

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 22 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 . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement to make to the House.

Mr. Speaker, honourable members know that the common sense and the ingenuity of Manitoba's farmers is being severely tested by the driest spring in a century. The current drought is already serious and forecasts suggest that conditions may well worsen in the next number of days and weeks. Our farmers have a right to expect the support and backup of their government as they strive to meet the problems out of these worsening drought conditions. To provide that support and backup we have today replaced the existing interdepartmental committee, which has been monitoring the situation, with a new Provincial Drought Coordinating Committee. Mr. Speaker, I am the Chairman of that committee. The Ministers whose departments are most directly involved in drought related services are also all members of the committee.

We will coordinate all emergency drought planning. We will make sure that whatever personnel or agencies of the government that are needed to meet the short-term, medium-term and longer-term aspects of the drought emergency, are made available immediately.

Specifically, we will be taking a number of actions to help farmers to maintain livestock herds across the province. I wish to announce that the government will provide special feed grain assistance, first to secure supplies of feed grain; and secondly, to help cover the costs of transporting it. To make that possible we are looking at supplies of hay from southern Ontario, screening pellets, barley, oats and other feed grains and milling by-products that may be available and suitable as alternate sources of feed.

At this moment we are in the process of purchasing feed pellets from Thunder Bay. These will be stockpiled and made available for resale to those farmers who need them later. We will be working closely with the Livestock Producers Association and others in this effort. In addition, we will make emergency hay and pastures available on Crown lands, including wildlife management Areas, for livestock if drought conditions worsen. We will assist in transporting livestock to those areas. If it becomes necessary, we will provide assistance to farmers to irrigate hay crops, using community lagoons and other available sources, including, for example, waters that could be diverted into the Portage

Diversion, and the use of natural flows in the Red River Floodway.

We will, of course, continue to provide assistance for pumping water in developing new water sources and in installing pipelines through the Agri-Water and the PFRA Programs.

Our officials have already met with PFRA and Agriculture Canada officials, and as well as representatives from the other Prairie Provinces, to discuss these and related programs. We have made a specific approach to the federal government to cost-share emergency drought programs, including the purchase of feed and livestock, emergency water programs, and the development of non-traditional feed supplies as required. As a minimum, we would expect the federal government to assume the same proportion of such costs as they did in 1976-77.

Mr. Speaker, one important form of back-up that has long been in place for the farming community is crop insurance. Crop insurance provides underpinning for the farmer and indeed for the total community. This year close to 15,000 farmers have insurance coverage on 4.3 million acres. This amounts to a total coverage of some 200 million for land that can be seeded as late as June 20th for major feed crops and June 25th for other crops.

I think, too, that there is a general understanding among both public and private farm credit institutions that the cash flow position of some individual farmers may become difficult because of continuing drought conditions. No one, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, wishes to see any farmer become a financial victim through an act of God. We will be monitoring the farm credit situation closely to assure that this situation is dealt with sensibly and sensitively through the drought period.

I have dealt at some length with agricultural, because that is our most pressing problem. There are other aspects of the drought problem that are also critical and of an emergency nature, if I may say so, notably forest protection. We have established a forest fire co-ordinating group under the Provincial Drought Co-ordinating Committee to ensure that the resources needed to deal with this problem, including water bombers, personnel, and equipment, are available immediately when needed. If it becomes necessary, we will not hesitate to take additional actions, including closing highways or resort areas in fire-prone areas. Clearly this kind of drastic action will be taken only where it is necessary to protect the environment.

With respect to water supplies, we anticipate no problem for municipal water supplies at this time. No problems are anticipated for industrial and irrigation wells. Our Water Resources officials anticipate that the level of Lake Winnipeg will be at 714.4 feet by mid July and that continued drought conditions could lower this by about six inches this year. On the Assiniboine River, the Shellmouth Reservoir is expected to fill to normal summer capacity and water from this, under controlled conditions, can be released for downstream municipal and irrigation purposes.

In our efforts, Mr. Speaker, we greatly value the help and support that we are receiving from personnel of PFRA and Agriculture Canada and from the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, which is represented by its Vice President, Dave Harms of Snowflake. Clearly, we will rely heavily on the assistance of municipal officials everywhere in all aspects of our drought emergency programs.

We encourage farmers throughout the province to continue to work closely with the local agricultural representatives and of course we value the ideas, the suggestions and the support of people throughout Manitoba, including in particular the members of this House who share, I know, my own deep concerns of this worsening natural emergency. Clearly, there is only so much that men and women in Manitoba can do in the face of this kind of natural emergency. We cannot wish or hope, or even work, the drought away but we must be and we are prepared to do everything within our power, working with the people of this province, to minimize the damage and the dislocation that arises from the drought and to use our collective ingenuity and ability to respond realistically and effectively to the drought, as Manitobans have responded to so many other problems in the past.

May I add, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Natural Resources will be available for an update on the forest fire situation when question period begins. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, we on this side thank the First Minister for the statement dealing with the particular problems that must be confronted now and solutions, if they can be found, to minimizing the impact of the droughts. So many of our old timers are indicating these days that it reminds them of the worst of the 1930's when drought conditions then were prevailing, that the circumstances that appear now to be prevalent point in that direction. We all hope not and we hope in fact that rains will come in the next few days.

There are some points that I would like to make to the First Minister, however. First, it is our view that the announcement by the First Minister today was the least that could be done but is too late, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, questions were raised in this House by the Member for Ste. Rose and by the Member for Inkster some three or four weeks ago, questions posing to the Minister of Natural Resources as to whether or not there existed any contingency program and pertaining to what was then in the minds of all who could reasonably contemplate it as a serious drought situation that was occurring within Manitoba. We regret, Mr. Speaker, that this type of action was not inacted within days of those probing questions that were posed at that time. —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, we heard the other steps that we would suggest should be undertaken by the government. We heard the Minister of

Agriculture suggest as a courtesy that the packers should attempt not to take advantage of the farmers during this pressing period of time. We say, Mr. Speaker, that this Legislature should take steps to introduce a floor price to protect our livestock producers during these critical times and we offer to the Minister of Agriculture the support of all members on this side of the Chamber in introducing legislation to insure that there is a floor price; that we do not rely upon goodwill; that we do not rely upon courtesy of the packing industry. In our view, that will not bring about the result that the Minister of Agriculture would like to see occur.

Secondly, to the Minister of Natural Resources, it is our information that this morning the Minister of Defence in Ottawa indicated that armed force and airforce personnel are available by request of any provincial government that makes a request for assistance from that source.

It is my information that the province of Saskatchewan has now requested the assistance of the armed forces in that province, in order to assist in their critical forest fire situation throughout Saskatchewan. And yet, Mr. Speaker, we have per a recent announcement, indication that Snow Lake has just been evacuated as of a matter of an hour or two ago.

So, Mr. Speaker, the situation is certainly critical enough in Manitoba that the Minister should seriously contemplate the urgency of following the lead of Saskatchewan and requesting the Minister of Defence for assistance from the armed forces.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the members across the way will not appreciate these comments, but I believe they must be made, they must be made. Lake Winnipeg Regulation is again proving its worth, and the statement by the First Minister this afternoon should put to rest once and for all, all those harping critics that we've heard from over the last two, three, four years, about the workness of Lake Winnipeg Regulation. It is indeed a fortunate day for Manitoba that we did make possible, through foresight and ingenuity, Lake Winnipeg Regulation, despite the criticism that came from some sources to the ingenuity in establishing Lake Winnipeg Regulations. It helps in this time of need, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne) introduced Bill No. 34, An Act to amend The Garage Keepers Act and Bill No. 59, An Act to amend The Fatality Inquiries Act.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time I should like to introduce to the honourable members 60 students of Grade 5 standing from Tanners' Crossing School, under the direction of Donna Shorrock. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

We also have 50 students of Grade 5 standing from Frontenac School, under the direction of Mr.

Reimer. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Radisson.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Has the Minister of Natural Resources called for any assistance from the Department of National Defence, the Minister of National Defence?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the honourable member's concern in this issue. We, of course, are aware of the availability of Armed Forces' personnel and we are aware of the circumstances under which such personnel would be of use to us. At the moment, we have not found it necessary to call on them for assistance. The situation is such that we do have sufficient manpower available within the department and in the communities close to where fires are occurring, so that it is not necessary to call on the Armed Services' personnel. In many cases, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the honourable members that the most effective people to be able to fight a fire, under the direction of my departmental staff, are people in the communities, especially in the northern areas. Those people are familiar with the bush and with the behaviour of fires and they tend to be much more useful than persons who are not so familiar.

I might say, Mr. Speaker, in passing, that we have urged the Shilo Base that perhaps one of the things that they could do to assist there would be to cease firing into unburned areas. We have had a substantial number of fires occurring on the Shilo ranges and the situation there is of great concern to the local people, as well as to myself and others.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my next question is to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, in view of advertising which appeared in the Winnipeg Tribune and Winnipeg Free Press, compliments of the Premier and the Minister of Finance, compliments of the cost to the people of Manitoba, the taxpayers of Manitoba, I would ask the Minister of Finance if he could advise the Chamber as to the budget for the campaign expenses that will be involved in the advertising campaign that is being mounted by he and the Premier pertaining to various programs announced in the Budget.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I can't give my honourable friend the figure for the program of information to the people of Manitoba with respect to programs announced in the budget, but I will take his question as notice and when that figure is available I will be happy to give it to him.

I would merely point out, Mr. Speaker, that it is a program of providing information on a number of matters that were contained in the White Paper to the people of Manitoba. We have ample precedent, of course, Mr. Speaker, by some of the non-informational programs that my honourable friends used to carry on when they were in government at public expense. We would hope that this program would be largely of an information nature and of much more benefit to the people of Manitoba, in telling them what was in the White Paper and how the changes are to be brought about, and the impacts that those changes will have on the general population of the people of Manitoba.

I am sure my honourable friend would agree that is a desirable thing for any government to do, to keep the people informed of those plans and programs that are in the people's interest.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister refers to advertising as one involving programs, that the advertising involves past programs already implemented. The advertising does not provide information as to means of application. Would the First Minister table in this House, so that all members might have access to the information, the free brochure explaining how the new programs work, in view of the fact that we haven't yet been able to obtain information from the Minister of Community Affairs as to the new plan to create more day care, which the Minister of Community Affairs has been dodging in the question period in providing information not only to members of this House but to those who are interested in day care in the province of Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, we'll be happy to provide, for the enlightenment of my honourable friend, a copy of the brochure when it's available and it will be freely available, of course, to the people of Manitoba who wish to have it as well. That document should be available within a relatively short time.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, would the First Minister advise whether this program of advertisement would be extended to radio, television, and to all the weeklies in the province of Manitoba, as well?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure of the breadth of the broadcast or the program that is being envisaged but we will take his helpful suggestion as advice and perhaps extend it to all of those media, thank you.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the First Minister would also take a helpful suggestion and send the bill not to the taxpayers of Manitoba but to the Progressive Conservative headquarters on Kennedy Avenue?

MR. LYON: Well in that case, Mr. Speaker, we would have to send the bill for something in excess of 1 billion to the New Democratic Party to begin to make up some of the losses that they imposed on the people of Manitoba . . .

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

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Has the Minister of Municipal Affairs made any decision with respect to the reference to a committee or otherwise a forum for dealing with the material which was contained in a letter from a former councillor of the local government district of Alexander, which I brought to his attention approximately 10 days ago?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. DOUG GOURLAY (Swan River): Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Certain documents that were referred to me, I have submitted them to legal counsel for advice and at this date I haven't received a reply yet.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, may I be advised from the Minister whether it is not a fact that insofar as one of those council seats is concerned that there was a councillor elected by acclamation and, if so, the number of available councils would be three, which is a quorum, and therefore that the council should be immediately reinstated?

MR. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, that is true. The nominations were completed yesterday and there were acclamations in two of the three seats. As soon as the oath of office has been signed by those that have been acclaimed, then the order which suspended the Reeve and Deputy Reeve will be removed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, is it also a fact that interestingly enough one of the councillors who felt that they had to resign and thereby create a hiatus in council activities, is one of the councillors who is standing for re-election and apparently has seen the resignation as not being as desirable as when she resigned?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GOURLAY: That is true, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. THOMAS BARROW: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. Speaker. Due to the fire hazard at Snow Lake — we hear all the stories second-hand of course — yesterday they had a partial evacuation, women and children; some women stayed. Today we hear there's a complete evacuation. Could the Minister give us a picture of the situation as it is?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can respond to that question as the

Minister responsible for Emergency Measures Organization. As of an hour ago, the personnel still remaining in that community are considered to be essential, either involved with the protection of the mine properties themselves and the town, and of course some support staff, which includes women to feed the people that are in the community. There has not been a general evacuation order made, nor was it necessary. The people in that community demonstrated their good sense by agreeing with the local officials, the Mayor, in making the evacuation of all non-essential people, virtually complete.

MR. BARROW: Has the Minister closed down the secondary roads in that area at this time?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I am not intimately familiar with the situation on the ground there, but I would feel quite certain, under the circumstances, that any movement in that area is strictly controlled.

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

MR. BARROW: You said the armed forces were not qualified firefighters. I want to inform the Minister that miners aren't qualified firefighters, bankers, etc., they're all fighting fires. A member of the armed forces is just as able to fight a fire as anyone. There are no professionals. When does it become acute . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. Has the honourable member a question? Would the honourable member proceed with his question?

MR. BARROW: My God, Mr. Speaker, here's a town that's burning up on three sides . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If the honourable member has a question, let him proceed with his question.

MR. BARROW: They've evacuated the town. The town is in danger of burning up and the situation doesn't call for bringing in the armed forces. Why, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member of course is misrepresenting the statement that I made. At no time did I say that the armed forces made poor firefighting personnel. I said we did not need the armed forces at the moment. I said that so long as local people who are familiar with conditions locally, people who have experience in the bush, as long as manpower is available from those sources, then it is not necessary to call in the armed forces. We are quite aware of the assistance that the armed forces could provide, especially if it became necessary to ask for their assistance in an evacuation. That is the sort of thing that we would expect to be able to make extensive use of the armed forces' personnel, within that sort of action, Mr. Speaker. I do not wish to have it remain on the

record in any way that I made the statements attributed to me by the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

I should point out, Mr. Speaker, that so far as is known to me, the evacuation of the town of Snow Lake has taken place very smoothly under the direction of the local government, who have been responding to the situation, have been carrying out their responsibilities, and there is no reason to believe that the situation would have been carried out any more effectively or efficiently with the help of the armed forces.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. ARNOLD BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. According to some news' reports, there were some 20 new fires reported in northern Manitoba. My question is —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I realize there are many members of the Chamber that want to ask questions, but I suggest they stand in their place to be recognized by the Chair before they do so.

