

Fourth Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
First Session—Thirty-Eighth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
VACANT	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean, Hon.	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
LOEWEN, John	Fort Whyte	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
MURRAY, Stuart	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PENNER, Jim	Steinbach	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Carman	P.C.
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
SALE, Tim, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
SMITH, Joy	Fort Garry	P.C.
SMITH, Scott, Hon.	Brandon West	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 1, 2003

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PETITIONS

Highway 276

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition. The background of this petition is as follows:

Grain farmers require a safe, dependable and efficient means by which to transport their grain to market. Grain elevators have been closed at McCreary, Ste. Rose and Makinak. Due to grain elevator closures, farmers north of Ste. Rose are required to use long-haul trucks to transport their grain to market. Load limits are in place on Highway 276 north of Ste. Rose, preventing grain farmers from using long-haul trucks to transport their grain on this highway, causing considerable additional cost. Farmers north of Ste. Rose have no alternative route to hauling their grain on portions of Highway 276.

So we petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Transportation and Government Services (Mr. Smith) to consider the reduction or elimination of load limits on Highway 276 north of Ste. Rose to permit grain farmers to haul their grain to market using long-haul trucks.

To request the Minister of Transportation and Government Services to consider upgrading Highway 276 to enable farmers to drive long-haul trucks and remain competitive.

I present it on behalf of Evelyn Bodnar, Myrow Helash, Olive Kindzerski and John Kindzerski.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Apology

Mr. Speaker: Is the honourable Member for River Heights up on a point of order?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

I have in the days since the Budget asked questions to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) in both English and French. I defend my right to challenge the Minister of Finance on issues in both languages in our Legislature, but my questions should not have in any way been interpreted as being critical of the member's ability to speak French. To anyone who has interpreted it in this fashion, I apologize.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the honourable Member for River Heights for that, and that should take care of the privilege matter.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: On the petition of the honourable Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings), in accordance with our Rule 132(6) when a petition is read it is deemed to be received by the House.

We are back to petitions.

* (13:35)

PETITIONS

Supported Living Program

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I wish to present the following petition and these are the reasons for this petition:

The provincial government's Supported Living Program provides a range of supports to assist adults with a mental disability to live in the community in their residential option of choice, including a family home.

The provincial government's Community Living Division helps support adults living with a mental disability to live safely in the community in the residential setting of their choice.

Families with special-needs dependants make lifelong commitments to their care and well-being and many families choose to care for these individuals in their homes as long as circumstances allow.

The cost to support families who care for their special-needs dependants at home is far less than the cost of alternate care arrangements such as institutions or group and foster home situations.

The value of the quality of life experienced by special-needs dependants raised at home in a loving family environment is immeasurable.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr. Caldwell) consider changes to the departmental policy that pays family members a reduced amount of money for room and board when they care for their special-needs dependants at home versus the amount paid to a non-parental care provider outside the family home.

To request that the Minister of Family Services and Housing consider examining on a case-by-case basis the merits of paying family members to care for special-needs dependants at home versus paying to institutionalize them.

This is presented on behalf of Edwin Guenther, Lois Guenther, Anne Rempel and others.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Fort Whyte. Is the honourable member up on a point of order?

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): No, Mr. Speaker. I am seeking leave from the House to present a petition. It is a petition that is being vetted by the Clerk's office. Unfortunately, due to some troubles with couriers, it has come down from Flin Flon. So I am just asking the House for leave to present the petition today.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave to present the petition? *[Agreed]*

Geriatric Psychiatric Facility Northern Manitoba

Mr. Loewen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my appreciation to the members opposite for agreeing to this.

These are the reasons for this petition:

Geriatric psychiatric patients are some of the most vulnerable patients in Canada's health care system.

Geriatric psychiatric patients thrive in environments whereby they receive individualized, tailored care according to their many needs, while they tend to deteriorate in institutional treatment settings.

Families of geriatric psychiatric patients desire to be close to their loved ones during the final years and months of their loved ones' lives.

Geriatric psychiatric patients and their families from northern Manitoba are unduly discriminated against due to the lack of health care professionals and resources to staff a northern specialized psychiatric geriatric facility, which would provide such services regionally.

The value of the quality of life experienced by psychiatric geriatric patients living in specialized health care facilities close to their loved ones is immeasurable.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) to consider providing funding to develop and staff a specialized home care facility or hospital ward for geriatric psychiatric patients in northern Manitoba so that patients are not forced to be transferred to southern facilities.

To request the Minister of Health to consider the importance of individualized, high-quality care for geriatric psychiatric patients and the significance of them being able to obtain care and treatment in facilities close to their families and loved ones.

