whenever that may be, because most of us cannot stand the truth being twisted and he won't have a snowball's chance in hell of getting elected.

Mr. Speaker, I would add that I believe, contrary to the remarks made by the NDP Party, that the Progressive Conservatives will be forming the next government and many after that. The trust is in the Conservatives, and no matter what is said at this point, the senior citizens have seen the proof of the promises made to them and the proof is in the Conservative pudding, not in the NDP swill, which isn't fit for hogs.

Mr. Speaker, over the last two-and-a-half years I have seen the workings of the Legislature and have observed the political process. I find it very disturbing to note the actions of the opposition in answer to good legislation. We are entrusted with the care and well being of the province of Manitoba and I believe that our efforts on both sides of the House should be channelled to the betterment of our province. I do not believe that strictly for the sake of political advantage remarks made to cause fear and indecision should be made. I hear remarks that government is not providing enough; didn't start soon enough; too late; too little; to hell with the cost, give away. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we must protect the interest of the taxpayer that we represent and be prudent in our spending. I know who is going to have to pay. It's me and the people I represent.

Mr. Speaker, I did observe the solemn-faced members of the opposition when the Budget Speech was being read by the Minister of Finance, and even with my hearing problem I was able to hear the squealing from those members who really felt that their position was being criticized from the opposition. I remember when I was working at Canada Packers when I was in high school and how they took the poor defenseless animals in for the slaughter. The squealing; it was the same type of squealing, Mr. Speaker. And some of the remarks that are made back and forward, during the Budget Speech I heard one of the members on the opposition call the Minister of Highways a smart ass. I really don't believe that type of language should be allowed in the Legislature, particularly coming from a member who is a smart ass, because I'm told that he can sit on an ice cream cone and tell the flavour.

I would like to take this opportunity to say, bienvenue, which is welcome, you're welcome, to all of the people of Manitoba, and I believe that it is all the people in the province of Manitoba. —(Interjection)— If you like it, keep your remarks to yourself; if you don't like, you are welcome to keep talking. The Progressive Conservative government for providing good government and a good budget to all of the people of Manitoba. I enjoy listening to the remarks of the opposition, while I have the floor. I enjoy the irritation they provide me. It makes me want to work that much harder, come the next election.

I would just make a couple of remarks about this Ingeborg Boyens, even though she's not here. I'm sure that —(Interjection)— Oh, which is the one? Is that the one up there? Oh, welcome back. I noticed that there was some remarks made in the paper about the survey reveals MLA's lack presence. Well, I am speaking on behalf of all of the members. There are times that we can't be here in the House. I will speak on behalf of all the members and if they don't care to agree with me they may do whatever they like. I think that we are entitled to a little time away

from the House and by you not reporting what is happening in the House, it leaves us open for criticism. As Mr. Speaker, who has never missed an opening of this Legislature since the opening when we first formed the government; not one opening because I would have had to replace him and I have never had to replace him; not one remark about Mr. Speaker opening up everyday, and he was not well on a couple of occasions. The Deputy Speaker, the Chairmen of Committee, who spend many hours in the committees in the evening and were there for many hours into the late night. If you don't put something in the paper about it, my wife is never going to believe me. —(Interjection)— It seems that I do have a problem and I'm trying to correct it.

I am just going to relate back to a few years ago, not when I was playing football but when I was refereeing. I was a back umpire and I was doing a game out in Vancouver. I recall a fellow, and his name came up just the other day and I recall the story; it was Ernie Pitts, and Ernie met a very untimely death. But Ernie had played with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers and was traded out to the British Columbia Lions and was working as a defensive half out there, very close to the position in which I was positioned out on the field. I could see that Ernie was very very upset, very upset. We had a little bit of communication going out in the field, not an awful lot but a little bit, and I said, what's the matter? He said, I am upset and I would just as soon not tell you, and I said, what's the matter? He says well he called me a black nigger and told me that I should be sitting under a tree eating watermelon and chicken. I said, look, if I had heard it I would have done something about it. Anyway Ernie Pitts had the opportunity of getting even with this person who had made the remarks and, low and behold, I never saw it happen. I think that at the point immediately following I went to Ernie Pitts and I said, are you satisfied? And he said, Abe, I'm satisfied. Are you even? He said, I am even.

I would hope that after Friday that we're all even, that we are absolutely satisfied with what went on. I would hope that there wouldn't be any more communication concerning names that are degrading. I would hope that we would accept this as a place where we represent the people of the province, not as a place to get rid of our own frustrations.

I am not going to make too many remarks now about what's happening in Quebec today, but the whole future of Canada will be affected either one way or another. I heard on the radio this morning some remarks made about the Maple Leaf Forever. Forever seems like such a short time these days. The confederation in united Canada is up for grabs today in the province of Quebec. I hope that everything will turn out because not only will the people of the province of Quebec be directly affected but we, in Manitoba, will be directly affected, particularly the Franco-phones.

On the Budget Debate, I guess there is only one thing that I'm not really too pleased about and that would be the increase in the tax on cigarettes. I think the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks and I are quite displeased about it but I think we're going to have to live with it. Saul, I think I'm about ready to quit smoking, and if I go I think that maybe you

should. I have been told that smoking can lead to lung cancer and I had a friend who decided that smoking might lead to lung cancer so he decided to give up smoking and he had to have something to take up his actions. You know, a smoker needs a pencil or a pair of glasses in his hands to keep him from smoking, and he decided that he would chew toothpicks; anyway, Mr. Speaker, he didn't die of lung cancer, he died of Dutch Elm disease.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just say thank you for the opportunity of expressing some of my views and just bringing forward the state of the budget, the way that I see it and the people it is going to benefit the most, which is our elderly, and without those people we wouldn't be here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start by congratulating the Minister of Finance for his performance the other night, because it was a performance. When you present a budget, your budget, on a given night, when you have to make your speech, you're not only indicating the condition in which the province finds itself, how you hope it will be a year later; you're also trying to create an image to the public through the media, of the programs of the government, it's direction and it's policies. And there is no doubt that this government found that it had to, that it was required, it had to do something about changing not just an image out there on the street but a reality.