The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is, can the Minister bring us up-to-date on the forest fire situation in northern Manitoba as it stands today?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the honourable member's concern for wanting information about the forest fire situation. It of course changes very quickly on a day such as today, Mr. Speaker, but I can inform the House that there are approximately 90 fires burning in the province at the moment; and in addition to the seven fires burning in the vicinity of Snow Lake, there is the very serious fire in the Porcupine Mountain area, which I reported upon yesterday and the day before. That fire has now consumed approximately 120,000 acres and is proving to be essentially impossible to control. It is within, perhaps, three or four miles of No. 10 Highway, near the southern side of the Porcupine Mountain.

In addition to that, I can report that the fire in the Wallace Lake area is moving towards the Ontario boundary, if it has not already crossed into Ontario, still is a concern to Manitoba on its northern flank as well.

I am pleased to be able to say that we have made arrangements to bring one additional Canso water bomber in from the province of Nova Scotia. We expect that that aircraft will be here by tomorrow afternoon. The United States firefighting people in the State of Minnesota have agreed to cover off the south-eastern part of the province, or at least to assist with fighting fires in the south-eastern part of the province which falls within the range of their land-based bombers — they operate with a different kind of equipment than we do, Mr. Speaker — and we're happy to have this kind of co-operation, Mr. Speaker, because it allows us to make better use of our equipment elsewhere in the province.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because of the serious forest fire situation in these areas, I wonder if there will be any restrictions in the usage of provincial parks imposed during the weekend.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, that question is under consideration at the moment and I expect that sometime later this afternoon, I will be announcing the type of restrictions that will be in place for the next few days.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Just as a matter of co-operation by the Minister, I would suggest that the Minister might wish to give such statements during the statement period and distribute copies of his statements. I think it would be much more useful and productive for members of the House that they would have statements that they would be able to relate to, and would be able to deal with prior to awaiting the issuance of Hansard. We appreciate the information. We would just like it, Mr. Speaker, if we could receive some more constructive method of dealing with this very critical situation than simply dealing with it through the question and answer period.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, speaking on what I presume was a point of order by the Leader of Opposition, may I advise him, and through him all members of this Chamber and all people in Manitoba, that the fire situation in Manitoba is changing hour by hour, and it would be imprudent for the Minister, if I may say so, Mr. Speaker, with respect to his responsibilities —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. I would hope that members of the Chamber would extend courtesy to those that are on their feet speaking in the Chamber.

The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: I am merely trying to indicate, Mr. Speaker, some of the situations that honourable members opposite may not well be aware of. In the passage of one day we have lost 60,000 acres of forest in the Porcupine Reserve, and, Mr. Speaker, to ask —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, the honourable member . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I suggest to the Honourable Member for St. George that he wait his turn.

The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: I am merely trying to indicate, Mr. Speaker, in as co-operative a way as I can, that the Minister is giving statements to me as the Chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee of this drought disaster as quickly as he receives them. We are convening a Cabinet Meeting the minute that this question period is over to get the up-to-date statements of what has occurred since 2 o'clock, since we came into this Chamber. So I merely suggest to my honourable friend, with the greatest of respect, that the suggestion that he makes about the

Minister having prepared statements which would be stale by the time they are given, is not a very practical source of help.

I reiterate, Mr. Speaker, if I may, what I said in my prepared statement to the House, that we would like to have, Mr. Speaker, the co-operation, the ideas, and the support of honourable members of this House in the very severe situation which we face. That kind of co-operation and support we eagerly wish to have from the honourable members. I would wish that they would become aware of the severity of this situation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a question.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the First Minister indicates that a statement would be stale if given, but, Mr. Speaker, if that is so, then the answers to the questions are stale.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. I find the honourable member is debating. Order please. The honourable member has no point of order.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I think there is a very bad practice that is developing in this House, and it is simply that Ministers, rather than making statements, are responding . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Does the honourable member have a question? — (Interjections)— The Honourable Member for St. Matthews. —(Interjections)— The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a point of order.

MR. DOERN: Ministers — and the last Minister was a good example — instead of making a statement under Ministerial Statements, are having backbenchers ask them set-up questions and then making Ministerial Statements. Now that is the practice. I think we should be on guard about it. If the Ministers want to make statements, fine, then let the opposition reply to them. Let stop this phony practice of setting them up and then not allowing the opposition to reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. The honourable member is using very strong language and I would suggest that he temper his language when he is speaking in the Chamber.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, on this same point of order, if it indeed is a point of order, let me remind members opposite that the Premier clearly indicated upon completion of reading his statement that the Minister of Natural Resources would shortly be in the Chamber to provide further information with respect to the fires to the Chamber, and that is the reason why, in the absence of any questions from members opposite, the question was asked by a member on this side, who was interested in that matter.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland on a point of order.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is incumbent on us, as members of the opposition, to draw this matter to your attention, in order that we can seek your protection against this unfair practice by the government of Manitoba. I say this, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. May I point out to the honourable member that it is highly improper for a member to cast disparaging remarks against the actions of the Speaker. I would ask him to withdraw them.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, I am seeking your clearness and justice, and protection in light of this unfair practice on the part of the government of Manitoba, not unfair practice on your part. Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't wish to leave any such aspersions on the record, but, Mr. Speaker, in this case, and let me finish my point, in this case, which is a very serious case in Manitoba, one where the province is in danger of many serious forest fires, we feel that it is only incumbent on the government to make a Ministerial Statement on this in order that we may at least respond to that, rather than having a set-up job of having a backbencher every day jump up and ask a question, and the Minister then making a lengthy statement to the House during the question period and not allowing us the opportunity of having a response.

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the obvious concern to all members of the House regarding this question, in view of the difficulties that the First Minister indicates that could take place with regard to immediate statements, could it be indicated by all honourable members — and I would think that the members on this side of the House would agree — that if there is information that is important to the members of the House, that at any time that takes place, in view of this emergency situation, Mr. Speaker, that the House would immediately give consent to a Minister to make a statement. — (Interjections)— Mr. Speaker, I am suggesting that if at 3:00 o'clock . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please..

MR. GREEN: I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that if at 3:00 o'clock or 3:30 this afternoon, the Minister wants to come in, even though he can't make it in writing and deliver to the House some important information, that he do it by way of a statement and that this would give members of the Official Opposition the opportunity to respond and they won't have the feeling that they are being precluded for a response by the fact that it comes as a question. I am sure if we followed that procedure, Mr. Speaker, then both sides of the House would feel that we are dealing with the emergency and not with the problem with regard to House procedures.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister on a point of order.

MR. LYON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the point raised by the Honourable Member for Inkster, may I say that we thank him for that very constructive suggestion, and I think he appreciates, as a former Minister of Natural Resources, something of the severity of the problem that the whole province faces at this time, and I think his suggestion is an extremely useful one. The business of preparing statements, statements by the time they are prepared are out of date, and he knows that from his own experience, and I am sure that various Ministers involved in the Committee will take advantage of that suggestion, with the permission of the House, to make oral statements from time to time as the situation changes, because it is changing rather rapidly.

On the second point, I would not have thought it necessary to make the point. I find it incredible to hear elected members of a Legislative Assembly in a parliamentary democracy talking about the right of any member of this Legislature to ask a question of the Treasury Bench. Mr. Speaker, we are, all 57 of us, here as elected representatives of the various constituencies in this province and all 57 have the right to ask questions of the Treasury Bench at any time, that is a fundamental of the parliamentary system. If my honourable friend from the east side of Lake Winnipeg, would like to go over to the mother of parliament sometime, he would see parliament in operation, whereby the backbench of the government, be it labour or conservative, on an average question period, Mr. Speaker, ask at least a third of the questions of the Treasury Bench. Let my honourable friend become better instructed in parliament before he tries, Mr. Speaker, to instruct you in your duties.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks on a point of order.

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, the government knows very well what the precedents in this House are, and they've not followed them. Just two days ago, the Minister of the Environment wanted to make a statement, not at 2:30 in the afternoon or 3:00 o'clock, at 10:00 o'clock at night; he got unanimous consent immediately and he made a statement, and it was responded to. That has been done before, it should be done now, and I'm surprised that the government is trying to cover up and maneuver as they are.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources on a point of order.

MR. RANSOM: I appreciate the suggestion that has been made by the Honourable Member for Inkster. I simply would point out for the record, that during the time earlier this year when there was some question of flooding occurring in the province, when I came into this Chamber with last-minute information and asked leave of the members opposite to make a statement without distributing the text, I was refused.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, i . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We have a point of order that has been raised, and I think it's only fair that the Chair should deal with it. There does seem to be a problem with respect to information provided to the House. Information can be provided to the House in answer to questions, or it can be provided in the form of statements.

We have set up our rules that do allow a reply to a formal statement that has been made. I haven't investigated thoroughly, but I would suspect that statements that do allow replies are usually ones that change policy. In most cases a statement that allows a reply, in my opinion is one that usually affects the policy of the House or the government. I could be wrong, but there is a difference. There is a difference between statements and questions, and in this particular case, I believe the honourable member for Rhineland was seeking information, information was provided to him. In that case I do not see that there was a point of order that was raised. The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave of the House to revert to the statements . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have leave? (Agreed)

MR. ENNS: Unfortunately, because of the nature of the statement, I would not of course have copies. It involves the possible evacuation, possibly later on this afternoon, of several additional communities as a result of the very serious fire on the Porcupine Mountain. These communities consist of Mafeking, Bellsite, Novra, and the surrounding farm areas. They are currently being assisted by the local officials and the RCMP co-ordinated by the Emergency Measures people on site, for evacuation of their home sites at this present time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, we thank the Minister of Government Services for the statement. We regret the contents of that statement indicating the increased severity of the problem confronting us. I think in view of the statement that the government would like to again reconsider their position in regard to calling in the armed forces. The situation appears to be worsening rather than improving.

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

MR. LEN DOMINO: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Attorney-General. It concerns the new federal Young Offenders' Act. Last year when we had a Progressive Conservative government federally, I understand that a draft was circulated to the provinces and comments were asked for from the various provinces. I wonder if the new Liberal government has forwarded a draft for the Young Offenders' Act to the province of Manitoba and asked for our comments?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the previous Conservative administration's Solicitor General, Mr. Lawrence, had asked for comments from all provinces on the proposed Young Offenders' Act by the end of June of last year, and of course the election intervened. The new Solicitor General has asked for comments on that same proposal.

MR. DOMINO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker: I understand one of the key elements in the new act might be a uniform —(Interjection)— I guess I'm right there. I understand one of the key elements in the new act would be the federal government suggesting that we might adopt a uniform juvenile age for the entire country. I wonder, has the Manitoba government indicated whether it's in favour of a uniform age across the country?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to the Solicitor General that we would be in agreement with a uniform maximum age across Canada if in fact agreement can be arrived at between all provinces.

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

MR. DOMINIO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A large number of my constituents feel that that maximum age for juveniles should be sixteen years of age. I note that several other provinces have an age of 16 and that there is increasingly a large number of serious crimes committed by sixteen and seventeen-year-olds that often go virtually unpunished because of the nature of our juvenile laws. I wonder, is the Manitoba government prepared to recommend to the federal government that that maximum age for juveniles be sixteen years?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, of course there is a wide variation among provinces. Manitoba and Quebec, I believe, are the only provinces with 18 as the maximum age. Our neighbouring provinces of Saskatchewan and Ontario are sixteen. I would prefer to wait to determine, Mr. Speaker, what the response is from all provinces before we proceed to consider the matter further and determine whether or not in fact all provinces can agree on a uniform age under the present proposal.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable Minister of Health. While I understand the Minister did not attend the very interesting demonstration of the visual ear aid for hearing handicapped today, I wonder if the Minister would advise the House, in view of the assistance that's been given to this program by the federal government in research and tax break, what assistance the provincial government is prepared to offer to these handicapped people?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): No, Mr. Speaker. The honourable member is correct. I was at the 66th Annual Meeting at the Manitoba Association

of Registered Nurses today. The rest of her question I'll take as notice.

MRS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister then confirm that money has been included in his department's budget for the past two years, to assist this program and has been eliminated before the estimates were presented to the House?

MR. SHERMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, I will certainly not confirm that. I will have to check to see whether that specific project — I cannot recall — to see whether that specific project was forwarded as one of the recommendations coming to my office from the department; but certainly there are a number, as the honourable member may be unaware, a number of proposals, programs and projects that come forward in recommendation form before Ministers when the first examinations of preliminary estimates are launched in approximately the autumn of the year. It might have been in that category. Certainly there has been no rejection of it in any sort of sense which discounts its viability or discounts future consideration.

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

MRS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is to the Minister of Education, and I am sorry that he is not able to answer. I hope someone else on that side can answer in his absence. What provision is the Minister of Education making for the hearing of disabled children and young people, to become proficient in the use of the visual ear machine? And how many units are provided for their use and education at the Manitoba School for the Deaf?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister without Portfolio.

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Education I would be pleased to take that question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: My question is to the Minister of Resources. In view of the very serious fire situation and in view of the information he provided to the House today that at least one of the major fires has doubled in size since yesterday, from 60,000 to 120,000 acres, is now threatening several communities, I wonder if the Minister can report to the House if he is satisfied that the government of Manitoba has sufficient resources in the way of equipment — that is heavy equipment — water bombers, water pumps and so on, all the necessary equipment to action all of the major fires that are threatening either lives or property or communities in Manitoba, that are now burning?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the honourable member that we do have sufficient

equipment to be able to deal with the fires that are in existence at the moment in the manner that staff would consider to be consistent with how they would normally be able to deal with fires. Our concern is that the situation is so critical in terms of the fire hazard, that fires may well get started — and they will get started — within the next few days, especially if we happen to experience some electrical storms. We have been fortunate in not having had very many electrical storms to date. So that is our concern. I can assure the honourable member, with respect to the Porcupine Mountain fire, I am assured by my staff that it was essentially independent of the amount of equipment available, that we were unable to contain that fire. The fire was of such intensity at the time that it entered the province that virtually no amount of equipment would have been able to control that fire, short of consuming the vast amounts of forest that have been consumed and that are likely to be consumed by that fire still today.