This is presented on behalf of Tony Scheres, Neil Richardson, Ellen Richardson, Karen Leifso, and others.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with our Rule 132(6), when a petition is read it is deemed to be received by the House. This also applies to the petition that was read by the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Education and Youth): As the Minister of Education and Youth, I am pleased to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the 2003-2004 Departmental Expenditure Estimates.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the 2003-2004 Expenditure Estimates for the Department of Health.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Estimates order, as agreed to by the House leaders, in triplicate.

* (13:40)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

National Forest Week

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Conservation): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask leave to make a very brief ministerial statement without written copies provided. I have consulted with the Opposition House Leader on this.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave to make a ministerial statement without the appropriate copies? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, as is the custom in this House, I am very pleased as Minister of Conservation to indicate this is National Forest Week. As you will see all around us, we have an excellent example of Manitoba's trees. I hope all members of this House will take this and remember Manitoba's forests every day when they plant this, whether it be at their residence or in their community.

Once again, it is National Forest Week and I hope all members will join in celebrating.

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond on behalf of our group and in doing so, first of all, offer very, very sincere congratulations to one of our older associations, the Manitoba Forestry Association, that together with the Department of Conservation has

promoted the very important aspect of trees in our province.

It does appear to me, although I am the first one to acknowledge that my memory may be fading somewhat and may be the early onset of Alzheimer's, that the trees used to be bigger when I was the Minister of Conservation. They seem to have had more vigour in them. Furthermore, the tree that I got is leaning decidedly to the left. Having said all that, I will probably take this tree back. I have quite a collection, that is until my wife's goats appeared on the landscape and they take to them kindly.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I ask for permission to speak to the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave to speak to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding concerns about the vigour of the trees, the vigour of the Manitoba Forestry Association cannot be put in question. We are here today to congratulate the Manitoba Forestry Association for its efforts, and to recognize the importance of trees and forests in our environment in Manitoba.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 16—The Manitoba Immigration Council Act

Mr. Speaker: I have a difficult time recognizing the honourable member, seeing through the forest, but I am sure it is the honourable Minister of Labour.

Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, my tree is leaning slightly to the right.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Ms. Wowchuk), that Bill 16, The Manitoba Immigration Council Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, Bill 16, The Manitoba Immigration Council Act, would allow

for the appointment of a 12-member commission with representation from business, labour and multicultural organizations that would help the province in its goal of increasing its annual level of immigration to 10 000 people and to keep them here in Manitoba.

Motion agreed to.

* (13:45)

**Bill 19—The Fisheries Amendment Act
(Offences and Penalties)**

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Conservation): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), that Bill 19, The Fisheries Amendment Act (Offences and Penalties), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ashton: This bill will apply significantly enhanced penalties for those that catch fish illegally, including through accompanying regulations going after people that knowingly purchase illegally caught fish. This bill states very clearly that people who illegally catch fish are doing so, essentially destroying our environment and stealing from the people of Manitoba. We are increasing the fines from \$10,000, as existed for many years, to up to a \$100,000.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 208—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): I move, seconded by the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 208, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Presently, The Manitoba Public Insurance Act is required to reduce an income replacement indemnity paid to an accident victim by the amount of any disability benefit received under CPP. This amendment allows the accident victim to retain rather than have clawed back any money received from CPP as a result of a division of pensionable earnings

from the victim's spouse, former spouse, common-law partner or former common-law partner.

I have had the opportunity to discuss this briefly with the Minister responsible for MPI (Mr. Mackintosh), and he has agreed to have the corporation take a serious look at this amendment.

Motion agreed to.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Ste. Rose, on a point of order.

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): I wonder if the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Ashton) would entertain a question on the bill that he just introduced.

Mr. Speaker: Would there be leave for the honourable Minister of Conservation to answer a question to respond to the bill that he just tabled?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Conservation): It is first reading, Mr. Speaker. The member full well knows that the normal parliamentary process is that, if the member wants to ask questions, on second reading he is more than welcome to do so. If he wants to talk about the bill outside the Legislature, I will do so right away, but this is not the normal practice in the House. The member knows that.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, am I to understand the Government is denying leave?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave? Order. The question before the House is: Is there leave for the honourable Member for Ste. Rose to ask a question of the Minister of Conservation? Is the Minister of Conservation allowing leave to entertain a question, yes or no?

No. Leave has been denied.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Order. May I have the attention of all honourable members.

May I draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have

with us today from Salisbury Morse Place School 29 Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. John Thompson. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable First Minister (Mr. Doer).