I think the Member for Gladstone — I think it was the Member for Gladstone — inadvertently perhaps, but he put his finger on it when he indicated — and I haven't got Hansard so I can't quote him directly but I'll paraphrase it — in congratulating the budget and indicating how good a budget it was, he indicated that this would put to rest any ideas in Manitoba by Manitobans that this government was callous. I think he used the word callous. He nod's his head. And this was the tip off. This is what this exercise is all about. How do we overcome the fact that people know we're callous? How do we overcome that? And so the Minister of Finance, got to work on it and he used whatever staff he used. Frankly, they belong on Madison Avenue; I think they are wasting their time here because they did a job. Certainly his backbench was carried away by it, quite a bit of the media was carried away by it. The Member for Radisson who just spoke indicated in his view that the NDP position has been undercut and this is a sort of a budget that could have been brought in by a New Democratic Party government, and therefore the opposition was undercut and were wallowing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you here and now, I would not have brought that Budget in, no way, because that budget is not as it reads. There is a lot of rhetoric there. There's a lot of rhetoric which says that we shouldn't be paying out moneys to high income people. They don't need it, so let's target it. And in targetting what occurs? You are picking on a certain element and you say they need it. And where is that money going to come from? They didn't reimpose the 2 percent cut in personal income tax which they gave out a few years ago, and which benefited, incidentally, the most wealthy. Because as

I recall, and I have the document here, the 2 percent cut in income tax benefited somebody at the 50,000 level by the tune of 267 a year. For the person in the 15,000 income, it was 2.66 a month. That's all that amounted to. So, at that time they weren't that concerned with those poor low income people. Now, suddenly, they are concerned. So did they reimpose that tax cut? No way. But here's what they have done. They have changed a definition. Instead of using the taxable income for Cost of Living Tax Credit, for the Property Tax Credit, now they've moved to a new definition.

What is that definition? That definition is one that's used by the federal Child Tax Credit Program. And what is it going to do? They indicate . . . I think, the Minister actually used it in his speech; he indicated that the present system was not a fair one because . . . He gave an example of somebody in the 35,000 income, spouse working earning 5,000, husband or the other worker earning 30,000.00. Another, a family of four, husband working, wife not working, both earning 35,000, one might claim under the Cost of Living Tax Credit, the 5,000 earner would get something, of course the 30,000 one doesn't. And he says that's inequitable. Why should there be this distinction between families.

So he builds up this case, and then he says too, and also, is it fair? And he questions whether things like Registered Retirement Savings Plans, Registered Home Ownership Plans, interest, those matters, why they should be included in calculating your taxable income, because as the Budget speech says, it is not typical. The typical family hasn't got the funds for RRSPs and other such things. So having made that statement, they said, therefore we should be more selective in our income calculations. And he ends up, after it's all over, saying, in all of these programs, we should take all incomes into account. And he ends up with the federal child tax credit income definition, which is known as net income in your table, not taxable income, but net income.

What is net income? Net income will still allow you to deduct a Registered Retirement Savings Plan. You will still be able to deduct the Registered Home Ownership Saving Plan, you'll still be able to do income averaging, you'll still be able to pay investment counsel fees, you're still able to take advantage of dividends, you're still able to write off interest on certain loans that you've made, or borrowings rather, not loans, you're still able to do that. But what you can't do, because that's going to make it all correct now, make it more equitable, you cannot take off your basic personal exemption which everyone qualifies for, you cannot take off your age exemption if you're over age 65, if you have children, you cannot claim them as wholly dependent children. You can't do that. No. If you're blind, you can't deduct that either, because there's something there. The education deduction is not included, and the Minister, I think, he says they won't let us change. But they're going ahead anyway. They're going ahead with this.

As a result, I think the press has reported, and I think the Minister said something like 465,000 Manitobans — let me see if I have this figure — the White Paper, I think it was, said 465,000 Manitobans received cost of living tax credits, and the press report indicated something like 165,000 will be cut

off. I suspect it's more like 200,000 will be cut off. But all will receive less.

And never mind his example of the 35,000 a year family. Let's talk about the typical family. Let's talk about the young couples, where the wife is working because she has to work if they're going to keep their home and their car. And he's earning maybe 17,000, 18,000, and she's maybe earning four or five thousand. The wife did qualify, and in calculating the property tax credit, only the husband's income came into account. But now, it's going to be combined. You have to declare the spouse's income. That's added to the husband's income. Both incomes are shown under net income, and the result is, because the calculation is made on three percent of deductions less one percent of what now is taxable income, it will be one percent of net income, a much higher amount.

So that the typical family is not the 35,000 one. There are not too many in that category. The typical families are people in the 16, 17, 18, 19, 20,000 bracket, that's your middle income, where in many cases, that's the combined income because the woman goes out to earn some money, whether it's a couple of nights a week at one of the shopping centres, that is now going to be lumped together, that is going to be lost.

In just about all of these programs, and it's difficult to analyze them entirely because they're very, very vague. The wording is a little general. I don't think the government itself knows, really, how some of these are going to work out. To me, this is a panic budget. They had to put something together. My colleague from St. Boniface was sort of speculating what may be behind this. Well, I agree with him. I'm sure that the polls indicated that they were in trouble. I don't doubt they did. And they're trying to get an answer. He also speculated there may be an election in February, a fall session, Throne Speech, and a recess over Christmas and then an election. I don't believe it. The election will be before that. It will be in October. And the reason is this. They can't have it in June, it's too late. That's the only reason. Because the moment people learn what this was all about, they're going to be in shock. All this glitter is not gold, it's a lot of nonsense. They're taking from that middle income group, ostensibly giving it to the lower income group, that's what they are doing. The idea that the rich, the wealthy, are taking advantage of these programs, is so much nonsense. For every ten people who may have qualified, and it could be said they really don't need it, there will be tens of thousands who are going to be denied benefit of the cost of living tax credit, a cut in the property tax credit. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I haven't really sat down and given this the kind of analysis that I would like to. I haven't had time, unfortunately, I didn't have time this week-end.

I'm looking at the White Paper, I marked it Page 20; it's really not numbered at all, but I like to number my pages so I marked it Page 20, it's at the end of the White Paper, and they're giving illustrations of general property and cost of living tax credits. This is by them. And we look at it, it says, *Family Net Income, and the asterisk says, after employment expenses, after unemployment insurance and Canada Pension Plan deduction, and they stop there. It would have been more honest to

say, after allowing for RRSP and after allowing for RHOSP, and after allowable business investment losses, and after those same drilling and filming credits that the Minister said people really shouldn't be getting or shouldn't be considered in making these calculations, but what I find here is that on that page, they indicate that a single tax filer, in the 15,000 category will be receiving 1980 property and cost of living tax credits, 325, which is the minimum today for property tax credit, which means there's nothing there for cost of living.

And if you're a married tax filer, 338, but the minimum today under property tax credit is 325, so what's left for cost of living? 13.00. Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba are being gulled. They really think that there's something in here, and what there is here is a shell game. They're moving dollars around, and they're not taking it from the wealthy, from the rich, they're taking it from hard working people who are fighting like hell today to make ends meet. That's who they're taking it from. The person who's fighting to meet his PIT because it's so high. The person who's fighting to feed his family, to clothe the family, to buy furniture, maintain his home, that's who they're taking it from.