I'm informed this morning that in the vicinity of the fire at 5:00 o'clock this morning, the temperature was something like 87 degrees Fahrenheit.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, my second question is, in view of the Minister's answer, does the Minister now have his department's staff, equipment and other resources available for fighting forest fires fully deployed on existing fires, or does he have some reserve capacity to deal with the potentially hazardous situation that we are now facing? In view of the expanding nature of the present fires, it's reasonable to assume that many of the existing fires will expand and, in addition to that, many new fires are likely to erupt in the near future in the days ahead.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we do have sufficient equipment at the moment. We do have equipment in reserve. We anticipate being able to deal with the situations as they arise, but given the uncertainty as to the duration of these extreme conditions, we are making contacts with equipment suppliers elsewhere in North America and we will be in a position to be able to fly in additional equipment on short notice, should that become necessary. We have, of course, been in touch with other jurisdictions as well, as I've pointed out previously, where we've been able to make some arrangement with the Minnesota people to handle fires in the south-eastern part of the province. At the moment we are not pressed for equipment or for personnel, but we are looking at the possibilities of getting further water-bombing capability because we anticipate requiring it in the days to come.

Might I also point out, Mr. Speaker, in response to that question, that if there was any misunderstanding with respect to my answer concerning the use of the armed forces earlier, I would like to point out that we do have, at the moment, adequate personnel and adequate equipment to deal with the situation, but should it become necessary to call on the armed forces to assist us either in fighting fires or in evacuating personnel, we will certainly do that, just as we called on the armed forces for assistance in fighting the floods last spring.

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

MR. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, as a follow-up to the Minister's answer, can he assure us that he has at least alerted the Canadian forces and is more than reasonably assured — as he says he is — that the equipment that will be required in the days ahead, if these conditions persist, will be available to the province and the province will not be suffering extensive delays and be putting themselves out, in terms of not having sufficient equipment to battle the fires?

MR. RANSOM: I think I can provide that assurance, Mr. Speaker, but I should point out to the honourable member that the equipment that is necessary for fighting forest fires is not the equipment that the armed forces have readily available to them. The sort of equipment that is available is a rather specialized type of equipment plus the heavy machinery, the bulldozers and things of that nature, that are required, and those of course are acquired from the private sector largely. So equipment is not a problem.

Where the armed forces might be of some assistance is, if we should become short of personnel, or if there is a necessity for some type of logistic organization that the department is unable to carry out; or that it would become necessary to have their assistance with the evacuation of personnel; or if we required perhaps helicopters, that might be required to gain access to isolated areas. Our people with our Drought Coordinating Committee have been in touch with the armed forces. They are quite aware of our circumstances and we are aware of the assistance that would be available to us.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period having expired — the Honourable Government House Leader.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, before debate, could I simply indicate to the members of the House that next week the Committee on Economic Development will meet Tuesday and Thursday at 10:00 a.m., and on Friday afternoon at 2:00 p.m., if necessary, to complete its business.

BUDGET DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: On the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance and the amendments thereto — the Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I am going to focus most of my remarks in this debate on the issue of renewed federalism. It is a major immediate challenge that confronts us at the beginning of this decade. Before I get into that though, I just wanted to pass on one observation regarding the forest fire situation. There seems to be some undue hesitancy on the part of the provincial government about calling in the armed forces. I am wondering whether in fact they are concerned about the possibility of

having to pay the costs of bringing in the armed services, and I would hope that is not the reason why they are hesitating in this time of need. I think, if that is the case, that it would be unfortunate, and I hope that isn't the reason why they are hesitating, especially if we are talking about situations where towns may have to be evacuated and indeed are being evacuated, because I think the armed services in that respect has the necessary equipment and the personnel trained in these areas to do the job expeditiously and well. I would hope that the government would not be concerned about any costs in this situation, but rather would try and meet the emergency and the immediate needs of the population of Manitoba in this time of fire threat.

Mr. Speaker, I have refrained from commenting on the issue of renewed federalism very much prior to the Referendum Vote in Quebec, because I think that a lot of what happened in the last two weeks was grandstanding, especially by a number of federal politicians, unanimously passing resolutions that they would meet as a Parliament in Quebec City for one day prior to the Referendum. Those types of actions taken right before the vote, in my estimation, were grandstanding, and I believe that they were insincere, and I believe that many of the people posing them were insincere, and many of the people in Quebec and the rest of Canada saw those actions as insincere.

Frankly, in the light of statements in the last two days by the Premier of Manitoba, I was right about the insincerity of a number of the statements of people prior to the Referendum. I believe that renewed federalism is an issue that we must be very serious and sincere about, because the implications of major changes in federalism are so fundamental and longstanding.

I was thankful and I was relieved by the vote of the people of Quebec in yesterday's Referendum. Sorry, the Referendum the day before yesterday. Quebecois voted in favour of Canada, in favour of trying to meet their hopes and aspirations —(Interjection)— Pardon? —(Interjection)— I was going to speak yesterday, indeed, that's right. Quebecois voted in favour of Canada, in favour of trying to meet their needs and aspirations, which really have mushroomed over the last 20 years within the framework of a renewed Canadian federalism. Having voted for some type of renewed federalism, the ball really is in the federalists' court. I don't say in Canada's court, I say that the ball is in the federalists' court. I believe the onus is now on the federalists; not the separatists; not the unionists like Collier and Ham in Saskatchewan and other assorted Conservatives in that province, who are unionists in terms of seeking union with the United States; not with Unitary Status, who believe that we should have one state that doesn't take into account regional or cultural differences; and surely the onus is not, and should not be, with parochial provincialists, who would dismember the country. Surely the onus is on us, the federalists, to renew a commitment to federalism, to make positive accommodations and changes, to make federalism stronger, to make it work as best as possible for all peoples in all regions.

The approach really must be positive. It must be sincere. I think the sincerity of approach or the

necessary condition of sincerity of approach poses a problem for the Quebec people. At present they have a government, which I believe does surely not have a mandate to negotiate any type of sovereignty association. The people have spoken out in favour of renewed federalism, yet the government representing them, at least for now, is not sincere about federalism. I believe the people of that province have a problem, and I believe that will create problems for us as Canadians in our negotiations.

I believe that we do not have positive attitudes about federalism in many other provinces, and I think that presents tremendous problems for us, because when we talk about strengthening federalism, or when I talk about strengthening federalism, I surely do not mean weakening the country and weakening the national government.

I was heartened by the responses of many people in Canada to the results of the vote the other night in Quebec. Their attitude was positive, it was creative, there was good will. Unfortunately, other persons' responses were quite disappointing. Some seemed not to accept the democratic will. Levesque was saying, wait until next time. Others saw this as an opportunity to dismember the country, and I believe that the biggest threat to this country comes from the positions of people like Premier Lougheed of Alberta and Premier Peckford of Newfoundland, and I find that the position of the Manitoba Government in this respect disquieting as well, because there seems to be some tacit support for the decentralist tendencies of these two people with respect to economic powers. They reminded me of wolves circling an aging deer or moose, waiting for the kill, and surely that is not the approach that we will, or should take forward into negotiations and discussions about renewed federalism, which takes into account not only Constitution, not only the institutions, but surely should take into account some policy differences, which may in fact have creative problems rather than constitutional problems.

I think sometimes when we talk about renewing federalism or making the federal system work better, we use the need for constitutional change as a smoke-screen to cover up problems of policy, where in some instances the federal government has not been cooperating with provincial governments with respect to optimum utilization of resources, or in some instances provinces have not cooperated with the federal government. That is part of the type of tension that might exist within a federal state. I think it can be creative, but I don't think that those difficulties in terms of policy differences should be covered up by saying that our problems really are ones of Constitution.

I must say that of all the responses to the Referendum Vote, the response of the Premier of Manitoba saddened and disappointed me the most. Here at the very blush of victory in a sense, and I think that most Canadians felt that it was a victory for Canada, was our Premier, not being positive, not trying to exude any type of good will to the rest of the country, but rather being negative, being reactionary, being inflexible, before even hearing arguments for changes. It is as if the Premier had fallen asleep since the debates of the 1960s and had just awakened and had responded to the concerns of that day. I tell our Rip Van Winkle Premier that

great changes have taken place since 1966 or 1967, especially changes in Quebec, an awakening of cultural and linguistic aspirations, which in many respects is admirable, and which in many respects should be seen as a positive creative force for our country, not one to be sneered at; not one that one tries to appease but rather that one tries to build in, to strengthen federalism.

I think the Premier got out of politics at that time and he really hasn't been able to bring his mind set to the latter part of the 1970's into the 1980's. It's an anachronistic attitude that he brings to these discussions and I believe that the people of Manitoba do not support him in his negative position with respect to developing a renewed federalism. I do not believe that we need macho-man politics at present, I believe that the situation requires statesmanship and we are not getting it.

We as a country, we as a province need an open mind. We should be prepared to listen; be prepared to put forward our views, not in rigid stereo-types but in a sincere attempt to find a more workable, albeit not a perfect solution to the various diverse needs and aspirations of Canadians and the people living in the country.

The Premier said he wouldn't negotiate sovereignty association before the referendum. The night of the referendum he says he will not negotiate a constitutional Bill of Rights. Is this a new non-negotiable item that the Premier has now put forward? Does that mean that the referendum vote, and the hopes of the referendum vote, are indeed stillborn?

I believe that it is wrong for the Premier to start laying non-negotiable items on the table just after the referendum vote and I now understand why the First Minister was wary of having any type of debate on the whole issue of federalism prior to the referendum, because I think had we had a debate, his biases and his negativism would have come out and that could have in fact hurt the referendum. So in one sense I'm glad that he didn't go to Quebec — yes, as my colleague says. I think that negativism is a very dangerous thing at present and it's the negative attitude. Some of the substance we can in fact have our differences on; there might be some surprising agreements. I, for example, must admit that I am not a big fan of a constitutional Bill of Rights, but I would be willing to listen to the arguments put forward, and I am not going to suggest that we should make it a non-negotiable item before we even sit down to talk about the entire mix of proposals being put forward for constitutional, or institutional, or policy changes with respect to a renewed federalism.

My colleague says that you need to entrench language rights somehow, and because of comments like that I am willing to listen and say okay, fine, maybe we do it with a specific amendment; maybe we do it with a Bill of Rights. I'm not going to say that one is on an . . . basis, throw it out. I think the Premier is taking that negative attitude to an extreme. I believe that his position of all has been the most negative. It's the language that he uses that also is one that could insight such negative backlashes on the part of the people that we in fact are trying to conciliate and bring together, as a

family of nations, as a family of people, as a family of provinces.

We will not pursue abject appeasement, is the statement of the Premier. Common law provinces don't have to buckle in. That type of attitude is shocking. It's the wrong approach to take and what I find strange about it is that here he was trying to build these distinctions in between common law provinces and Quebec, while at the same time the real serious threats to federalism are the threats posed by people like Premier Lougheed, when they say we are going to take away powers from the central government. And the Premier of Manitoba has never said anything about the attempts of some of these nouveau riche provinces to weaken Canada despite the fact that they themselves through the course of their history have been tremendous beneficiaries of the concept of sharing, which is inherent in Canadian federalism.

Alberta was bankrupt in the '30s; Saskatchewan was bankrupt in the '30s; Newfoundland was bankrupt in the '50s, '60's, and '70's, and now these provinces are saying we have hit our little moment of glory in history and we're going to pool this money all together and we won't share it with anyone. Well the ebbs and flows of history, we've only existed for just over 100 years and if you think about the fact that we surely will exist for many more hundreds of years, let me tell those other premiers that the ebbs and flows of history will change and it is in every province's interest to reinforce and believe in the concept of equalization; the concept of sharing between rich and poor regions, rich and poor people; rich and poor provinces. That is the approach that I feel very confident that our party stands for. It is not the position that I have heard articulated by Conservatives because Conservatives inherently are against redistribution. There have been a few of them. One of them is somewhat disliked by many Conservatives. —(Interjection)— That's right. Surprisingly, the one prominent Conservative who has said that an inherent characteristic of Canadian federalism is redistribution was Dalton Camp. But of course Dalton Camp would be the type of Conservative who would not be liked by the Conservatives opposite us, because Dalton Camp, I assume, had some red Toryism within him.

I urge the First Minister to be positive, and I don't think he has been to date. Now when I look at the issue of renewed federalism, I must say that there are many perceptions of it. —(Interjection)— Oh, I'll get to that, I'll get to that. What do you want to do now? Are you saying that we should somehow punish Quebec, that we should turn around, beat it over the head, because they didn't agree to something in 1971? Is that the backward-looking Conservative approach that's going to take us into a new renewed federalism? It won't, it won't and I'm telling you that it won't. And that type of attitude is exactly the type of attitude that will lead to a split in the country.

MR. McKenzie: You tell us how you're going to solve it. That's what I want to hear.

MR. PARASIUK: I'm getting there. I certainly will solve it by being a bit fairer and open-minded than your First Minister has been to date. We have in fact had an embarrassment as a province from the

statement put forward by him. I am saying that there are different perceptions of this whole issue — (Interjection)— Wait a second. There are different perceptions of this issue. I know the history somewhat better than you my friend. The point is that what we should do, we should hear the different perceptions, and if the Member for Rocklake has positions and perceptions on this issue that he wants to put forward and the Member for Roblin, I want to hear them. And I believe that people of Roblin should hear them, too, and if some people in Roblin have some positions that they want to express, they should express them too. That is precisely why I support my leader's call for an all-party committee to be established now, to provide a forum for discussions on this issue, which will enable the Legislature, an all-party committee of the Legislature, to have public hearings and to allow people like the Member for Roblin, if he wants to be a part of that committee, or to allow his constituents to come forward, but he doesn't want to be part of that.

The point is, my leader has put forward that excellent suggestion. We believe it should be carried out. Who's the one backing off? Who's the one saying, no, we won't do that, we'll only consider establishing an all-party committee once we have established some stereotype positions. We say that that is the wrong approach to take into these discussions on renewed federalism. —(Interjection)— That's precisely the examples I wanted to point out. There was an all-party task force in the north; there was. That's an excellent point. There was an all-party task force in the north; there was an all-party committee looking into the whole question of family law and there were a number of diverse opinions and positions on it. There was an all-party committee on municipal affairs, on agriculture, and different views were put forward. There are precedents that exist for open government, for participatory democracy and at a time and on an issue when we most need open government, when we most need participatory democracy, this government is turning thumbs-down on an excellent proposal for an all-party committee.

The other point we're hearing is that this is not an issue, this is not an issue. The drought's an issue; the forest fires are issues. Those are issues surely, but if the Member for Minnedosa is saying that we sweep the whole matter of renewed federalism under the rug, you are playing into the hands of the separatists in Quebec. Just as with your attitude with respect to economic powers, you are playing into the hands of the separatists of Alberta. Surely we can establish a forum for hearing about perceptions of federalism and for exchanging views and this can, in fact, be done without a sacrifice of principle, especially if one's principles are logical, practical and take into account the cultural realities of Canada. If they aren't logical and practical, what's wrong with improving a principle or modifying it in the light of bona fide improvements put forward by other people, or if other alternatives that are useful are put forward?