Also I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have from Rivers Collegiate 40 Grade 9 students under the direction of Mrs. Leslie McFadden and Mr. Jim Peirson. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer).

* (13:50)

Also I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us from Shore Elementary School 36 Grade 5 students under the direction of Mrs. Sandy Rosenberg. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here today.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Taxation Provincial Comparisons

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in the Premier's recent Budget he showed that he had zero lack of vision for this province, nothing at all. Nowhere in this Budget did we see—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Murray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, there was no vision whatsoever in this speech. Nowhere in the Budget did we see any hope or opportunity for young Manitobans, no opportunity to keep this province more competitive.

Following this Budget, a spokesperson representing small business in Manitoba said we are the highest taxed west of New Brunswick now, which is something we did not want to see. It

does not help us in any way, shape or form. It does nothing for small business. The Manitoba Chamber of Commerce said the tax relief and incentives, they are just not there.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans deserve better and expected more from the NDP government. I would like to ask the Premier why he insists on not making Manitoba more competitive.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I believe small business tax has been reduced by some 38 percent in the four years we have been in office.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, members opposite had 11 years and did not touch the corporate income tax. We lowered the corporate income tax for the first time since the Second World War. Members opposite are one-trick ponies, but they are really tax phonies when it comes to reductions. Our \$220 million on income tax cuts is much superior to their whole 11 years in office.

There is more work ahead of us with a 6% tax cut for middle-income people. Most provinces did not reduce their taxes at all this year. Our 6% middle-income tax cut that comes in January 1, 2004, continues a progressive reduction in taxes in a sustainable way that also pays down debt. That is competitive.

Mr. Murray: Well, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister made a comment that most provinces did not reduce their taxes. What part of this does he not get? Under his jurisdiction, his high tax jurisdiction, we are the highest taxed west of New Brunswick and he is worried about people not removing taxes.

Everybody in Manitoba knows somebody, whether it is a friend or a relative, who has left this province for greener pastures elsewhere because of the high taxation in this province. Following the Budget, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation said: There is going to be nothing changing in this province. We are going to lose people.

The Premier had a chance to make Manitoba more competitive. He had the opportunity to give hardworking Manitobans a tax break but he chose not to. What do we have to show for it? A

billion dollars spent and zero job growth. That is the legacy that this Premier has.

My question is very simple: Why do you refuse to make Manitoba competitive?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, from September of 1999 to this period of time, and stay tuned for further job stats, the economy of Manitoba grew in terms of job growth twice as high as the 1990s. We may not be perfect, but we are twice as competitive as members opposite in the 1990s, twice as good in terms of results, and I want to thank the many people in Manitoba who are working every day and owning businesses and buying goods.

Members opposite should pay attention to the fact that the endangered species, the building crane, is back in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. May I take this opportunity to remind all honourable members that we have guests in the gallery, we have the viewing public, and time is scarce for Question Period. I ask the full co-operation of all honourable members.

* (13:55)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the other issue that one must look at in terms of budgets, and I know that some of the tax-cut lobby groups may not look at this, but Manitoba's debt now on the operating side of government is second best in Canada, only below Alberta.

Now, some provinces and some jurisdictions like the United States have chosen to reduce taxes and run deficits year after year after year. We have rejected that idea. We believe in a sustainable tax reduction. We believe that that makes a lot more sense. We do not think our young people and the people in this gallery are better served by a situation where we would reduce taxes at 20 percent like they did in B.C. and run massive debt. Instead, we have reduced taxes by 12 percent and paid down debt. That in the long run makes a lot more sense for Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, there is another 6% tax reduction coming in for middle-income Manitobans in this Budget. When we look at the \$120-million tax reductions made by members opposite over 11 years and tax increases on the education portion of property taxes, you look at that versus our \$220 million in four budgets and a tax-flattening on the property-tax side of education, the members opposite, when they ask the question of competitiveness, we are much more competitive on our tax record than you are.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House reject high spending and raiding Manitoba Hydro to cover deficits because you cannot spend responsibly.

The best comment on what this Budget really means to Manitoba came from the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, something that the Premier likes from time to time to take a run at, some of these organizations that represent business in Manitoba. The chairman's comments were: Manitoba's business case for investment just got weaker today. It is a very good day for our competitor provinces. We are still losing people to other provinces. We need to have a competitive tax structure in Manitoba that does not penalize success but rewards it.

Those were the comments from the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce. I would ask this Premier simply this: Why does he insist on penalizing hardworking Manitobans and making them pay the highest taxes west of New Brunswick?