Mr. Speaker, they're giving it very selectively, they're not giving more, the cost of living tax credit has not changed, it's still the same three percent less one percent. The only change is this higher basis on which to make the deduction, the net income, so that the resultant figure, after subtracting that higher figure, is going to be less. So everybody is going to get less. They really don't want the cost of living tax credit program. They don't believe in income redistribution, but they didn't quite have the guts to say so. So they hang on to it, but they're making a pretty well useless program out of it.

And in all the other programs, you know they talk about all these other programs that they're bringing in, they have the basic property tax, that, too, is going to be affected by the combining of incomes. The supplement for the pensions, it's a nice one, and it's unclear, so I'm going to raise my comments in the form of a question almost. They've doubled the supplement to the elderly, and they changed the name from elderly, to pensioners, and they're going from age 65 down to 55, so why they changed it from elderly to pensioners, I'm not sure, unless of course, at 55 there are those who are on pension at age 55. If it's that, they're the only ones that qualify. You see, our program was somewhat simple. It said, pensioners, because it was people who were getting OASGIS. That was your entry into it. Now they're going down to 55, so of course, OASGIS is no longer in it. So they're going to have to figure out a new way of doing it.

But Mr. Speaker, again, they're going to change the income definition. They're going to seek a new definition. It's no longer going to be simple OASGIS. They're going to take other transfer incomes into account, both federal and provincial, and maybe even municipal, if there are any. They'll take them all into account. So they're doubling. I don't think we'll ever get to the recipient. By the time they're through, there may be an increase, or even a stand pat, and the reason that they're doubling is there shouldn't be a loss. There shouldn't be less paid than there is today, because when you start horsing around with

the threshold entries then the result is a lower payment, and because it would look very bad if actually people got less under the supplement to the elderly, they had to double the figure to make sure that they didn't get less. But it's all window dressing, and I suspect that. I can't prove it because the paper is so skimpy on it. And of course, it's a program that isn't going to come in until September 1980.

They have the enhanced SAFER program, January 1981. The new SAFER program available to low income and single parent families, January 1981. What are the income criteria? Again, all through this paper, they keep talking about the need to be more selective, to target the need, and they use that word needy, again and again. And I'm always suspicious of people who talk about needy. Who is to say who is needy? How do you define needy? The family that's trying to make ends meet today? Bringing up a family with children? Have them educated? Living a very nominal lifestyle? They're not needy? You take it away from them for some undefined needy? How do you define needy?

And this is what we've had in this budget. That's why I can say without hesitation, Mr. Speaker, that no way can anyone, should they feel that by introducing this budget they have undercut the NDP or anybody else. All they'll do is confirm to the public that this government is callous, that this government is not concerned with the middle-income people; that this government is still favouring the most powerful in our society. They did not tax them more; they did not take anything from them, because they weren't getting it before anyways, 99 percent, but they have taken it from the middle group in spades, and there is no doubt about that. So I want to say to the people of Manitoba, all that glitters is not gold. It is fool's gold in this case.

They liked to say, when they were first elected, that people have had it too good. I remember the former Labour Minister; we have to tighten our belts, people have been living to high off the hog, they have had it to good and now the day of reckoning has come. Well, whose day of reckoning? They were so busy giving tax concessions to certain elements which favoured the more wealthy and now what are they doing? Now, they are taking it from the middle income and squeezing them, and, Mr. Speaker, if I can use that term suburbia, that is the people who are going to get squeezed right in the middle, right in the middle. Suburbia is going to feel it like you wouldn't believe. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I am saying that they are not going to wait until 1981 for an election, because when people go to fill out their forms next — because all this is going to occur in 1981 when they fill out their tax forms for the 1980 tax year — and when people go to fill out those tax forms and they take a look at what has happened to them and how they have been diddled, they are going to be angry and with every right and every justification. And they are going to be angry. They are not going to wait for that anger to be felt, they have got to move fast, they have got to move earlier to avoid that anger, and legitimate anger.

My own prediction, and that is where I disagree with my colleague from St. Boniface, he said next February or March, I say they ain't gonna wait that long, they can't wait that long. They have got to go sooner than that because otherwise the credibility

they think they are acquiring, the respectability they think they are acquiring now will just disappear once word gets out as to what is happening. I think they would, if it wasn't May 20th and if they could get the Budget through and the business of this House wound down by May 26th, I think they would call the election. —(Interjection)— No, you won't wait until 1982, oh no, no, no. That you won't do, that you won't do.

Mr. Speaker, one other thing that I think I should mention. These programs, you know, this government in their White Paper and I think the Minister himself indicated, over the years he has I know, that the plethora of programs create complex administration and difficult, and they add to the cost, layering administrations one on top of the other. I thought something was going to happen with that kind of talk over the years, but what we have now is more programs again, more forms, and what is his answer? His answer is an information service. You know, we have an Information Service now, it is called Citizens Enquiry. You haven't eliminated any forms; you have got more programs, more forms, and frankly I can't imagine the kind of administrative nightmare you are going to have trying to dovetail the CRISP Program, your Cost of Living Tax Program, your Property Tax Program, and your new Social Allowance Program. I don't know — and since I can't ask questions, this being not a question and answer period nor the Estimates — I have no idea, and I don't think the government today has any idea, how this new Social Allowance Program is going to work, whether Ottawa is going to accept it. But I wouldn't be surprised if somebody has an idea that somehow they are going to be able to get more federal funds in their maneuverings on the Social Allowance Program. Somebody, I think, has had a brain wave, and by including in Resources all the benefits of all the programs announced, and then saying, we will include that in Resources and now we will raise the threshold for social allowance so the individual shouldn't get less money. That in doing that, they are looking to get federal funds, and that, in fact, it won't cost Manitoba any more money at all, not a nickel.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, that, of course, is something that only time will tell. We are in the Estimates of the Minister of Community Services and maybe he will have an answer, I don't know. He didn't have much of an answer with regard to Day Care, that was mentioned in the Budget. He just knew that the money was in the Finance Department; how it was going to translate he wasn't in a position to say the other night. It is obvious that this thing was put together very very quickly; it was a last minute putting together of a bunch of stuff, because the Ministers don't know, the details are skimpy. They attach a White Paper, which obviously was supposed to be meant for discussion, because they say there, Improvements or reforms may be suggested during public discussion of this White Paper. What public discussions? It is here, the Budget is based on it. We hope that this White Paper will contribute to broad and useful public discussion of these important reforms. What public discussions? The Budget is in, the White Paper is part of it.