There is often too great a tendency for adopting hard rigid positions and never being flexible and I say that it is at this time that we should be open-minded and flexible. So I look forward to serious discussions on renewed federalism. I do so with a combination of hope and concern. My hope is that

we can improve federalism so that all people feel comfortable within it and obviously right now there is a substantial portion of Canadian population that does not feel comfortable living in Canada, as constituted at present.

My concern is that we may try to change a federation into a confederation at the expense of our country. Canada surely is greater than the sum of its parts. I believe that ultimately Canadians see themselves as Canadians first, Manitobans second, Albertans second, Newfoundlanders second. There is a tendency, because provincial politics is close to us, for people to see themselves in talking about everyday issues, possibly as Manitobans first, but if they can step back for a second, they surely see themselves first as Canadians. If you travel outside this country surely what you tell people, what you proclaim about yourself internationally, is that I am a Canadian. You do not go out proclaiming that you are a Transconian or a Manitoban. You're first proclamation to people is, I am a Canadian.

But I believe that there are strong pressures on provincial governments and provincial leaders to come away from federal-provincial conferences or to come away from constitutional conferences with a pound of flesh gained at the expense of Canada. There are 10 governments chipping away at the concept of Canada and only one defending it, and often not defending it particularly well. I think it's important for provincial politicians to go a bit beyond their parochial provincial interests and speak out in defence of Canada, not just say, well, it's so easy to do the other.

We've had Levesque attacking Canada with the concept of sovereignty association and I didn't particularly buy that proposal. I have some very major concerns with the proposals of Claude Ryan. I look for some real federalists to come forward from Quebec. Levesque came up with a referendum to try and establish independent Quebec's sovereignty and then he wanted to negotiate association.

On page 38 of the Beige Paper, Claude Ryan goes a step further, that most people haven't picked out. His recommendation No. 4 is that the new federation will be composed of two orders of government, each sovereign and autonomous in its fields of jurisdictions. So Claude Ryan, without even going through a referendum, has indeed willed sovereignty on the part of Quebec and then will negotiate its relationship to the rest of Canada. That is a position that we will have to listen to possibly, we will argue against but I think that we have to be prepared to listen to anyone coming forward, even people like Brian Peckford, the Premier of Newfoundland, who came out with the statement that Canada is an agency of the provinces. The ludicrous position of the state's right is taken to its ridiculous extreme and if Canadians want to go around arguing that their country is somehow a creation of its parts, I think it is important for us, as Canadians living within provinces, to think clearly about who we are and what we are, first and foremost.

I say that these Premiers are grandstanding and that they are fooling the people. I have indeed been to a number of so-called Premiers' conferences and the Premiers like to give the impression that if Ottawa was very very weak, they somehow, acting in concert, would be able to do great and wonderful

things for this country. Well, the thing that they usually achieve easiest agreement on is abashing Ottawa; that's an easy one to get agreement on. Whenever it comes to a situation where you have to talk about trade-offs between provinces or talk about policies that might help one province at the expense of another, there is no agreement and there is stalemate and usually the issue isn't discussed at all, it is swept under the carpeting completely.

I'll give you a couple of examples about issues which I believe have been swept under the carpet at the recent Western Premiers Conference, the one that took a very strong position saying no to any type of negotiation on sovereignty association and took a couple of other strong positions on issues outside of their geographical territory. I'm wondering if the western Premiers discussed at all the situation where Alberta's sitting on this huge pot of money; it's using its Heritage Fund to raid industries from other provinces. Surely that will hurt the industrial base of those other provinces, and how will that be dealt with in this confederation that people like Loughheed and Peckford propose?

What about the whole question of medical researchers being raided by Alberta, that's using its big potful of money to raid researchers from Winnipeg, an issue which the Minister of Health agreed with me on as being a very serious problem? Was that issue even discussed by the Western Premiers? I can say that it wasn't discussed because that is the whole way in which Premiers operate when they get together. They never deal with contentious issues and that's why I think they're fooling the people when they go around thumping their breasts and saying that they could do so many wonderful things for this country.

When we had double-digit inflation, all the provinces could agree on was to send a resolution to Ottawa asking Ottawa to do something about it. I don't agree with what Ottawa did subsequent to that request. But I don't want to take away from the federal government the real powers to do something about inflation. I believe it's important that Canada be strengthened, not weakened. I believe that Canada, under Trudeau over the last 12 years, has weakened itself. I believe it's weakened itself with respect to social programs by transferring so much of this responsibility, without any conditions, to provinces and that has weakened social programs. I think it's weakened itself with respect to its fiscal capacity and that's one of the reasons why its deficit is so much larger at a time when certain provinces sitting on resources are building up huge surpluses and there is no way to redistribute this wealth within the country.

I believe that Canada, under Trudeau over the last 12 years, has weakened its fiscal capacity by so many tax concessions, especially to the large corporate sector, and there is a report on hidden taxation by the Department of Revenue, nationally, which estimates that there is something in the order of 15 billion in deferred taxes. That equals the federal deficit. There is no interest charged on those deferred taxes, so the deficit escalates each year because of the deferred taxation. So I believe it's not because of the constitution, I believe it's because of some inadequate policies that Canada has weakened

itself but I think it's important to keep Canada strong.

There are some major challenges facing us. We have disparities between rich and poor regions, rich and poor people, rich and poor provinces. We have the major challenge of growing dominance within the Canadian economy of foreign multinational interests which do not take into account the long-term interests and concerns of the Canadian people, or the Canadian people as a whole, and the Canadian people living in particular provinces.

When I see situations where we are trying to repatriate some of our economy, that will not happen if we decentralize and provincialize so many of the economic powers, as is the wish of certain Premiers in this country. We have a situation where these multinationals are larger in size than Canada itself. And here we have a situation where certain people want to fragment our power, vulcanize it to a point where you're going to have Manitoba with 1 million people trying to deal with some multinational located in 80 countries that is 100 times the size of the Manitoba Gross National Product.

It is a ridiculous position to take and it's a very narrow-minded one and it's surely one that I believe the multinationals are secretly applauding. It's a direction which is being showed here. We have the provincial government tying into a multinational with respect to the development of potash; tying into a multinational reducing its interests in a mine from a controlling interest to a 27-percent interest; to Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting trying to create the illusion that Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting is a national Canadian company when it's not, it's controlled by Anglo-American, a South African country. —(Interjection)— It's not a wholly . . . That's right, it is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Anglo-American, and I think that there are some difficulties in trying to deal with them. I think that, unfortunately, there have been a few provinces that have capitalized on short-term wealth and have gone around becoming quick nationalists, or provincialists, I'd say. I think that it is a danger; it's too easy a path for provincial politicians to take. I think there is a case to be made in the interests of a province to have a strong federal government.

I want to clarify one thing that I raised the other day with the First Minister. This concerns the parliamentary request to patriate the constitution. I asked the Premier if Manitoba has contacted the Prime Minister in this respect and I really didn't articulate my question properly. I meant to ask him if we have requested consultation with the provinces. I believe that the constitution should be patriated. I believe that that should take place after a period and process of sincere consultation between the provinces. However, if a province is completely obstinate and is not willing to agree to a process of amendment, I believe that ultimately the responsibility lies with the federal government to patriate the Constitution, to clarify that position I have taken.

With respect to the real issue of federalism, which I believe comes down to the division of powers, there are three categories. There is the category of cultural powers; second category of economic powers; and the third one of social legislation powers, social policy powers. Right now there are two cross-

currents. There is a group in Quebec, which because of its historical development, especially over the last twenty years, is pushing for changes in the Constitution regarding cultural powers. Those, I believe, can be accommodated. We have taken positions in the past, I certainly have taken positions in the past which I believe may have been too inflexible in this respect and I am willing to accommodate the reality of the Quebec factor.

At the same time, there are another group of people in the country who are trying to use Quebec's demand for some cultural decentralization or decentralization of cultural powers, use that as a lever to get a decentralization of economic powers. I believe that would be disastrous for Canada, and should be argued against. There may have been some instances where friction was caused between the federal government and provincial governments because of differences in policy, and that should be resolved through the political process, not through a process of trying to revise a Constitution and get away from all those problems. You will have those problems on a continuing basis, but I certainly wouldn't want to emasculate Canada as a means of trying to overcome some difficulties that might have existed between provinces and the federal government with respect to resources because that is where the big push is taking place.

The third category of powers is the area of social policy, and in that respect I believe that the federal government has given away too much to date. We have given away the nation control over national standards of medical care, health care and education. We have seen abuse in different provinces because of that. I believe that it is important for the federal government to have a role in social policy and in social legislation and in social programs. Without the federal government, we would only not have equalization, which we all brag about as being a tremendous quality of our federation, but we would not have Medicare.

The second characteristic that we as Canadians, when we go forth into the international arena as Canadians, like to brag about it being distinctive and positive about Canadian federalism, and we would not have had that if we would not had a federal government pushing this forward, despite some objections from provinces. You do create tension in this area when you have some differences. I say we would not have Medicare in Canada without a courageous government in the middle 1960s, but surely we would also not have had Medicare if we would not have had a courageous New Democratic Party Government in Saskatchewan in the early 1960s, which pioneered Medicare and showed the way for the rest of Canada and provided an example for Canada to implement through the rest of the country.

We have two different sets of stimuli at work for constitutional change. One, which I will say openly, I have some sympathy for with respect to cultural changes. The stimuli for the economic changes, I don't have that much sympathy for. I do not want to weaken this country; I do not want to weaken this country's ability to deal with the problems of regions; I do not want to weaken this national government's ability to manage the economy, to deal with the threat of multinationals to our economic

independence, to deal with the whole question of regional disparities; for those very difficult and major challenges we need a strong central government.

So I think the challenge that we face is, can we give sufficient cultural powers to Quebec to make it feel that it can retain its cultural identity while protecting the whole country's ability to manage itself, manage the economy, transfer wealth from the rich to the poor provinces, introduce or help provide social services, because we haven't finished the range of health and medical services that indeed could and should be provided to Canadians as Canadians.

What I wish for Manitobans, I wish for other Canadians. So when we have a nursing home program that we introduce in Manitoba, I want Canada to pick up our lead and bring it about for all Canadians, and that will only happen if we have a strong country.

I believe that we should not allow resource rich provinces to use the accommodation of Quebec as an excuse to extract economic powers from the central government, which will make it virtually impossible for the country to carry on effectively. It reminds me of the story of the American officer in Vietnam, who said that in order to save the village from the enemy, they had to destroy it.

We have challenges, some very severe major challenges facing us. We have to give the country strength and instruments to govern; we have to look at what provincial aspirations are, in fact, thwarted by the division of powers in the Constitution, and I think we should look at some cases specifically. I think that is a challenge that would face us as a Committee, that is the challenge that faces the various groups that I hope come together when discussing renewed federalism.

Let's look at whether in fact the division of powers in the Constitution thwart a province's ability to do something or the federal government's ability to do something. I think we should determine whether indeed the Constitution is being used as a smoke screen. I say we don't have all the answers to these questions. I am pointing out some preferences on my part. I am pointing out some approaches that we, as a Committee, can take, things that we might ask of people coming forward before the Committee, people who are citizens of this province, who I think want to participate in the process of renewing a commitment to this country. I hope that we have the opportunity to pursue these questions and other questions in the Committee creatively, as I said was done with the Northern Task Force, was done with the Committee of Family Law, and that we act positively and sincerely to take this opportunity. It is a ripe one and we should take it to try and build a better country, because I think that this — I hate using now or never situations, but I think that this is one of those times where the onus is surely on us and we are willing on this side of the House to try and meet that challenge.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many comments have been made on the Budget that is under debate here today. Most of them have been complimentary. One thing that has been lacking is

criticism of the Budget. In fact, the previous speaker spoke of everything but the Budget items, and this seems to have been the case with many of the members opposite.

This is the third Budget that our present Minister of Finance has brought down, and they are getting better each time.

A MEMBER: Give it to them again, Albert.

MR. DRIEDGER: I say they are getting better each time. Last year the highlight of the Budget was the Hydro freeze, which was a very dramatic effect. This year we have been fortunate to be able to increase the tax rebate, but basically the whole Budget this year, which makes it so very good, is that it is a Budget for the less fortunate and low income people. Over the past three Budgets, the Minister has covered pretty well all aspects of society, with steady improvements and changes.

I have to agree with the Member for Minnedosa and Radisson in their reaction to the opposition. Prior to the last election various statements were made by members running at that time for the NDP about how they were going to kick the elderly out of their homes. That aspect of it we have solved. — (Interjection)— The Member for St. George says we kicked them out. We finally have solved the problem.

The members opposite have also set themselves out to be champions of the poor. The Budget that has been presented this year kicks that one out from under them. I am just wondering whether they are going to vote against this Budget. They refuse to discuss the Budget and — (Interjection)— If you are going to vote against it, let the people know what you voted against.

As I mentioned before, many of the members opposite even refuse to discuss the Budget. The Member for St. Vital yesterday was talking basically of the federal election. The Member for Transcona was talking about federal issues. The only one that actually criticized the Budget to some degree was the Leader of the Opposition, and he criticized the Budget for not doing anything for the farmers. I find that sort of ironical. The members opposite have only three agricultural rural members on their side of the House and they are criticizing that this Party is not doing enough for the farmers. I doubt whether they were even aware of the dramatic drought effect we are having until it was brought up in the House here.

I think one of the reasons for the strong rural representation that we have on our side of the House is because of the previous Minister of Agriculture. Many times during the election we were debating the issues of the then Minister of Agriculture, his land-buying program, the Beef Assurance Program, transfer of quotas, even issues like Crocus Foods, which was put to rest prior to the election, but they were already collecting money off the dairy farmers for that plant at that time. Unfortunately, the member for Lac du Bonnet is not here, because I would like to direct some of these comments to him.

One of the reasons why the farmers of Manitoba did not accept the policies of the previous Minister, was that we are a very young country. Our fathers and our forefathers fled Communistic countries in some cases to get away from what we were starting

to do here, develop a socialistic program whereby the state owns everything — the buying of land. The Member for Lac du Bonnet indicated in Committee that farmers did not have to pay money back on the Beef Program, they had to give the cattle to the government. It is this kind of thing that actually soured the farmers of Manitoba off.