Mr. Doer: The member opposite, on all his stats, is wrong again on small business. Our small business taxes are amongst the lowest in Canada. We again raised the threshold, and again we lowered the small business taxes in Manitoba by 38 percent.

He is wrong about zero population growth in terms of job growth, Mr. Speaker. We have created jobs at twice the rate that they have. He is wrong about out-migration because from 600 people a year between the ages of 15 and 24 who were leaving under the Tory years, there is one third of that.

Mr. Speaker, every year we make progress, and I am confident with the Budget that has been introduced that both invests in education—invests in a high-skill economy, invests in infrastructure—lowers middle-income taxes, lowers business taxes and continues to pay down the debt. That kind of approach, that balanced approach is making the difference in Manitoba. Look out the window. People are here, and the community is growing and thriving.

* (14:00)

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Tabling of Documents

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): I would rise on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member is rising on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Over the last number of days we have heard the Minister of Education (Mr. Lemieux) tell the members of this House how much their property taxes have dropped in this Legislature. I think it is time that the record was set straight. I would like to table the history of tax payment and school tax payments, if it is your wishes, Mr. Speaker, from 1989 till this year that indicate clearly how much taxes dropped under the previous administration and how much they have risen during this administration. I would like to table this document.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would take the position that this is an unfortunate interruption in Question Period. It is neither a point of order, I would suggest, nor clearly is it a matter of privilege, certainly no motion, but *Beauchesne's* 31(1), which is known to all members, a dispute arising between two members as to allegations of facts does not fulfil the conditions of parliamentary privilege.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on the same point of order.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I hear where the minister is coming from and the House Leader is

coming from on this matter, but you and the minister just previously allowed this same issue to come forward when the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) rose at the beginning today. He said he rose on a matter of privilege, and nobody at that time said there was a problem. As a matter of fact, you even said that everything was in order and that the matter was taken care of. What is good for them is also good for us, and what is good for Doctor Gerrard is good for us.

Mr. Speaker: Order. According to *Beauchesne's* 31(1), a dispute arising between two members as to allegations of facts does not fulfil the conditions of parliamentary privilege. I am only citing you the rules from *Beauchesne's*. This is the book that we have always followed.

Dakota Tipi First Nation Gaming Revenues

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Mr. Speaker, the Council of Women of Manitoba, and the women, children and citizens of Dakota Tipi who brought the issues of misuse and abuse of gaming monies have been vindicated by the Auditor General's scathing report.

This issue was first brought to the Premier's (Mr. Doer) attention on April 15, 2002, by letter from the Council of Women. From that time forward, red flags have been raised about the issue and the Government continued to stonewall and deny any wrongdoing. As a matter of fact, they supported the then-ousted chief of Dakota Tipi, Dennis Pashe.

My question to the Premier is: Why did he, as Premier of Manitoba, fail to take any action when in fact he knew April 15 that monies from gaming were being used for inappropriate and, as the Auditor General points out, criminal purposes?

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister responsible for The Gaming Control Act): Mr. Speaker, the allegations that were brought forward at that date were passed along appropriately to the office of the Attorney General. There were considerable numbers of contacts investigating those decisions. The member, I think, is factually wrong and is attempting to sustain a debate over an

issue which I think all of us find rather sad, that we have had to go to this point of having an inquiry. I believe the people of Dakota Tipi now want to return to the form of civil government that will bring peace on that reserve, in that community, and that we should all be supportive of the process of healing and not try to keep this issue boiling for partisan purposes.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I am going to turn to the Premier (Mr. Doer) again. I want to ask the Premier: Can he explain why his then-Minister of the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), continued to stonewall, insisting that Dakota Tipi were in compliance when he knew as of April 8 from a letter from the band, from the people of Dakota Tipi, that they were not in compliance and that gaming funds were being used for inappropriate and, as the Auditor General says, criminal activities?

Mr. Sale: Mr. Speaker, first let me say that I regret this continued matter being washed in this way, but let me point out to the member—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Sale: Mr. Speaker, let me point out to the members opposite that audits for Dakota Tipi were not received for 1995, '96, '97, '98. All the years they were in government, this First Nations gaming commission was not in compliance. The audit for 1999 was received in February of 2000 when this Government took office. The audit for 2000 was received September 19, 2001, while this Government was in office. The audit for 2001 was received December 19, 2001, and it was not quite complete, so we sent it back for work. That work was ongoing when the reserve entered into a period of great turbulence. That is the audit that was in the process of being completed when we talked about compliance.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, the Auditor says that Dakota Tipi was never in compliance. I want to ask the Premier once again why his minister, the Minister of Lotteries and the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Ms. McGifford), allowed this matter to fester.