MR. DESJARDINS: They had to.

MR. MILLER: They had to, exactly, they had to. They couldn't wait, and the reasons I have already indicated.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to dwell for a very short few minutes, other members will probably spend more on it, with regard to this play of words, the use of words between deficit and debit. Pardon me, deficit and public debt, even I get tangled up with it.

When the Minister of Finance reports mid-term, or whenever he reports, deficit has been slashed, and he keeps referring back to 1977, the big huge deficit. Every deficit in every year stands on its own. At the end of the year if there is a shortfall in revenue it is added to the public debt. If there is a surplus in revenue over expenditure, it is deducted from the public debt. Every year stands on its own. So when you talk in terms of saying there was 100 million deficit, now it is only 50 million deficit, we're terrific. It's only that year. What the bottom line is, and he knows it, is the public debt. A press release: The Minister recalled that the record deficit of 191.3 million at the end of the 1977-78 fiscal year was reduced by the end of 1978-79 by about 56 percent, and to just under 45 million by the end of 1979-80. The key words that the record deficit of 191 million at the end of 1977-78 was reduced. That deficit was not reduced, that deficit was gone, fini, kaput, it went into the public debt. Every year stands on its own.

Mr. Speaker, it would be more correct to talk in terms of the public debt. Has the public debt been reduced by 56 percent? No. Has it been reduced by 50 million? No. Has it been reduced by 10 million? No. By 10.00? No. By one cent? No. It has gone up. So what is this? Semantics, playing of words, and what they are trying to do is confuse people. They are trying to make it look good, and by tying it in with that 1977-78 deficit, they are trying to imply that somehow they have reduced that year's deficit. They haven't. Every year stands on its own.

This year they have come up with 139.6 million deficit and I hope they are not wrong. I hope that it isn't higher, for Manitoba's sake I hope so. But I tell you this, I suspect, I believe very sincerely, the bonanza of last year will not be repeated. They are not going to get an additional, over and above, unanticipated 77 million in equalization payments; they are not going to continue to get those vast increased in the EPF funding, the Established Program Funding in Health and Post-Secondary Education grants; they are not going to get that kind of money, because as they know, it was high in the first two years, it is levelling off now, and it may dip a little in the fourth and fifth year.

So they are not going to get those little bonanzas that came through, and, Mr. Speaker, if the economy continues as it looks right now, and it looks bad right now, then the revenues generated within Manitoba may also not come up to their expectations. In which case that 139.6 million may be a low figure and it may end up a little higher. But I want to tell the Minister now, I will not say to him you predicted 139.6 and it went to 149, I will not say that, because he knows and I know, and he has said it, the fiscal transfers from Ottawa are estimates, they are guesstimates. He goes by what the federal people tell him and he hopes they are right. If they are not

going to be right, he hopes they are wrong in the sense that the moneys to Manitoba will increase beyond what they anticipated, as happened last year. But to continue to go back to 1977 and say, look what happened in 1977, we have cut the deficit in 1978, we cut it in 1979, and now we are cutting it again. Nonsense, they have cut nothing. Every year stands by itself, every year there has been a deficit, not as great as originally published, because the revenues are greater, but now this year, 139.6, a pretty healthy deficit, a pretty healthy deficit.

If, as I say, the revenues don't stand up and for some reason Ottawa calls them in, as they called us in in 1977, and said, sorry, Buckley, we made a mistake in calculation, that was then, 55 million bucks you are down. That is what it was. And, you know, that was it, nothing you can do about it, nothing you can do about it. It is true, they also got 30 million unanticipated in 1977, but they got in the fiscal year 1977-78, just before the end of the year, so they decided to put it into next year. After all, we are not going to include it in this year's revenues, because we want to show a high deficit. They got 24 million under old cost-sharing arrangements, but they gave that to Manitoba Health Services Commission, in trust, so it didn't effect, so as to keep that 191 as high as possible, and maybe even higher.

All right, so they played their games, and you had your fun, but if you think you can go to the people of Manitoba, whether this year or next year and talk about 1977, you can try, but it is now your baby. It is now your ball game and it is now your public debt and it has now hit 4 billion by the Minister's own comments in his Budget Address, and 4 billion is the figure you use, and when you speak again, or somebody speaks don't make a distinction between direct debt and self-sustaining debt, because all through the years when you were critical of debt you always talked about the combined debt. So let's use your calculation of combined debt and it is there.

Mr. Speaker, there is one sleeper in this Budget. They talked about the cigarette tax and I have to agree with my friend, the Member for Radisson, that he and I are hit hard, and he suggested to me we should stop smoking, but I have to say to him, if he and I stop smoking that government is going to go broke. So take it easy, take it easy. Only if I stop it would make a dent in their income, never mind somebody else, but I guess I have been at it for too many years, I find it too difficult.

But I'll tell you where that sleeper is, the sleeper is in that very innocuous shift in the method of calculating gasoline tax, and it is very astute. Right now, it is 18 cents a gallon — I think it's four cents a litre but I still think in Imperial terms, so I'll use the gallon. I think it's 18 cents with the tax now. All right, 18 cents with the tax. Now, by coincidence, Mr. Jack Armstrong, not all-American boy, just Chairman of the Imperial Oil Limited, who indicated that Manitoba should be paying roughly 1.72 a gallon for gasoline, he didn't think that was out of order, that the wellhead price which is now 15 should go to 35, and we know that Alberta and the federal government are talking, and we know what Mr. Lougheed wants, and we know that the federal government is going to have to get together with Alberta, and there are going to be increases in the wellhead price. And Mr.

Jack Armstrong here figures that it should go up 60 cents.

Well, you know what 60 cents is going to mean in the way of taxes in Manitoba? For every dollar increase in the barrel head price, it's three cents tax. Pardon me. For every dollar of increase in the barrel at the wellhead . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. MILLER: Thank you. The price of gasoline goes up three cents. If the price — and it will come, inevitably it will come — the price, if it rises, from 15 a barrel to 37 a barrel, will be 20 a barrel. That's what Mr. Armstrong calculates. And let's assume he's looking at it from his point of view, and it's not really going to go that high, but let's use his figures. At 60 cents a gallon of gas — and that's what he really says, it should go up 60 cents — at 60 cents, Manitoba will be imposing a 12 cent tax. Automatically. No legislation anymore. You don't have to come into the House and say the taxes are going up one penny, two pennies, no way. It's going to go up 12 cents if the wellhead price increases, which it will, and this does not take into account any federal excise tax which will also affect the price in Manitoba and on which the Manitoba tax will piggyback. So it's going to piggyback on the increase in the price of oil at the wellhead, it will piggyback on the federal tax, that 20 percent, and I can foresee a 12 cents tax without any problem.