I would like to just make some comments about our present Minister of Agriculture and the consideration that he has given to the people in my area, specifically the southeast area, certain of the policies that have taken place, and I would like to enumerate a few of them. For example, the sale of Crown land policy, where I have in some of my areas 80 and 50 percent of the land owned by the Crown, a lot of it leased by farmers. We have given them the opportunity to buy this land. Why is this so important? I will tell you, that even supporters of the ND Party are in favour of the sale of agricultural Crown lands. And it's ironical. Why is it that important? It is a good lease program, it costs very little money, why would they rather own the land than lease it? It is because of instability in governments, they never know how long they will be able to have it. I, for one, have also leased Crown land. I have no compulsion about buying land; I want to buy the land, because it gives me security, security of tenure.

In conjunction with this agricultural Crown land sales policy that we have, the Minister has indicated a Brushing Program for the eastern region, and this is taking off — I think we have something like close to 5,000 acres being applied for already for interest rebate under the Brushing Program. These are the kind of things that help in my specific area.

Just two weeks ago, our Agriculture Minister signed an AgriMan Agreement with the people in southeast Manitoba, the SPADA group. SPADA means Stuartburn-Piney Agricultural Development Association. This group is a self-organized group comprised of farmers throughout the whole south east. They have set up their program; they have presented it to the federal and provincial people; they were accepted and the agreement was signed for 184,000.00. What they have done with this program — they have set up 20 various projects which are all off and running, regarding spraying — these are projects which adjust or adapt to the south east corner. They're just, like I said, brush breaking, special crop projects, and all done by the people themselves there. 184,000, Mr. Speaker, is not a very big amount when you consider that millions were spent under the FRED program and the ARDA program in the Interlake just a few years ago. But this 184,000 is going to go a long way towards getting the initiative going of the people in the southeast, and they have been virtually overlooked for many years. They have never really had a chance to really get themselves motivated and they are now. I'd like to make special mention of the SPADA group here in the House because that's the kind of dedication that I think has built this country and will continue to build this country.

I'd like to just make a few comments and support the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sports views on the opposition members, the conflicts that they appear to be having and I think I possibly can find a reason for that. When you don't have a boss that

can give direction then it is very difficult to show strong leadership and in this particular case, I think the affiliation of the ND Party with the unions has a big bearing on it.

I'd just like to make a little comment here regarding the Canadian Labour Congress convention that was held here a little while ago and make reference to a grant that the provincial government gave to the convention, a grant of 8,000.00. A grant of 8,000 was given to the convention and within 15 minutes after receiving the grant they informed the Premier that he was not needed to make opening remarks at the convention, and the statement that was used was that they wanted to be non-political. Mr. Speaker, from the day that convention opened till it closed it was nothing but political, with all the members opposite there, the national leader, Mr. Broadbent, Tommy Douglas, all these people were there. They wanted to be non-political. That's why our Premier was asked not to come but they did it only after they got the 8,000.00.

Their affiliation with the unions is what's going to hurt them in the long run, in fact my feeling is, Mr. Speaker, that in the next election a vote for the NDP will be a vote for the unions running the province.

I would like to read, Mr. Speaker, Support for NDP prompts protest., this was in the paper during the week when the convention was on. The Canadian Labour Congress was accused of pushing the NDP down union members throats as delegates adopted a policy Wednesday of on-the-job canvassing for NDP politicians. Vancouver delegate Tony Cereldi said an NDP membership card could become a qualification for attending future CLC conventions. These are the things that we want to bring out to the people in the next election.

The Member for Minnedosa says you can't blame the Member for Inkster for leaving the Party and I think he's the only one that had guts to stand up and state the issue the way it was. I would hope that there are others that can take the same position.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the positive action taken by the Conservative government in last year's spring flood, and again the position that is being taken during the present drought conditions. It's approximately exactly a year ago when the Red River crested in this area here and we were fighting flood problems, and now we are faced with a drought situation. I think we all have to pray for rain or else our political differences in this House will be very meaningless in view of the economic disaster that will be hitting the province, and I think, Mr. Speaker, that it is very pertinent, it is not of our doing, but we have to have rain within ten days or there is going to be dramatic change in this province. Farmers have been squeezed to such an efficiency over the years, cost-priced efficiency, and I think we are the best producers in the world, bar none. But, Mr. Speaker, I believe that at the present time the farmers are stretched tight financially, and if this drought continues we are going to have problems that will affect, not just the farming community, but everybody in the city as well.

Mr. Speaker, referring back to the Budget, I believe the last three Budgets have been the best this province has ever seen. I mentioned this before and I anticipate that the Minister of Finance will be presenting many more, because unless strong

leadership can be shown by the opposition, we will be here for a long time. I find it interesting, very often, Mr. Speaker, to listen to the Member for Brandon East. I think he has been referred to as flip-flop number one. He's the economist that supposedly gives direction to the party, and I hope he's around next election because it's going to make it a lot easier for us.

I'm looking forward to being a part of the team that will make this province gain it's proper place in this great country of ours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, Abe Kovnats (Radisson):

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge. Order please, when I was talking about turning on, I — (Interjection)— My apologies. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Don't explain, don't explain. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For three months I've been listening to debates in this House and I have been troubled by the name calling that seems to be acceptable here. At the same time I have hoped that I would never become a part of it. Unfortunately last Friday, in my pain and anger, I did engage in name calling and in doing so I failed to maintain the standard that I expect of myself. I deeply regret that I do so fail, and I will try doubly hard to ensure that I do not do so again.

MR. DESJARDINS: But you were right. In your case, you were right.

MRS. WESTBURY: Being right, doesn't justify it.

Mr. Speaker, some government members have suggested that I have supported the official opposition. What I do is support, and I will continue to support, Liberal policies even when they are adopted and presented by the New Democratic Party as if they were their own.

Mr. Speaker, in the federal election we saw the federal leader of the New Democratic Party defending and presenting PetroCan as if he had invented it. We regularly hear Mr. Stanley Knowles taking credit for those social security measures which have been introduced by the Liberal Party over the many years.

Mr. Speaker, before I speak on the Budget I want to join those others who have expressed gratification at the results of the Quebec referendum on Tuesday. At the same time, I have to deplore the fact that the Premier of our province offered such lukewarm support to the no position, that some have suspected that he wanted it to fail in order that the federal Liberal Party may be embarrassed. Isn't that a terrible attitude for our government to take, Mr. Speaker. I am surprised that the First Minister did not report to the House today on his meeting this morning with Monsieur Chretien on this very subject. I had expected that some statement would be made to this House on this very important subject. The same time as I deplore the First Minister's position I must also express concern with the non-participation in the whole referendum debate of the federal New Democratic leader.

I was moved by some of the introductory remarks made by the Member for Transcona today. He was very sincere in expressing his provincial party's

position. I didn't agree with everything he said but certainly I understood the concern that he expressed. But on Tuesday night we watched Mr. Broadbent make instant demands of the federal government, after the vote was in, when he had demonstrated that his dependence on Quebec union movement was more important to him than the future of our country. Without him and without Manitoba's First Minister, however, the result was good for Canada and for Manitoba.

Now the Budget itself, as the Throne Speech did, leads to more questions than it provides answers, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask is this the kind of Budget that the Finance Minister and his Conservative government colleagues think is what is needed to do the job for Manitoba? Have they presented a clear blueprint of their government's policies, which gives an indication of the guidelines for future economic performance in this province? Have they thrown a few ad hoc bones to the people, asking them to bask in a few vote getting favours rather than looking at the total Budget as a whole? After several kicks in the head, a mere slap in the face is a refreshing change. Is the government attempting to cloud the bulk of their Budget by throwing out a very few tax benefits for a small segment of the population? I suggest that they are. Do they think the public can really be led to believe that a smaller increase in taxes is better than a small decrease? Does this Budget accurately reflect the economic realities of the province? Are we really facing all the issues, or only those few the government has chosen to face? Will the tax measures and program proposals put forward by this Budget really have the impact upon the economic conditions of this province that is desired?

I can recall our present Premier's immediate predecessor being quoted as saying that his government was so conscious of social service needs that they had introduced every necessary type of program to meet their needs and he couldn't for the life of him think of what more his government could do. Mr. Speaker, I get the distinct impression that the present Premier and his Ministers are as naive as the last group. A token effort to approach a problem does not constitute a solution to that problem. It is totally frustrating that in this day and age, lip service can be misconstrued as serious effort to resolve society's problems. What the government says it is doing and what it's actually doing often seem to be poles apart. It is a burden for the opposition, the ombudsman, the media, and the public, to drag out of the government, what they are actually accomplishing and what they are merely spouting off about.

I think perhaps the Minister of Finance learned something from the former federal Minister of Finance, Mr. Crosbie, a few months ago, in his fiasco, but it sounds as though our present government is falling over backward to avoid making the same mistakes the federal Conservatives made in their Budget. It seems they're throwing their Conservative caution to the wind now that they have seen a recent national public reaction to Conservative reactionary policies.

I think we have to ask, in light of the Premier's statements regarding the Throne Speech and how now that government affairs have been straightened

out a little after the NDP years, is this the kind of Budget the Conservative Premier of Manitoba really thinks is good for Manitoba? This is probably the last Budget that this government will ever present in this House, and I have to say thank goodness for that. But is this the ultimate in Conservative Budgeting? Nearing the end of his government's term in office, he is still blaming the former government, the former provincial government, and the federal government and world conditions in general for his own Ministers' inability to respond to the actual problems that are facing Manitobans.

I have to admit that I wasn't enamored of the NDP Budgets over the years any more than the present Finance Minister was, but there are those who would prefer that as the only Liberal in this House I take no stand on the issue. Even as the one Liberal, neither the Premier nor the Leader of the Opposition, this Budget is one that is leading us into the next general election, which will undoubtedly increase the number of Liberals and they shouldn't have to face the present Finance Minister's mistakes of today.

Speaking of Liberals, where would this government be without the federal government equalization payments, Mr. Speaker. Manitoba exceeds every other province in receiving federal government handouts. The Finance Minister's budgeting has managed to turn Manitoba into a have not province in a few short years; clever bookkeeping, if you can get away with it.

The Finance Minister suggests that his statistics show that Manitoba is in no worse position than any other province in Canada. It is small comfort to have company at the bottom of the barrel. This government's attitude seems to be one of not rocking the boat, reacting only to what cannot any longer be ignored, refusing to take any initiative, or to provide leadership, taking false comfort in not being alone. It is significant that the Manitoba Premier's soul mates at the bottom of the barrel are also Conservative Premiers in other provinces.

I have to note that it is still the middle-income taxpayer who is bearing the brunt of Manitoba taxes. The government continues to talk about ways to take the money out of the taxpayers' pockets, but refuses to talk about ways to put money back into their pockets before taxes.

Now Budget speeches, it seems to me, have to be about more than taxes and expenditures, they have to be about real issues, issues that individual people can relate to. Such speeches should have an underlying purpose, a statement of policies, and a meshing of policies. The Finance Minister here alludes to cooperative planning and national-wide policies and goals when there is no clear-cut policy in this House on most issues.

Ottawa can be used as a scapegoat only so often. There is a continuing eroding of many of our important economic institutions. We must be adapting to a new economic system to provide stable economic group to this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party is gratified at the removal of the sales tax on certain safety devices, equipment, apparel, including equipment for the handicapped, and on energy related items, farm related items and trapping equipment. We welcome also the incentive to the thrifty, who sew family clothing at home, and simplification of the remittance

procedures, the sales tax and the increase in commission paid to business men, especially on behalf of the small businessmen.

The changes in the Property Tax Credit for senior citizens are welcomed, and the extension of the School Tax Assistance Program to senior citizen tenants. However, the Minister failed to mention what impact, if any, this might have on the SAFER Program. Tenants who now qualify for SAFER may find it no longer available to them.

Unfortunately, in analyzing this Budget, Mr. Speaker, we find on several occasions that where measures seem favourable to Manitobans in need, there is an offsetting of the gain which in some instances will result in little or no net gain, and I will come back to that later.

We Liberals also welcome extension of the SAFER Program to low income families with children and to pensioners over the age of 55, but again we are afraid that it will be balanced out with reductions in other programs.

The Day Care increase, 4 million, would be most welcome if we could believe in it. I just cannot accept or believe, in view of the answers that we have received in question period, that this government means to spend 4 million after the 1st of September as opposed to something under 2 million previously estimated.

I am very concerned about both Ministers, the Finance Minister and the Minister of Community Services, both of them referring to Noon and After School Programs as opposed to Lunch and After School Programs. The Minister of Community Services indicated in his estimates that he feels that parents should and would supply lunches for their children, and, of course, they should, but the sad reality is that some parents will not and do not. Are we going to continue to punish the children for the errors, mistakes, and omissions of their parents?

In reply to questions on this 4 million dollar item, the Minister said expenditures will depend on applications, depend on the demand, and later on, it will take times for groups to come forward and to become organized. Really, Mr. Speaker, this is going to be available in September and it will still be depending on groups coming forward. This is a cruel joke, I suggest.

Where is the assistance that School Boards desperately need? Especially School Division No. 1. Where is relief for School Division No. 1 in the matter of the Foundation Levy, which discriminates against the inner-city.

Apart from senior citizens, no attempt has been made to shift the school tax from property taxes to income taxes. There is nothing in this Budget for the city of Winnipeg. There is no provision for either rail relocation or the overpass or preliminary preparation for either. No incentives for rehabilitation of older neighbourhoods, nothing for transit corridors. I am extremely disappointed that no encouragement or incentive is provided to the city for energy saving transit measures, such as Park and Ride or electrically operated transit buses. There is nothing for small inventors to encourage them to develop and produce their inventions here. We saw a couple of weeks ago the Minister of Economic Development presenting as wholly designed and produced in Manitoba products, three of which did not meet the

criteria, while our own inventors are going south to the Dakotas and Minnesota to have their inventions produced and developed and marketed. Good to see you, Friendly Manitoba made in USA, and he says that it is not possible to get them made here. Why not? If we have a need, why isn't he going out and filling the need.

There is nothing in the Budget, Mr. Speaker, for students, jobs, salaries with those jobs, tuition fees. No changes in three years for students. Of course, the First Minister made a statement, I believe last year, to the effect that virtually, who cares, they are all socialists anyway. All students are not socialists, Mr. Speakers, they are our sons and daughters, the sons and daughters of the taxpayers of this province, and they deserve the same consideration as any other people in this province.

There is nothing for employment, particularly nothing for employment of minorities, natives, handicapped, women, or youth, nothing. In a supplement put out by the Institute for Research on Public Policy, I would just like to read a brief excerpt:

For a number of years now the unemployment rate of those under 25 has been more than double that of those over 25. In 1978, for example, the rates were 14.5 percent and 6.1 percent respectively for these two groups. What makes this problem special is that the effects of youth on employment may be largely irreversible, since experience has shown that youth excluded from making contributions to society have frequently estranged from the society in the longer run. Moreover, during the current long period of high unemployment, many youth are missing their normal opportunities to acquire skills and work experience. Youth being denied this opportunity during the present period may very well be condemned to a later life of low paying and unstable job opportunities, and even a full economic recovery five years hence is likely to largely bypass them. There is nothing for young people in this Budget. There is nothing either to improve portability in pensions in today's transient and moving society; surely this should have a priority.