If we're now paying 18 and we can foresee a 12 cent increase, that's 30 cents tax on a gallon of gasoline, or an 80 percent rise. I'm not saying this is going to happen immediately. No. I know it isn't. This is going to happen down the line. A year from now, 18 months from now. As a matter of fact, I think there's an increase supposed to come in July 1st, and probably January 1st, so it will come in bits. I know the federal government has indicated a number of times something like 4.50 a barrel, 4.00 a barrel. That's bango. Immediately. That may take a year to come into effect. It may take six months; but inevitably, there's a great deal of revenue going to be generated in Manitoba through the gasoline tax. And is that the fairest way to tax? Does it reflect ability to pay? No. Who does it hit? People who have to use their cars.

The Minister will say, we have to conserve, we have to achieve self-sufficiency. But what you're doing is forcing people who must use their vehicles to pay this kind of tax, the taxi drivers, people who drive trucks, people who have to use their cars, the salesmen, they're the ones that are going to be paying it, the cost of merchandise, moving it from one place to another. Everything is going to increase because if you putting on this kind of tax which rises automatically as the price of oil increases, not related to the cost of production in Canada, but to the price as determined by OPEC. And even if it was truly a blended price, we know there's going to be some increase. And you're piggybacking onto it every time.

Mr. Speaker, in the few minutes left to me, I want to say one thing. This whole budget is rhetoric and a bunch of statistics. But, Mr. Speaker, I say to the members opposite, go out on the street, never mind

your statistics. You can tell me that percentages of this have gone up and that have gone up, you go out on the street and talk to people, go out and talk to the people on the street. You talk to the merchant, and ask him how is business, and he'll fill your ear. People haven't got the money. They're spending it on necessities, they've got to make ends meet. That's where it's at today in Manitoba. You've done absolutely nothing to stimulate the economy. You're patting yourselves on the back because of some mining activity which has nothing to do with you, but has to do with world conditions, you're patting yourself on the back because of a potash mine which you had nothing to do with, again, because potash is a marketable commodity today, that's what it is. — (Interjection)— My friend, we were doing it but you stopped it through the Mineral Resources Limited. That's why you're partners in northern Manitoba, otherwise you wouldn't be.

Mr. Speaker, that's where it's at today. You ask the guy on the job, you ask the salesman, you ask people on salaries, what's happening, and they'll tell you that today they're under the gun, they're squeezed, they're fighting to keep their head above water. So all these statistics about an increase in that and an increase in the other make no difference. This is it as far as this government is concerned, if you think you're going to hoodwink the public, you're wrong.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just have to make one or two comments on the remarks of the previous speaker before I refer to my notes. I felt that he was playing an old record over and over again. We've heard that story so often from the members on that side that naturally they're going to criticize the budget. And he mentioned, at one time in his remarks, that we didn't believe in income redistribution. Well, he's probably true there, because we believe very strongly in the work ethic on this side of the House, and that's the fairest way to redistribute income that I can think of. But the business of the potash mine that we had absolutely nothing to do with and the other points that the Member for Seven Oaks mentioned, I'm sure they're just adding to the doom and gloom story that we hear so often from that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that it's become pretty repetitive.

But I do agree with the Member for Seven Oaks that conditions are verging on dangerously bad in this province, Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware that if we don't receive relief in the way of moisture within the next couple of weeks that things are going to be drastically serious not only in Manitoba, but the western provinces. Mr. Speaker, the situation is not critical yet, but it's approaching a critical stage day by day. There are farmers who have stopped seeding, hoping in the next week or two that we get a rain, and a reasonably good one, in order to plant some of their oil seeds. If that doesn't come to pass, there's no question that some of the things the Member for Seven Oaks mentioned will come true, and we sincerely hope, on this side of the House, as I know all members do, Mr. Speaker, that that doesn't come to pass, because agriculture is the

backbone of western Canada, particularly Manitoba, and if we don't receive an exceptionally good crop this year, there is no question about it, we are going to be in some difficulty.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make some mention of some of the happenings in the House the past while and I don't want to dwell on it too long, but I know that I have been one that maybe hasn't contributed to the decorum that you would like to see in this particular Chamber. But I think in the results of the past few days, you have made some rulings and you have an excellent opportunity now to carry those rulings forward and if I find myself not adhering to your admonishments as closely as I should, I know that you will bring me to mind and call the Sergeant at Arms, as the Member for Roblin says, and straighten things out.

But I know it takes some members many, many years in this Chamber before they make damn fools of themselves and other members can make fools of themselves very very quickly. But I know that the members have taken the events of the past few days seriously, that things are said in this Chamber with feeling in the heat of debate and they are said in a political sense, and I know at times retractions have to be made. I have experienced that opportunity myself to sort of cleanse oneself and I know other members have also done the same.

I would say one thing, Mr. Speaker, and I know he needs no defending, but in the defence of my colleague, the Member for Gladstone, that I want to categorically say on the record, Mr. Speaker, that I don't consider him a dirty little man, I consider him a big man and you can take that in every sense of the word, Mr. Speaker. He's big in his community; he's big in his service to his fellow man; he's big in his service to his colleagues; he's big in the service and responsibility to his family; so I consider him a big man, Mr. Speaker. And I say that in all seriousness.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to be standing here today with a crystal ball, because I think entering a new decade requires something like that. I'm inclined to agree with the English writer, Thomas Carlisle, who said, our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the budget that the Minister of Finance has brought down this year makes a bold attempt to do just that, to do what lies clearly at hand. There are no major tax increases, Mr. Speaker, and the benefits have been gone into time and time again, but I'll refer to some of the benefits maybe just a wee bit later in my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, the doom and gloom that we have heard from members opposite over the past couple of months is going to prevail, I know that, it's their job in opposition to criticize and criticize us as strongly and as best they can, but you're well aware, Mr. Speaker, as are other members of this Chamber, that our economic problems did not appear overnight. These are problems that have been building up and they're with us, and I know that if we do not experience a reasonable productive harvest this year, that will be blamed on the Conservatives and I suppose that's the penalty you pay for being in power.