The assistance to the very poor was welcome, but again there are so many variables. Provincial welfare rates now are going to include CRISP, SAFER, and Property Tax Credit as income? If so, the programs will pay for themselves to a large part. My party does approve the use of the combined family income as a basis for income. This is realistic and fair. The target groups of the aged and those over 55, and those families who are below the poverty line, the Liberal Party does agree with the emphasis on these groups.

Mr. Speaker, I have four different instances here now that I have calculated, four different instances of family income of about 10.5 thousand, quite a bit below the Winnipeg poverty line, where the results of this Budget will be vastly different. The first instance refers to a husband earning 7,000 and a wife earning 3,500, two children, so she gets 436 for the two children. They will have a magnificent increase over the year, and this does not include the SAFER Program, that their increase will be 19.00.

The second instance is a husband who earns 10,500, the same amount of gross earned income. The wife is employed in the home, she does not have an earned income, and still two children, so there is

still the 436 for those two children. That family, again without the SAFER being taken into consideration, because we don't know what that is going to constitute, that family will have an increase of 110.00.

The third instance, if you have a single individual who is a homeowner, as a result of this Budget they are going to increase by 48, that is 29 more than the husband and wife both working with two children.

The fourth instance that I want to discuss, is where the husband working and earning 7,000, the wife earning the 3,500, no children, and they will be 74 less than they have been under the previous situation, pre-reform in other words, pre this Budget.

Obviously clarification must be made by the Minister, because some of these figures are just not fair. For a family where the wife is outside the home earning one-third of the income of 10.5 thousand, the gain is 19, and if the husband alone is working outside the home with a gross yearly income of 10,500, the gain is 110.00. A single individual homeowner gains 29 more than the first couple, but a married couple without children loses 74, still as I have to say without SAFER being taken into consideration, so there is a penalty on marriage here.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps my greatest disappointment in this Budget lies in the fact that there is nothing whatsoever in the provision of housing. I have already referred to the fact, no incentives are provided for rehabilitation of older housing, and I include that in my disappointment. But there is also an obligation on the part of the provincial government, Mr. Speaker, to provide adequate housing for all of our citizens. The Progressive Conservatives, Mr. Speaker, recognized this obligation in 1977, when they were seeking votes, when they released a paper called an Urban Strategy, programs and policies for addressing the problems of the city of Winnipeg prepared by the Manitoba Progressive Conservative Party, released the 5th of October, 1977, stating:

The priorities of the Progressive Conservative Urban Strategy are as follows:

1. To reverse the deterioration of older neighbourhoods;
2. To provide a variety of housing options with a strong emphasis on the promotion and facilitation of home ownership.
3. To provide a specific and socially sound series of responses to the housing problems of senior citizens.
4. To assure that local governments have sufficient resources and authority to meet their responsibilities and to provide normal and acceptable services and to maintain those services.
5. To provide special financial support to local government in dealing with high priority items.
6. To assure sufficient local control and flexibility to permit local government to be responsive and efficient.

So there was a clear commitment to urban action; a commitment which has been tossed aside with a celerity and cynicism of which this government is sometimes capable. The question is, when is the Minister of Housing going to do something, anything, anything, about the abysmal state of inner-city housing? When will he acknowledge that provision of housing, even that NDP housing that was completed

by his government after they took office, also requires provision of support and service industry? When will the Minister make a statement to the effect that his government will assist his tenants and others, to remain independent in government-provided housing, and other housing in the neighbourhood, by allowing a grocery chain to operate on government-controlled land? When will this government move to meet any of its acknowledged obligations in downtown Winnipeg?

Mr. Speaker, another major omission in this budget was in the area of medical research. There's no item in the estimates for a medical research fund; virtually every other province has a provincial health research fund, why hasn't the Manitoba government moved in this direction and set up a research fund for health? Manitoba doesn't even have adequate applied policy oriented research departments because of cutbacks. I suggest that because of the cutbacks, because of restraint, the Minister of Health has lost the ability, firstly, to monitor health changes in the province; and secondly, to evaluate health programs in a systematic and effective way because of the lack of the research that's been going on. Manitoba has not gone in the direction of preventative programs to change and improve health care.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that both the amendment and the sub-amendment, I find rather mild and negative. Neither of them offers any positive suggestions towards a better province. Neither one of them is particularly offensive. I regret that they do not suggest some positive methods, make some positive suggestions for a better province, a better budget, a better government. I don't think it's enough that we sit back and criticize everything that government is doing — as I have tried to do in the estimates — without making suggestions that would improve the situation.

In conclusion, I have to say that this budget makes me think of a man covering a decrepit building with a coat of paint in the vain hope that the dilapidation and deterioration of the building will not show; in the vain hope that it might be declared an important historical structure, when in fact it's only a decrepit old building painted over.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. ROBERT ANDERSON: I rise with pleasure to participate in this Budget Debate. The budgetary process, Mr. Speaker, is one of the most important features of the parliamentary system of government. The government puts before the House, and therefore the public, its broad intentions with respect to spending and finance, and by so doing invites scrutiny, comment and criticism. It imposes, Mr. Speaker, a discipline on the government that would otherwise not be there, and brings about, I believe, a more efficient and effective use of the public's scarce financial resources. Indeed, the process serves to make the government, any government, aware of whose funds it is spending, and I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that my government feels this very deeply and acutely. My government has never lost sight of the huge responsibility it has been charged with in

redistributing, allocating and spending the public's funds.

A budget, Mr. Speaker, should not be brought down only in the context of what is happening right now in the economy. While those issues should not be minimized, a budget should be and do more. It should be consistent with long-term economic and social realities and, as well, should be but one more step for the government on the way to achieving the communities' objectives. A budget should, therefore, grow out of previous budgets and depart of a long-term plan in philosophy. Mr. Speaker, where budgets are too short-sighted or too geared to immediate problems, what we end up with is uneven economic progress, social and economic instability, unnecessary pain and dislocation for the citizens and a wasteful use of resources.

Are these not some of the consequences of the previous administration and their budgetary practices? Some illustrations are appropriate. Did the previous administration not develop the Nelson too rapidly, far ahead of the capacity of the market to utilize what could be supplied? And did this not cause pain and dislocation for Manitoba citizens? For example, a 150 percent increase in Hydro rates; uneven economic growth; and according to Mr. Justice Tritschler, a wasteful use of resources.

Did the previous administration not develop spending plans based on the unrealistic and unsustainable boom years of the early 1970s? And did not retrenchment from these plans cause havoc for Manitoba's economy and her citizens and, in the end, force us to adopt the painful policy of restraint, from which we are now just emerging?

Did not the previous administration bring in social programs far ahead of their capacity to properly manage and implement? And did this not create all kinds of problems for Manitobans? Finally, Mr. Speaker, had the previous administration had any kind of a consistent and realistic long-term plan in philosophy, would we have faced the deficit we did when we came into office? And would we have been as limited financially, as we were in our efforts to manage creatively and direct the provincial economy in the interests of its citizens?

The answers to all these questions are obvious, Mr. Speaker, and this government is not making the same mistakes. We understand the realities of Manitoba, what we can afford and when and what we cannot do. We appreciate, for example, Manitoba's demographics and how they are likely to unfold over the next decades. We understand how the Manitoba economy fits in with the national and international economies. We have, in short, given great thought to and have a good feeling for what is possible and what is not; what can and cannot be sustained; what Manitobans want and do not want.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, reflects all these considerations. It is more than just a casual response to what is happening in Manitoba and Canada today. It is but one more step on this government's road to stable economic growth, an equitable distribution of resources, the highest level of social and economic freedom for our citizens, and a standard and quality of living that is not only high today but can be sustained indefinitely.

Let us look, Mr. Speaker, at some of the specific things this budget does. The budget provides a

measure of protection for those Manitobans most seriously affected by inflation. For example, the property tax repair; the pensioner; the lower income families; people in need. It reaffirms our commitment to sound financial management and controlled procedures. The importance of this should never be underestimated. It is but one more step in our emergence from the necessary but painful restraint program and yet it leaves us in the financial position to creatively manage our provincial economy, should we experience some unavoidable economic bad luck. It continues in place the five-year freeze on Hydro rates, an inflation fighter of the first order that has been hailed by economists of all stripes. It continues and supplements the province's important social programs and, finally, it leaves us with a balance sheet that will command international respect and, with this, will come easy access to the world's financial markets when the occasion warrants.

What the budget does not do is as important as what it does. It does not saddle future Manitobans with a large deficit. What the members opposite either conveniently forget or choose not to understand is that large deficits must be financed and future citizens must then make good on those borrowings. Is there a greater disgrace than stealing from our children's future standard of living, that we might live well now? As well, there are no new income taxes in the budget. This government is committed to the principle of income redistribution and yet it recognizes that there's a limit to what producing Manitobans can reasonably be expected to bear. And finally, this budget is not inflationary. Would that the same could be said about the federal government's recent mini-budget and their budgets of the past decade.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this budget is humane yet reasonable, long-term in orientation, yet it deals with our most pressing current problems; equitable in the fullest sense of the concept, yet it implicitly recognizes the need to reward those outstanding producers in our community. An important step forward, yet it recognizes that trying to do everything at once leads only to chaos. Members opposite should particularly note the last point.

It is appropriate to review the current state of Manitoba's economic affairs. There is far too much gloom and doom in the economic air. Some indeed seems to emanate from across the House and leaves me to speculate on just what they are trying to achieve. After all, we are all in this business together of creating a better quality and standard of living for all Manitobans.

Where are we and what have we got? Manitoba will have a real growth of about 2 percent this year. Not as good as we would like but well ahead of Canada which will come in at under 1 percent, and considerably better than the just over 1 percent forecast for the industrial nations of the western world. Mr. Speaker, many parts of the world and, indeed, of Canada would thoroughly enjoy having Manitoba's economic problems to deal with.

Further, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's unemployment rate will continue to be well below the national average. Our economy will be able to accommodate most, if not all, of the prospective new entrants to its labour force and while inflation will probably be no better here than anywhere else, it at least will not be

any worse. It should be noted, Mr. Speaker, that a provincial government is severely limited in its capacity to do anything about the inflation problem.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's economy is in good shape and getting better. It is extraordinarily diversified for its size, running from agriculture through mining, manufacturing and financial services. That diversification goes a long way to assuring steady, manageable and peaceful growth, and while it is not consistent with an Alberta-type boom, it is not consistent with a bust either. The importance of the latter cannot be stressed strongly enough when it comes to planning a lifetime in a community. There are a number of other features of the Manitoba economy that auger well for its future. In place are high quality health, educational, recreational and cultural facilities; an abundance of reasonably priced housing; ready access to high quality transportation facilities; a highly developed industrial infrastructure; available labour; and an extraordinary supply of relatively cheap electric power and, never to be underestimated, a government that encourages and indeed applauds productive initiative.

Mr. Speaker, it is only a matter of time before investors and manufacturers see the wisdom of locating in Manitoba. There is, quite simply, no better place in Canada, all things considered, to locate new production facilities right now and right here in Manitoba and businessmen will soon recognize the fact. Mr. Speaker, we have not tried to do everything in this budget; such would have been naive and not in the best interests of Manitobans. Rather, we have taken one more important step in the direction of guaranteeing the quality and standard of living of this generation of Manitobans, and of those generations to come. The objective after all is not unsustainable overnight success, but steady progress in the direction of a better life for all.

As I come to the end of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the agricultural situation and commend the Minister of Agriculture and the Premier on the efforts they are making in regard to the current drought situation. I would call to all members' notice that almost exactly 12 months ago today, the Red River crested and we were stuck with a lake some 50 miles long and 20 miles wide in the Red River Valley, and it's ironic that we're in the situation now where the whole province is crying for some of that moisture. —(Interjection)—

In closing, I would like to commend the Minister of Finance for the outstanding document that his budget was and while I don't wish to detract from it in any way, I trust that those blue skies that he forecast will be obscured for some time by some rain-filled clouds.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that I was not planning to speak at this moment. Mr. Speaker, in hearing the remarks from the Honourable Member for Springfield, one wonders where he's been, where indeed, Mr. Speaker, that member has been for the past three years. Mr. Speaker, he talked in the latter part of his remarks about a hope that there might be some rain and

there might be some clouds that would obscure the blue sky budget that the Honourable Minister of Finance tabled in this Assembly. Well, Mr. Speaker, one presumes, one has to assume as a matter of fact, that the Member for Springfield must indeed have been on Cloud Nine when he listened to his colleague, the Minister of Finance, present his remarks during the course of the Budget Address last week.

Mr. Speaker, there is in the opinion, not only of members on this side of the House' but I think throughout our communities, there is a marked disposition to consider this budget a rather cynical, certainly a cynically-motivated instrument of this particular government. The honourable member, in making his address just past, indicated that there was nothing inflationary about this budget. He stated that he saw it as a sound document that would lead to a better future for all Manitobans. Mr. Speaker, one presumes that he didn't look at the fine print. What could be more inflationary than the gas tax, the motive fuel tax that was imposed by the Minister of Finance? What could be more automatic in terms of its inflationary impact on everyday citizens, working people and middle-income people, than that sort of tax? They're simply going along for a free ride, that's all it amounted to, more dollars for this government without having to take responsibility. So taxation without responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, we on this side can't possibly condone that sort of budgetary policy. We regard it, I think quite rightfully, as being regressive. We regard it as being an instrument of an underhanded, opportunistic, cynical government; a government that pretends on the one hand to spread the wand of beneficence throughout the province and on the other hand, of course, has put its hand in the pocket of the taxpayer and is simply transferring, is simply playing a simple game of transfer or shell game, if you will, Mr. Speaker, in order to give effect to the mythical notion that they have somehow become reborn, that they now have some vision of social equity, some deliberate concern for the little guy. Mr. Speaker, they are no more humane today than they were in this House a few years ago when they were preaching and pronouncing the very negative statements of rhetoric of restraint. That, Mr. Speaker, indeed is what I think really motivated that government into office. I think that there have been very few statements or declarations of intent subsequent that have illustrated what sort of philosophical base, what sort of philosophical framework will guide and motivate this particular government.