But Mr. Speaker, as I say, the problems did not appear overnight. And I think, Mr. Speaker, the two principle agents of economic growth are labour and

capital, and the principle condition of economic growth is political stability. Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that anyone can deny that since 1977, October, we have provided a more stable political climate in Manitoba. And I think we will try to further strengthen these foundation stones. That is obvious, Mr. Speaker, in the return of investment capital. We've been criticized for taking a portion of an ownership in a potash mine and in a copper zinc property up north, but the incentive to invest has been brought back to Manitoba and I think you will see more investment dollars flow into this province. You will not have investment dollars within the province without a stable political climate and without the proper reward for risk which is known probably in some circles as profit, Mr. Speaker, and I know that that's not a very popular word on the other side of the House. But there's no question about it, that if there is an opportunity and an opportunity to make a profit, that your risk capital will appear.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister and the members of this side of the House have been strongly criticized for the handling of Autopac. I'm sorry the Member for St. George isn't with us this afternoon, but the Burns Report was commissioned for a reason, as you well know. It was commissioned to do a review and to confirm to us the operations of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, which it did. A great number of the recommendations were brought into effect very very quickly and they were able to be brought in quickly because they were improvements that the corporation was considering. There were recommendations, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that were brought in in 1975, recommended to the former Cabinet — nothing was done; small changes that would have cost the corporation very little — nothing was done. These recommendations have been acted upon, Mr. Speaker, with many many other recommendations. They like to think of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance, Mr. Speaker, as a model, it's been in operation for many many years. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Corporation is subsidized to the tune of 3 cents a gallon on gasoline; they've received government interest-free loans of some 31 million to prop their corporation up and that's in addition to increasing their rates some 20 to 25 percent last year; they've doubled the surcharges, the deductible has gone from 200 to 300. Mr. Speaker, I think that corporation will lose probably 20 million or 25 million this year. Now, do you not think that they should have a Burns Report, or a Burns commission, out there just to have a look at that corporation. That's what it's all about. That corporation, Mr. Speaker, has forgotten the bottom line, they have become a social tool. Their premium volume is not much different than the volume of the corporation in Manitoba. They operate with almost twice the staff that Manitoba operates on, and as I say, they are going to lose millions of dollars this year. Do you not feel that a Burns commission checking into SGIO would be a wise move by a government that wanted to find out just what the answers were?

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have said it time and time again. The Leader of the Opposition who was a former Minister responsible for that corporation and the Member for St. George are still

going around, as late as the committee hearings the other day, saying that we are going to destroy Autopac, we're going to get rid of Autopac.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister has just signed a lease, a ten-year lease, authorized the signing of a ten-year lease with the corporation, at Eaton Place. Mr. Speaker, if that doesn't put to rest the rumors of us destroying Autopac or getting rid of Autopac, I don't know what will, and I'm just waiting to hear the half truths of the members opposite again going around to their little committee meetings saying, elect the Conservatives again, they're going to destroy Autopac. The Minister has mentioned, Mr. Speaker, that doubts about the future of Autopac should be laid to rest when he announced the move to the new 10-year lease.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, there are a great number of improvements that have been brought in that could have been brought in by members opposite when they were in power, but they weren't; the Dial-A-Claim was something that wasn't new but we instituted that to improve the service to the motoring public of Manitoba. It's been extremely well received. The Hot Line trying to recycle some of the used parts to keep expenses down, because, Mr. Speaker, the cost of automotive parts in this country, not only this province, have gone up tremendously in the past couple of years, and those things have all brought pressure on the corporation. But there is no doubt that Autopac is here to stay, Mr. Speaker. The Burns Report has confirmed to us what was wrong in the corporation and what was right in the corporation. It's been said time and time again that Autopac is here to stay; it will not be destroyed. The motoring public will continue to enjoy the benefits, and the benefits will increase as funds permit and as the recommendations are being instituted. I am just waiting, Mr. Speaker, to hear those rumors start flying again by members opposite who have been former Ministers responsible for that corporation, Mr. Speaker, because it is just not going to wash. The people in Manitoba are just not going to listen to those rumors over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the dryness of the year. I want to say a word about highways at this time. My particular constituency has suffered very badly, as I have said in this Chamber before, from rail line abandonment and rail line relocation. It is extremely important that we have a proper road system and proper highways to deliver our farmers produce to market. I know that the Minister has an excellent program under way this year and my constituency is getting a reasonably good share of work, because I think we've been one of the hardest areas hit. The Member for Virden, who adjoins my constituency, has lost a great number of rail lines also and we are fortunate in having municipal councils in both our constituencies who have got together and formed an association, Highway 250 Association, and have come to their own agreements of which particular sections of that road should be worked on first, and I think that's extremely important when you can draw four or five municipalities and four or five towns or villages together and have them speak with a united voice on how they would like to see that road on some long-range program develop and be paved from one end of the southern constituencies to the north. Mr. Speaker, I can only urge the Minister of

Highways to do whatever he can with the funds that have been allocated to him this year and if it is necessary to bring in supplementary estimates I would certainly support it because I know that in a dry year you can double your construction work, nearly, by having the necessary road conditions.

Mr. Speaker, we won't get into the Crow rate because the members opposite will be decrying that, that we're out to destroy it, when they get into the Private Members' Hour again, because I think there is a bill before the House. But, Mr. Speaker, the members on this side of the House, I don't think want to see the Crow rate destroyed if it's of benefit to the producers of western Canada, but they are saying what's wrong with taking a look at it?

Mr. Speaker, you can mail a letter across Canada today and it costs you more than it costs to ship a bushel of wheat. I think, Mr. Speaker, what the members on this side of the House have been saying, it's a very very old agreement, what's wrong with taking a look at it? If it has to be updated, let's update it. But no, you hear the cries of doom and gloom so often as we hear over there; you'll hear them every day whether it be the Crow rate or whether it be McKenzie Seeds in Brandon, and I just want to issue a word of warning, Mr. Speaker, to members on that side of the House, because we received several from the Member for St. Boniface. I see that he has left the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, but I don't want to miss the opportunity, he can read it in Hansard. While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, thinking back to the admonishment that he delivered to us and the rifts over there; he was talking about rifts on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. I have the results of poll 77, in the last election, Mr. Speaker. The voter listed as No. 141 on poll 77, is Laurent Desjardins; No. 142 is Melvina Desjardins; —(Interjection)— the last federal election, poll 77.

Mr. Speaker, the results of poll 77 show Mr. Axworthy, 30 votes; Mr. Balderstone, 0; Mr. Gitterman, 0; —(Interjection)— NDP; Brad McKenzie, 0; Inez Trueman 36. So Mr. Axworthy got 30 and Mrs. Trueman got 36 and there were no other votes cast in that poll, Mr. Speaker. How did the Member for St. Boniface vote? Did he vote Conservative? No spoiled ballots. Did he vote Liberal or did he vote Conservative. —(Interjection)— He voted. He voted; he was checked off the voting list. How did he vote; Liberal or Conservative? And he talks about a rift. He doesn't even vote for his own party, Mr. Speaker. He talks about a rift over here. I'm sorry that he wasn't in the House, Mr. Speaker, because I've been saving that for weeks but we'll hear more from him. He'll be wiggling out of that one and saying, well, I voted for the man and I don't like to use that term in the House, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry. He voted for the person. I know when you're reporting accidents to Autopac now, Mr. Speaker, if you have an accident on the street and the wheel of your car dropped into a personhole, you have to be very careful how you describe your accidents.

Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the member is trying to create a rift over here. Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Member for St. Boniface is back, Mr. Speaker. Did he hear it? —(Interjection)— All right. 30 votes for Axworthy; 36 for Mrs. Trueman, and no other votes cast and the Desjardins both voted.

We're not too sure just which way he voted, Mr. Speaker, for us or for them.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Would the honourable friend permit a question? Would you permit a question?

MR. BLAKE: Yes, you bet.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, doesn't the member remember that I made a public statement that I was supporting Axworthy in both elections? It was no secret, no secret.

MR. BLAKE: According to his own admonition, Mr. Speaker, he voted for that other group. —(Interjection)— I think probably we knew it all along. Once a Grit, always a Grit. I don't know how you've been able to fool those guys over there all these years. I don't know how you've been able to fool them all these years. —(Interjection)— Just long enough to get a Cabinet post, the Minister says, right. Well, I don't know how long the rift is going to last over there, Mr. Speaker, because there is no question about it that in the reply to the Budget Speech the Leader of the Opposition, there is no doubt that his powderpuff ran out of powder, Mr. Speaker, because the last half of his criticism had lost all its punch and we know that the real leader, when he walks into the House, sits to the left of the Member for St. Boniface and when he gets up to speak all the members on that side of the House stop to listen even though they did try to shaft him pretty badly this year. But, Mr. Speaker, in the Leader of the Opposition's criticism of the budget he threw around a lot of figures and I just want some of the members on that side of the House to take some of the figures that he was using and just do a little more research on them and a little more analysis. Pretty wild abandon with some of those statistics and the figures, Mr. Speaker. I recall the former Leader of the Liberal Party that was in here, he used to throw around half truths and statistics that would suit his purpose and we know what happened to him. But, Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid the Leader of the Opposition is listening so closely to that great economist, the Member for Brandon East, and we know what his statistics are like when he comes armed with them. His new boss now is the former Member for Crescentwood and we're pretty well aware of what his leanings are, Mr. Speaker, so I say that the rift in that party is a little larger than they would care to believe over there or they would care to let on. So I think they better take a long hard look at the operations of the group and the Member for Inkster doesn't have to pick up too many more supporters, Mr. Speaker, to have a recognized party.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have jumped onto some of the programs here, the Member for The Pas cries loud and long that we have destroyed Pukatawagan Builders at Wabowden and, Mr. Speaker, when they really sit down, there are several members for northern Manitoba in the Chamber, when they really sit down and analyze some of the patchwork programs that they put together to try and prop up the economy in the north, they just

didn't work. The Member for Swan River gave us a tremendous example just the other day of some of the horror stories in the north — the arenas, the housing. Surely there had to be some supervision. Who was the Minister responsible? Some of the northern transport problems. The Ministers are still in the House sitting on that side and I can't understand why they aren't sitting hanging their heads in shame with the disastrous results that resulted from some of their projects. You know, the Wabowden affair was very popular in my early years in this Legislature and while it didn't really bring down the government of the day, we thought it might. There is a lesson there, it showed up some utter chaos in the operations of the Northern Affairs Department, how nepotism has crept in and these little projects were propped up by little groups in these northern communities, and we were made to think, that these communities are now self-sufficient, they are off and running, and nothing could have been further from the truth. —(Interjection)— That is right, Mr. Speaker. The Thunderbird Lodge, Molson Lake Road, the barging, the Minago contractors, the barging was a great operation that if it had every got under way would have cost us millions of dollars. Where are the barges today? Half of them are probably sunk or the motors have been broken. —(Interjection)— That is right, post-hole factories, Mr. Speaker. You name it. They had little wee make-work projects propped up all over the place and it just was ridiculous, just was ridiculous, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, getting back to say one or two more things about the Budget, Mr. Speaker, and I know that we are going to be criticized no matter what we do. We got criticized for the first couple of years for restraint programs, now we get criticized for spending too much money. I have heard it on that side of the House when they were over here. They can't win. If we have a high deficit, we are criticizing them; if they spend too much money they are being criticized. What story has changed, Mr. Speaker? The story hasn't changed except you are over there. It is, you are over there and you better get used to it, because you are going to be over there for a long long time. Mr. Speaker, it is who is in and who is out.

Mr. Speaker, the policies that the Finance Minister has brought down in the Budget, the forward thrust that has been shown in this budget is going to be accepted by the people of the province. Mr. Speaker, it is one of the most comprehensive budgets based on need that we have had for years, probably the most comprehensive one in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it was mentioned by the Member for Seven Oaks that what we are doing for senior citizens is a sham, it is a smoke screen. Mr. Speaker, there is an area where they would like to use scare tactics to make the elderly think the NDP have a monopoly on the care of the elderly, but the facts show this isn't the case, Mr. Speaker. The Conservative Government has continued to serve senior citizens. We have carried on the previous government's programs, a great number of them. We have enriched them. We are continuing to build care homes and we can't build them as fast as we would like to. We would like to spend another 100 million on them but, Mr. Speaker, there is a limitation to what can be done and the members opposite know

that. They wouldn't be building them any faster than we would.