Mr. Speaker, they come to the taxpayers of this province now with a document which they say shows a good deal of heart and goodwill. They note that they have essentially piggy-backed along on the shoulders of the former New Democrat administration; they take credit for social programming as each member rises in his or her place; they take credit for social programming such as day care and extensions in that respect. Mr. Speaker, where were they in 1978? What about 1979? The truth is, Mr. Speaker, that it's too little, too late. There has been very little by way of initiatives on the part of this government in the past few years. What they have done, of course, they have

in many cases caused programming, social programming particularly, to degenerate to such a level and extent that it's barely capable of resuscitation.

So now they're going to put — I think they claim — 8 million into day care. Well, what person really believes that this government is genuinely motivated to have that sort of support for that sort of program? Who can believe that, Mr. Speaker? Who can believe that the government which candidly acknowledged, prior to 1977, that day care was a nonsensical program — those were their words, not mine, Mr. Speaker — a government which was critical continually of that particular concept of program. Even up to last year when the Member for Fort Garry still had responsibility for the then portfolio of Health and Community Services, even then he was loath to utter the pious platitudes that we now hear from the new Minister of Community Services on the question of day care. Even he has said in debating and discussing the matter with me during estimates, Mr. Speaker, that during his administration he had some serious concerns about the extension of the lunch and after school format.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that that is a much more sincere and candid pronouncement on the part of the government than the one we received today about the extension. Mr. Speaker, the truth is that most of the extensions that supposedly are going to accrue to the benefit of people who wish to subscribe to this programming are not going to arrive until 1981 because the Minister well knows, and he's listening and he well knows, Mr. Speaker, that by the time the red tape is extricated and removed from the package, by the time people are able to comply with all the regulations and work their way through the bureaucracy in order to be accredited and obtain a creditation for their facilities, he well knows, Mr. Speaker, that 1981 will well have arrived.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's a big bubble, it's a sham. The money that will actually be invested will be carried over into next year's budget. It may have been appropriated through this budgetary statement and document, Mr. Speaker, but it won't be used. Mr. Speaker, I want that to be clear as a matter of record because that allegation will prove not to be spurious; it will not prove to be unfounded; I suggest that next year when we ask questions during the course of estimates about the utilization of those funds, we will find that very little of that money was actually disbursed and allocated. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of defects in that particular budget.

Mr. Speaker, members opposite were very proud that they extended the shelter concept. Mr. Speaker, let's examine that, we're going to examine that in some detail in the course of estimates in Housing, but let's examine what they really did. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that although the members opposite are advising and proudly state that they are assisting low income renters, I suggest to you that they're really helping people who rent to low income renters, landlords who are occupying that sector of the housing economy of this province. I suggest to you that in the absence of rent controls and very shortly, Mr. Speaker, we will have an announcement — if there's enough courage on that side, if the member can screw his courage to the sinking point and make

the announcement — that rent controls will be removed from the regulations and laws of this province. Mr. Speaker, when that happens I tell you — and we put the other side on notice, Mr. Speaker — that these shelter allowances will be nothing more than a sham. They will be a conduit by which the slum-landlord, in many cases the slum-landlord is simply subsidized by his unwitting friends — and I say that, Mr. Speaker, without any malice and if I was to be malicious I would suggest otherwise, Mr. Speaker — by their unwitting friends on the other side.

Mr. Speaker, the enhanced levels of shelter allowance that will pertain in the months to come will not in effect be of any benefit to many of the poor people of this province who are in such need of better housing. It will be indeed a pleasure for many unscrupulous landlords to simply take that money and pocket it by way of increased rentals; it will be simply done because most of the people that would be exploited in those circumstances, Mr. Speaker, will be elderly people; they will be people on welfare; they will be people who are ignorant of their rights; who will not be socially fluent or mobile. Mr. Speaker, that is the sort of budget, that's the sort of declaration of intent which I would have liked to see, not implicit in the document, but I would have like to see members opposite rise and be much more explicit, because that, Mr. Speaker, indeed is the true result of this sort of budgetary policy. It's nothing but a mere sham, it's a fiction.

Mr. Speaker, if they really wanted to do something about the housing problems which prevail in this city and this province, what they would have done is they would have invested a lot more money in the Critical Home Repair Program. That would have been a very simple way to help people to help themselves. I appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite always speak at some length, expatiate on the need for self-determination in all matters financially. They give long-winded speeches, Mr. Speaker, about the need for an individual autonomy in economic matters for persons and individuals to be able to control their own affairs. Well, Mr. Speaker, they don't put their money where their mouths are. Not at all, Mr. Speaker. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that when those members establish budgetary policy, what they do is they evade that essential issue. Because, Mr. Speaker, if they allow people to do as we did, if they allow people to loan money at subsidized rates or on a grant basis to renovate their own housing, whether or not that housing is for exclusive occupancy or is to be shared, if they allow people to do that, Mr. Speaker, it might cost them money and you can't ride the restraint horse and the good-guy image horse at the same time. —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, there is a big deficit and the truth of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that there's nothing wrong with government deficit. In my opinion there is nothing wrong, for what it's worth, there's nothing wrong with government deficit. It's solid, it's prudent in many respects, it's practised by the most orthodoxly conservative governments around the world. There is nothing new. It's all part of the redistribution scheme that we now accept as a part of liberal democracy, whether it be in the big C or the big C Conservative stripe milieu, or whether it be in the small s social democrat NDP milieu. The truth

is, Mr. Speaker, that there's nothing unsound about that sort of approach. What bothers me, what rankles so much, Mr. Speaker, is the inherent hypocrisy of members opposite to suggest, prior to the 1977 election, that the deficit was what was fueling, governmental deficit was what was fueling inflation; and indeed, Mr. Speaker, they did. They spoke that way. They spoke on every single platform they could find in this province and they told every single person from the top of the province, the cape at Hudson Bay to Emerson, about what the Schreyer Government was perpetrating and doing by way of deficits, and how that was inflationary and it was eating away at people's standard of living, and that you could attribute cost of living increases to the Schreyer Government's deficit policy. Well, Mr. Speaker, how the worm has turned, how the worm has turned. The same members who decried the former government's policy and deplored it publicly have now got on to the same stick; they are doing exactly the same thing. Mr. Speaker, they have realized that there were good reasons to do it. They are so proud it is all in capital, Mr. Speaker. They advise us that it is different, Mr. Speaker, because it is not a current deficit, they want that to be clear, it is a capital budget deficit. Mr. Speaker, let us all know that the truth is that they had a talk with some of their friends in the construction industry, they took a look at some of the building trades labour statistics over the past two and one-half years, which have been monumentally disastrous; and, Mr. Speaker, having taken that poll, having taken a poll of the building industry, they determined that they better get off their duffs and do something. They realized that Manitoba indeed was a mixed economy province, and that was the substance, that was the sustenance which fueled that economy.

Mr. Speaker, having come to that conclusion, you can damn well be assured they decided to be a deficit-oriented government, and there is nothing wrong with it. We are not deploring it, we are saying we are deploring it because it is too little too late, and because the members opposite are like a ship without a rudder. Who is at the helm? Who indeed, Mr. Speaker, is at the helm of that ship? It is hard to tell, it really is. We have a First Minister — and I don't want to become personal, Mr. Speaker, but sometimes I think in the course of political debate it is important and necessary — we have a First Minister, who up to a few weeks ago would have us believe that it was sinister for a government to do anything by way of public initiative, a First Minister that was on his feet at every opportunity telling us that any deficit at all, any increase in government spending was wrong, that was somehow indicative that a government was irresponsible, and he had a very good example that he kept referring to, and he did refer, Mr. Speaker, to bedfellows. He talked about the federal Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party in this province, and he went on and on, Mr. Speaker, how terrible it was, how irresponsible it was.

Mr. Speaker, who is in charge over there? Who is in control? When it comes time to win political friends and influence voters, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you who is in control — the Minister of Finance, who doesn't probably know which end is up anymore. They are running a few polls, they are running free

ads. The taxpayer has the responsibility for picking up the tab, but they are trying to convince people that they are a newly restructured, reborn, palpably warm, heartfelt, small l liberals, small c conservative government. In other words, Mr. Speaker, they are trying to convince everybody that they are really a bunch of good guys and do-gooders.

Mr. Speaker, where were they? Where were they when we talked about the conditions in our hospitals, in our nursing homes? Where were they? Where were they when we told them about the conditions in the building trades and the high unemployment? Where are they today, Mr. Speaker, when we often rise and we discuss inner city housing conditions, when we talk of the plight of children in remote communities, in the inner city, where are they, Mr. Speaker?

They are so proud, because they put some money into Day Care after so many years of being aggressively opposed.

Mr. Speaker, where were they when we introduced Property Tax Credits, when we introduced that concept in the mid-Seventies? Where were they? They were as per usual, Mr. Speaker, adopting the usual position of that particular party. They were diametrically opposed to anything that the Schreyer Government would do by way of initiative to assist the people of this province. But now, Mr. Speaker, in trying to preserve that sinking ship without a rudder, now they are quite willing to use that sort of life raft to stay afloat. Oh, now, they are so happy that it is there and they are clutching it desperately, Mr. Speaker, literally for dear life.

The Minister talks about his blue sky Budget and he is so proud of it. Well, Mr. Speaker, you know there was a lot of discussion in the media, and people when they first saw this particular document and heard the Minister expound at some length about its reforms and its many provisions. There were a lot of people who suggested, through the public media, that this Budget indeed did show that the Conservative Government was capable of demonstrating, manifesting a social consciousness. Mr. Speaker, when that happened I thought it is much like the dog that walks on its hind legs. You know, he doesn't do it well, but whenever you see it, you are forced to remark on it, and that, Mr. Speaker, is what happened with members opposite and their Budget. Everybody was so shocked that there would be any support shown whatsoever for programs like Day Care that at first blush they were willing to concede that it was a reasonable and liberal statement. It was only after they recovered from the first shock that they realized, Mr. Speaker, that government was indeed not a blue sky Budget to anybody who walks erect, only to a person, Mr. Speaker, who has for years been taking a reticent position on one's backside. The only way you could see blue sky is if you were looking straight up, and that I suggest, Mr. Speaker, is the perspective of members opposite.

This Budget, Mr. Speaker, should not be tossed away lightly; this Budget should be thrown away with great force. It is simply, after two many years of callous neglect, too little too late.

Mr. Speaker, I think I would be remiss if I concluded my remarks without mentioning the recent pronouncements of members opposite respecting

their participation in the mining industry in this province. I spoke earlier, Mr. Speaker, of demonstrable hypocrisy demonstrated in this particular Budget. Mr. Speaker, in my estimation nothing was more hypocritical of late than the revelation that this government suddenly had seen the light and was going to participate in resource exploration with the mining industry. Again, Mr. Speaker, at first blush it seemed like this was a major breakthrough, that this was indeed indicative of this government taking a much more rational and pragmatic position relative to resource management. Mr. Speaker, we all felt that this was — although to be fair, I think some members did and I think the Member for Inkster was one, who immediately suggested that it was hypocrisy — but most of us suggested that it seemed like at least a move in the right direction. But, Mr. Speaker, probably the only time I sat in this House, I must agree with Mr. Fred Cleverley, columnist with the Winnipeg Free Press, Fred Cleverley took this government to task for their position, not because, Mr. Speaker, he was concerned about this government becoming too left wing; not for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't his concern, and that should have been, I think, that would have been construed by most to have been the reaction of that particular journalist, but rather, Mr. Speaker, because he thought it was poor business. He suggested, Mr. Speaker, that he was personally incredulous at the lack of business acumen demonstrated by members opposite. He wondered how people who prided themselves on good management, solid business principles, could introduce this sort of scheme to the province of Manitoba. He noted that the former government's policy, with respect to resource management, was far more prudent, far more rational, simply far more attuned to the realities of business circumstances in the Twentieth Century today. He noted, Mr. Speaker, that the major deficiency, and one can't help but agree, the major deficiency of the Conservative proposal is that it gives the private sector the decision-making initiative. It puts the ball in the resource companies private court, and they, Mr. Speaker, they alone decide whether they want participation, because this government doesn't believe in putting its heavy hand on the shoulder of industry. Oh no, Mr. Speaker, what they believe in is allowing industry rather, whenever there is a high risk or precarious situation, allowing industry to come to them for a handout, for a type of welfare.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have some ventures that are obviously viewed as occasioning some risk to the private sector and, Mr. Speaker, they gladly, on a voluntary basis, will allow this government to participate. Because, Mr. Speaker, it's not a question of allowing the government to skim the cream, it's a question of letting the government help them to dredge some of the dregs. What they are doing is they're cutting their risks, they're hedging their bets, Mr. Speaker. They're demonstrating prudent business principles, prudent fiscal management. This, Mr. Speaker, is a move that simply reeks of waste and mismanagement; there's no way that any member opposite would run a business on this basis. Mr. Speaker, this is what they have introduced; this is by way of parodying or mimicking the former NDP's very real, very creditable mineral resources

policy but, Mr. Speaker, it won't wash, it's not good enough. Like everything else that I've spoken of this afternoon, it's not the real thing and when it's held up to the light of day and it's scrutinized closely and carefully, it simply, Mr. Speaker, will not work. The people of this province are not that ignorant; the people of this province are far more critical in their judgement than members opposite would give them credit for; the people of this province know the real goods when they see them and, Mr. Speaker, they're wondering, they are indeed, today they are wondering why this government at the same time it is doing a complete about face, in terms of its philosophical orientation, why it's doing such a bad job of addressing the very real problems that present this economy.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, the reason is simple, it's because they can't put their heart into it, they don't really believe, Mr. Speaker, in this sort of programing; they don't believe in a co-operative approach; they don't believe in the social ethic; they don't believe in government as an instrument of social progress. They have it, Mr. Speaker, in the course of their philosophy, and I acknowledge that it's not a discredited philosophy, I acknowledge that this philosophy has many tenets which are indeed viable but I am suggesting that like all other philosophies, Mr. Speaker, that in order to survive and for any political party to survive, that ascribes to a particular philosophical direction, it is necessary that there be an organic type of evolution, that there be growth. That growth, Mr. Speaker, has to be compatible with social and economic reality. In the world of the multinational, Mr. Speaker, in the dog-eat-dog world, in the competitive world of the multinational, the philosophy which members opposite subscribe to is simply outdated, outmoded and outworn.

They can't hope, as the Member for Transcona said a few hours ago, Mr. Speaker, they cannot hope to deal and wrestle and grapple with the problems that present with this economy, unless they do it on a truly participatory, democratic basis. They have to be willing, they have to be willing to build a mixed economy, they have to do more than mouth platitudes in that direction. They have to be willing to re-endorse and reintroduce initiatives such as were brought forward by the Schreyer government from 1969 to 1977. If they don't do that, Mr. Speaker, they are lost and so are the people of this province.

The mining companies that they are trying to negotiate with will eat them alive. They will set them off against Guatemala; they will set them off against Chile; they will set them off against Ontario, in the world that the Premier of this province would have exist in Canada, a Canada where every province was competing for its place in the sun. The multinationals will simply by degree degrade the status of Manitoba and its people to such an extent and level that no progress, Mr. Speaker, will be possible. Mr. Speaker, I call upon members opposite not merely to pay lip service to the initiatives and to the philosophy introduced for the first time in this province in 1969, but to do something real and palpable, something of a very demonstrative nature to bring forward that sort of government, that sort of concept, in order to better the lot and life of our people.

Mr. Speaker, we'll be looking in the few days that are left in this debate, the few hours that are left in this debate, we will be looking to the Premier of this province to explain his renunciation, his seeming renunciation of many of his former positions, positions taken before the electorate of this province in 1977, to denounce his own rhetoric, Mr. Speaker, to denounce his own politically opportunistic rhetoric of, past to explain the seeming polarity between himself and the Minister of Finance. We will be looking for the Minister of Finance to explain his seeming opposition to statements pronounced by the First Minister. We will be looking for something comprehensive and coherent, some guideline that will indicate that there is indeed a true philosophical direction that motivates this government's administration so that, Mr. Speaker, that all people in this province can see that this is not, as I have described it, a rudderless ship, but rather a ship steered as was the last ship of state in Manitoba by a truly competent humane leader. A person surrounded, I might add, by others who had a vision, a vision of a better Manitoba founded on all the best principles of liberal democracy and social humanism. That is what we will be looking to from the other side, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

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

The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker. I apologize for intruding, but in keeping with this afternoon's suggestion from honourable members opposite that they would like to be updated on current affairs with respect to fires and its difficulties, members might be interested in knowing that starting tonight a very substantial airlift of some 3,000 evacuees from the Ontario community of Red Lake will be arriving in Winnipeg. It will be my hope that the citizens of Winnipeg will in their usual manner open up their hearts and hospitality to these people. It simply demonstrates again the size and the scale of the difficulties that we have in this drought condition, not just in Manitoba, but throughout this western part of this country. I thought the members might be interested in knowing that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, we thank the Minister for his statement. Maybe the Minister could still elaborate as to whether it's intended to open up armouries or schools or what sort of facilities will be opened up to accommodate the people of Red Lake. I'm sure it concerns all Manitobans that we provide as much assistance as we can under these difficult circumstances.

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

MR. DOMINO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After this afternoon's question period I was a little worried that I might not get to speak before 5:30 but, Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of this budget. Without any reservations, I can say that I think this is a terrific

budget. This budget was put together with much thought, concern and care. It's a good budget; it rivals, if not outstrips the most progressive brought down by any government in recent years anywhere in Canada. Mr. Speaker, those aren't my words but I can say amen to all of that. That quotation that I just read from was from a columnist in the Winnipeg Tribune and I should also add that it's a columnist who has not often been kind to this government and who often takes a very harsh view of our actions, and that's Frances Russell. But I think, in this case, she understands the budget. She has a better understanding of it and of its implications than the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, what most impresses me about this budget is that it shows flexibility. It shows that this government has not been hived up in its ivory towers; it shows that we have not kept ourselves away from the people; it shows that we are still listening and we are still aware and we are still capable of discerning what the real problems in society are, and that more than just being capable of going out and locating and isolating the problems, we also have the courage to go out and do something about it. We are aware of the needs of the people. I think the Member for Wellington said, who is in charge over there and he pointed at the government benches. Well, I'll tell the Member for Wellington who is in charge over here — all of us. All 33 of us take an active part in formulation of government policy. We have a Premier who is our leader; we have a Cabinet of excellent men and women. Good people, but they listen to all of us and we all go out and we collectively make our decisions.

This particular budget and White Paper, I think I had the honour and I had the privilege of working on it, because it is not just the Cabinet Ministers in our government who get a chance to formulate policy. I worked on that White Paper along with some bureaucrats and other politicians from our party. I worked on it over a number of months and I am particularly proud of it and I think that White Paper isolates real problems and then comes to terms with them. I have not heard a single member opposite yet take apart the White Paper and its assumptions and take them apart effectively. Oh, they've made all kind of speeches about everything else; they have attacked our motives and that's easy to do. It's easy to say, well, it looks good but I know you don't like doing it. Motives matter nothing. It wouldn't matter if we hated the poor, but we do have a concern for the poor; it wouldn't matter. What really matters is the actual effect of the budget and the actual effect of this budget is going to be assistance for single mothers or single parents, assistance for the poor, more day care. It is going to be assistance for those in our society who are the most in need. It is going to be an efficient use of government funds. We're going to take the government money that we have, which we are spending in a very prudent and intelligent manner, and we're going to take that money that's available and we're going to apply it to the problems rather than blasting it across the whole spectrum.

I listened to the Member from, I think it's Seven Oaks, who spoke earlier and said that this government was callous, that it really didn't care about poor people. All you have to do is take a look,

just take a look at the budget, the last budget brought down by the Member for Seven Oaks. This budget here which the members opposite, the ND members are so proud of. Read Page 108 and then turn over to the tables in the back of the budget brought down by the present Minister of Finance. Just compare, compare the moneys that will be provided to low-income people, of 4,000 and 5,000-a-year people. Just compare and you will see that our budget supplies two, three, even four times as much money to those people who are in need. Mr. Speaker, I haven't heard one speaker from the other side yet talk about this government being ideologically hidebound. No one has talked about how we're tied to our ideology and how we can't change and we're not flexible. That was last year's argument when it suited, but this year, not a word. This year it's too little too late; this year it's another strategy. —(Interjection)— We're going to get to that. Mr. Speaker, just last week —(Interjection)— this budget, the members opposite . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I realize it's getting close to the supper hour, but I hope you can give another 15 minutes today to the Honourable Member for St. Matthews.

MR. DOMINO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I'm sure most members are aware, I still am a part-time high school teacher teaching most mornings at Tec Voc High School and I appreciate your assistance and I appreciate your words of advice, but I wasn't particularly perturbed by the members opposite. Prior to being a high school teacher, I taught junior high, so I'm used to watching a bunch of restless people squirming in their seats. People who don't really want to be here, don't want to hear what's being said, but I still appreciate your comments anyway, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, members opposite have said over and over again several times now that this party has made an about face, that we have suddenly changed. The Progressive Conservative Party in Manitoba hasn't changed. The party of Duff Roblin hasn't changed; we're still the same party. Your arguments have changed; your interpretation of what we're doing has changed, but we never were callous to people's needs. We never turned a blind eye to our social conscience. Mr. Speaker, I note that the independent Member for Inkster is pounding his desk and I appreciate, I very much appreciate the enthusiasm.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for all members opposite, and I'm sure that because we are a Conservative Party and because we do represent a lot of different variations on the one basic ideology, but let me say that I, as a Conservative, have always drawn my strength and my beliefs from the British Tories, not from the American Liberals of the 18th century or the British Liberals of the 18th century, not from Barry Goldwater, but from the British Tories. The British Tories for hundreds of years have seen society as one all, as an organic group. They haven't fought for complete equality; they know that we're never all going to receive the same salary. They know that there are differences, God-given differences, but they have fought for several things.

They fought for equality of opportunity, which I stand for and so does this party, and we have also

fought for protection for those who can't compete, and if you're — in this society in Winnipeg today — not able to compete maybe because you haven't got the intellectual ability, or maybe you haven't had the education or the luck, or maybe you have for any number of other reasons, you're not able to earn the salary that we receive in this building here. Maybe because of any number of reasons which have nothing to do with politics you are not able to make as much money. Maybe you are in the bottom end. Well, this budget addresses your need and this budgets says, friend, you're in this society with me and simply because I make 22,000 a year and you make 4,000 doesn't mean we forget you. It means that we have a duty and a responsibility to care for the poor, to care for those who can't take care of themselves. This budget addresses that aspect of our philosophy. That's not new; we haven't changed our tune.

Hopefully we've changed the way some people view us because they are receiving — if they listened to you fellows — a pretty distorted and self-seeking image of what we're doing, or they have been. Mr. Speaker, just last month we talked in this House about the minimum wage and we've talked about the minimum wage now for three years in a row and I have said — if any of the members opposite would like to peruse Hansard, they will find that I have said the same thing for three years. I have said the way to help people who are making 6,000 a year is not to give them a 50-cent raise in the minimum wage, because that will destroy their jobs; it will distort the labour market; it will end up with self-serve gas stations instead of gas jockeys. You will end up with Salisbury House replacing waitresses and waiters with self-serve Salisburys. You will destroy their jobs; we've said that. We've said it consistently and I've also said that when we've finished paying for the waste and extravagance that you fellows left us with, we addressed that problem in a realistic way.

Mr. Speaker, this budget addresses the minimum wage earner, those people who have to go out and try and make a living at the minimum wage today. And, Mr. Speaker, if any member opposite suggests that I don't care for those people, they're wrong, because I do, and I know them and I teach some of their children and I live with them. Mr. Speaker, I want to supply those human beings with more disposable income. This budget does.

Let's take the figures presented by the Member for Fort Rouge, who unfortunately is not here right now, and I'll be very careful what I say about her because she wants special treatment. I'm perfectly willing to treat her specially and in a special manner. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. Boniface resents that. Mr. Speaker, I resent his off-the-cuff remarks from his seat of his pants. I said nothing during his rambling speeches, speeches which often don't make any sense.

Mr. Speaker, the figures used by the Member for Fort Rouge were wrong. Low income people, figures arrived at were wrong. She didn't even include the 500 exemption in the figures she did use per child when she read out the figures, but it didn't matter to her when I suggested she should check her figures. She ignored it. Facts don't really matter.

However, let's take a look at . . . I don't want to argue the battle in terms of statistics and facts. Over

the next two years before the next election, the people who are affected by this budget will see they have more money in their pockets and they will see that they're better off and they will see that we took more care and concern for them. Rather than getting up and making grandiose speeches about the minimum wage, demanding we add 65 cents or 50 cents to the minimum wage to put them out of work, we've done something realistic. You just take a single mother, take a single woman with two children and you apply the new government child-related program to her, she will obtain a minimum of 600 a year; you add in SAFER, SAFER at the old rates, because the White Paper we're going to increase and enrich SAFER — details haven't been announced yet — but take SAFER at the old rate of 27 1/2 percent —(Interjection)— of 90 percent of your housing costs over 27 1/2 percent. The budget says we're going to raise that to 30 so it's going to be richer. But you add another 660 from SAFER. Just quick tabulation tells you that's over 1,200 a year. You've got 2,000 hours a year which a person is working at 40 hours a week, we've just added 50, 60 cents, maybe as much as a dollar to the minimum wage and we haven't hurt that person's ability to find a job.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the members opposite aren't going to waste any more time with that resolution. I fully expect the Member for Point Douglas, who is not here again today, but I suspect —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, I fully expect that member is going to withdraw that resolution for good reason, because rather than standing up and scoring cheap political points on the minimum wage, we did something about it. And if any member opposite — there are a few speaking spots left before we vote on this — if any member opposite thinks I'm wrong, let him stand up in his place and say so. Let him say this budget won't help those people who work at or near the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, I want to mention something else too before the dinner break. Mr. Speaker, I'm really sorry that the lone Liberal is not here today.

MR. URUSKI: I think you're wrong.

MR. DOMINO: Mr. Speaker, I think you're wrong and I think you're probably speaking from the position of total ignorance. Mr. Speaker, I don't know what research you've done on this issue, but from listening to your previous speeches I know that you often speak from the position of total ignorance and so I have reason to believe that you're doing that again.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about another program, a program that affects my constituency very directly. It's called the Community Services Program, Mr. Speaker, and under this program the federal government is going to put 6.3 million this year or add 10.5 million next year into this Community Services Program. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate federal Liberals on doing that. I want to also mention that program was negotiated and worked out under the previous Conservative government but the Liberals haven't cancelled it. The program goes ahead. It's a cost-sharing program between federal/provincial government, worth a lot of money to Manitobans and money being spent

where it should be spent, because under that program they're going to have 56 park and recreation projects, water and sewer and community improvement projects which are going to go ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I'm worried. I'm worried that the lone Liberal Cabinet Minister from Manitoba may sacrifice their valuable program so he can keep his word about rail relocation because, Mr. Speaker, on May 3rd in the newspaper, he had some interesting things to say, or people from his department had. They said and I'm quoting from them, page 4, May 3rd of the Tribune: Employment Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy is raiding federal programs to get money for relocation of the CP main line and yards in Winnipeg, a spokesman from the Minister's office said Friday. Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, a million dollars of that money is going into my constituency for neighbourhood improvement which is now called community improvement programs. We want that money, we need that money, and further on in the article, Mr. Axworthy's assistant says, It's a bit of a contentious thing to do. Well, I'll tell him, it's a real contentious thing to do and he won't get away with it because the people in our constituency need that money and if he thinks we're going to give up the neighbourhood improvement program just to make him happy, so if he can keep his promise. His promise was extra money for Winnipeg, and when he made that promise, I was silent and I thought, if he can get us an extra 100 million for Manitoba, that's good because we need the money. But now he wants to scrap other programs. He better keep his fingers off the community services program.

Mr. Speaker, presently in my constituency we're circulating a petition to the effect that we want, we're canvassing house to house, we hope to have 2,000 or 3,000 signatures early next week on a petition to Axworthy which says, keep your fingers off our programs.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a comment too on the Labour Congress that was held here in Winnipeg last week. Mr. Speaker, I think it was rude and obnoxious, the treatment given to the Premier of this province, a Premier who has done nothing anti-labour in any way, and to a government that's tried very hard, the Premier who has done nothing that could be construed as anti-labour, done a lot of good things for this province, was slighted. I think it was the Manitoba Federation of Labour who said, He doesn't want the labour union to be political so we don't want the Premier to be there. He'll take political money. Mr. Speaker, I plan to introduce a Private Member's Resolution in this House next week —(Interjection)— I don't believe in compulsion. You want everybody to do everything as long as you're giving the orders.

Mr. Speaker, I plan to introduce an amendment to The Labour Relations Act which will require unions, if they're giving some of their money to a political party to once a year, to once every year have a secret ballot amongst their membership to ask them which political party they want the money to go to and that once that is being done by secret ballot and the NDs get their 25 percent of the vote which is their usual vote from Labour households, then the union will be allowed to give 25 percent of their political contributions to that party. If the Conservatives or the PCs get 30 or 40 percent, the union will be

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required to give 30 or 40 percent of their entire political action contributions to this party.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The hour being 5:30, I am leaving the Chair to return at 8:00 o'clock. At that time the honourable member will have 20 minutes remaining.