Mr. Speaker, in agriculture, the budget lays down some good measures in agriculture. The Conservative Government has been striving and will continue to strive to create an environment and economic climate which fosters the growth and diversification of agriculture in this province. We know, Mr. Speaker, what disastrous results we had with some programs brought in by the former administration. We know, Mr. Speaker, that they are now pushing for further programs and unfortunately they've got a lot of help from the fellow that is back in the Chair down east on supply management and various other crippling other devices that will hamstring the farmers in this province. With any fortune at all, the Minister of Agriculture will not allow it to happen in Manitoba, because there is no question, Mr. Speaker, we have abandoned the policy of the former government of buying farmland. The debate has been going on, I don't know how long in the Committee under the Department of Agriculture spending estimates, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say a word about that to the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know how long the members opposite plan to stay in this particular session of the Legislature but the way its going, I would say we will be here till July or August. In 1977, Mr. Speaker, the last year we undertook to study their estimates and criticize their estimates in agriculture, and we know what a disastrous situation agriculture was in under the former Minister and the massive land grab and the great cattle ranch he had envisioned. There were 11 hours, Mr. Speaker, and I think we criticized that department fairly well. Mr. Speaker, to date, I don't know how many hours we've spent this year on Agriculture Estimates but it's probably 30 some. There is no question, Mr. Speaker, of the repetitiveness, the haranguing and the obstructionist, I don't like to use that word, but the obstructionist tactics of one or two members opposite that happen to be in the criticizing of the Agriculture Department and the Member for Ste. Rose is one of the ring-leaders. My God, Mr. Speaker, to listen to him you would think he was one of the biggest and most successful farmers in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture is important, the Department of Agriculture should be examined very very carefully. But I suggest to members opposite and one of the reasons that the attendance hasn't been star-bright by everyone that members would like to see, or that the constituents back home would like to see but I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that one of the reasons for that is that members like — and I don't want to name members opposite because they know who they are — that can spend two and three hours fiddling and haranguing and banging away at an item that could have been said in 10 or 15 minutes and make your points and get it over with, but there have been endless hours and hours and hours spent. The question period, Mr. Speaker, has gone on for 40 minutes every day, I don't think there's been one that's been less. What did you have today in the question period? Little bit on the fallout of the ash from Mount St. Helens by two or three members, one or two other ones — absolutely drivell as far as hard-hitting, good, strong, sound leadership

opposition questions. Now if there was any leadership over there, those questions would be relegated to the coffee shop instead of being in here with the television cameras on them. Mr. Speaker, if the debate continues with the hours and hours and hours on one or two particular items that has gone on to now, Mr. Speaker, I predict that we'll be here till August.

Now we don't mind criticism in agriculture. It is an important department and should be examined thoroughly. But, Mr. Speaker, it's come to the point where it's a bit ridiculous and I suggest that's why members are absenting themselves from committees, because the minute you see one or two opposition critics get up, you know it's going to be an hour and you're not going to hear anything anyway, so you might as well do some constituency work or make some phone calls. And as I say, I don't want to name them, Mr. Speaker, because they'll know who I'm referring to.

Mr. Speaker, some of the tax reforms and income assistance programs that were brought down in the budget will bring Manitoba — they're steps that will bring Manitoba taxes back in line with the other provinces, Mr. Speaker, it will improve the competitiveness, the personal income tax was reduced from 54 to 56 on the basic federal tax, small business tax has been reduced, 10 cent acreage mineral tax, Mr. Speaker, that we eliminated a while ago has now virtually been fleshed out so that we could understand the problem before, the metallic mineral royalty legislation that has been reformed and encouraged development again in Manitoba, the previous government's policy of compulsory participation in mining programs has been abandoned to the form of a voluntary partnership or sharing. There's been a wide range of exemptions under the provincial sales tax, Mr. Speaker, for items — children's clothing . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Five minutes.

MR. BLAKE: . . . and insulation materials and things of that nature. The special supplement on the pensioners' school tax assistance program has been added, Mr. Speaker, and I won't go into that because as the Member for Seven Oaks seemed to think that it was a shell game and the people aren't going to be able to understand them.

People in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, were encouraged to see the gasohol produced from Canadian-made alcohol will be exempt from all gasoline taxation to encourage the production of gasohol as a fuel. I think that's a tremendous step forward and we hope that those people that are involved in studying and researching that item will look closely to my constituency where a facility is standing idle at the present time. The warehouse is still virtually full of very fine and very aged spirits, Mr. Speaker, but I'm afraid we wouldn't want to turn that into gasohol.

The Manitoba Political Contributions Tax Credit Program, Mr. Speaker, I think, is a good move that will enable many of us to finance our campaigns a little easier and may avoid some of the brickbats that are thrown back and forth about how various campaigns are financed.

Mr. Speaker, the emphasis on energy conservation and I think, an efficiency was made to assist the farm

communities, the small retailers have been assisted to some degree in collecting of the sales tax that's been a hindrance and a bit of a nuisance to some of the small business people, Mr. Speaker.

These are some of the highlights. There are many in the labour market and education. I can't go into them all, Mr. Speaker, because you've indicated that my time is almost up, but they're all in the budget, Mr. Speaker, for all to see. They'll be defended I know when the Minister of Education particularly brings in his budget estimates or his spending estimates. They are going to be defended and defended well because education is a top priority in the Conservative policies and this government on this side, Mr. Speaker, and the funding of education is a commitment of this government to provide 80 percent of the costs of education, as and when the revenues enable them to do so. The Minister will expound on that I know when his spending estimates are before the committee and I hope that, I know we'll hear from the Member for Elmwood because I don't know whether he's the critic or not. But, Mr. Speaker, those are some of the highlights of the budget.

I think the western grid that was announced is one of the greatest steps forward for our party. When that's signed, the western Canada grid agreement, we are going to see great activity in the province of Manitoba and the doom and gloom, the outmigration figures that have been thrown across from time to time are just not going to wash, Mr. Speaker. They're going to have to get some strong leadership, they're going to have to get some good policies on that side of the House, and come up with some positive programs rather than the negativism that we've heard so far. And please, on the question period, let's try and get some questions that have got some meat in them instead of these little, funny funny little shows about fallout of 1953 and the ash from Mount St. Helens and a few of these things that really could be settled in the coffee shop just as quickly, because I'm sure the Conservative government didn't have too much to do with the eruption of mountain in Washington State last weekend, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't get the opportunity during the speech from the Throne to stand up and make a few remarks at that time, so if I may be permitted now to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your continued presence in the House. I know that all members sitting in the Chamber look to you as the protector of their rights and in fact, as I've pointed out to some of our members, the rules are designed to protect the minorities in this House, not the majority which is big enough to look after itself.

I'd also like to congratulate the Deputy Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, who is doing a fine job in what is usually and often a most tedious position. He is handling that position with confidence and with a good deal of patience and I know all members on this side intend to give him their continued support and confidence.

I would also like to congratulate those new members that have joined us in the House since the

last Session. I note that the constituency of River Heights has returned a Conservative again; the constituency of Fort Rouge has returned a Liberal again, and Rossmere has returned a New Democrat again — position unchanged. I welcome all three of them to this House. I note they have made their maiden speeches and other contributions to the debate, and I foresee a distinguished career for all three of them.

I'd like to also congratulate those other members of the back bench, I don't have a list of them, who have assumed new duties as Legislative Assistants, or appointees to boards. I'm sure that would include almost all of the gentlemen on the backbench with perhaps just the odd exception or two. However, we will perhaps get to that other at a later time.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, and noting the time is getting towards 5:30, I wondered if there would be an inclination on the part of members to call it 5:30 at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there an inclination to call it 5:30? (Agreed) The hour being 5:30 I'm leaving the Chair to return at 8:00 o'clock.