She was made aware in a letter of May 8 and at committee hearings by the women's council and women and citizens of Dakota Tipi of the suffering, the abuse and the inappropriate use of VLT monies at Dakota Tipi.

Why did this Premier sit on this matter and not take action?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): The minister just indicated that the Department of Justice was involved.

Mr. Speaker, one would think with all the allegations made by members opposite that they would have the decency to apologize for them and the personal attacks they took last summer.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Russell, on a new question.

Judicial Inquiry

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): On a new question. Mr. Speaker, this Premier sat in this House in concurrence at the end of the last session when in fact we asked the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) what involvement his department had. At that time there were no indications that he was involved. Someone is not telling the truth.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I cannot hear the question. Order. I need to be able to hear the questions and the answers in case there is a departure from the rules or a breach of Manitoba traditions. *[interjection]*

An Honourable Member: Pardon me?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

An Honourable Member: Did you hear what he said?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

An Honourable Member: I will put it on the record.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would like to once again ask the co-operation of all honourable members

in the House because I need to be able to hear the questions and the answers in case there is a breach of the rules or a departure from our Manitoba practices. So I ask the co-operation of all honourable members, please.

* (14:10)

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Speaker, you know you are getting to the Premier when he is starting to use the term "arse" when he refers to members in this House.

The Auditor General, in his conclusions, stated: We are concerned about the appropriateness and legality of certain uses of VLT proceeds with respect to the existence of evidence where the proceeds of VLTs may have been used for criminal activities.

This is a very serious issue. He goes on to say: These situations may warrant further review.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier of this province: Given all of the allegations that have come forward, given the stonewalling of his ministers when this matter was brought to this House last year, given all of the evidence that has come forward from the people of Dakota Tipi, and now the Auditor General who says monies from gaming may have been used for criminal activities, will this First Minister now call an independent public inquiry into this matter?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity of hearing the radio when I returned from up north. I heard the Auditor General, in his own words, was asked a very direct question about government influence with the Doer government in connection. He said: No, no government influence.

The number of allegations the member opposite made last year, last summer, are very regrettable. Having said that, there is no question that the usual procedures will be followed in the sense of the Auditor and the Auditor's Report and where it will go in terms of any criminal matters, in just the same way as the report was forwarded to the officials and the police departments when we received the report on the

building of the two casinos in Winnipeg. The same process will be followed.

I am also very pleased that the minister responsible has tabled legislation in this Chamber to deal with the inadequate accounting procedures on the matter. I think the action taken by the minister to undo some of the legislative changes that were made in the House, I believe in the early 1990s, the legislation in the early 1990s obviously is inadequate from the public interest, and in the public interest that will be changed.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this Premier why he allowed his ministers, the Minister responsible for the Gaming Control Commission, the Minister responsible for Lotteries, the minister responsible for Native and northern affairs then, the minister who is also responsible for the Status of Women, to continue to deny investigating this matter when it was brought to this House not just by this side of the House but it was brought to the Government's attention by numerous letters on numerous occasions.

When the questions were asked in this House, the ministers continued to support the then-ousted Dennis Pashe, and the Minister of the Gaming Control Commission said the Dakota Tipi Gaming Commission was "in compliance." That is a quote from July of last year.

Why did this minister allow that to continue?

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister responsible for The Gaming Control Act): Mr. Speaker, when the previous government brought in a very weak gaming control act, they gave to the Gaming Control Commission only one enforceable power, and that was to receive an audit. Under legislation of the previous Conservative government, they did not allow for the Gaming Control Commission to have access to the minutes of the First Nations gaming commission, did not allow it to have access to the proceeds and the use of the proceeds from any gaming operated, whether it was a bingo, a break-open ticket or a VLT, had no requirements for audits. Their legislation is what we are fixing in this legislation that was developed by the Gaming Control Commission

under our leadership, and which is called for by the Auditor virtually identically to the legislation that we have presented. We are fixing their mess.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I want to know, and so do citizens in this province, why this Premier waited for a whole year. This was brought to his attention in April of last year. Since that period of time there has been abuse, there has been suffering, people have been beaten, there has been criminal activity. This Government has sat by and watched it all happen.

I want to ask this Premier: Given all of the red flags that were raised regarding this issue, why did he allow his Government to sit by and not take immediate action to allay the fears and the problems that were present in respect of gaming at Dakota Tipi?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): One must also remember that, at the same time the federal minister, Minister Nault, had indicated that there was going to be elections at the Dakota Tipi First Nation, we on this side said at that time and during this House session that we supported that proposal for a democratic election at that community. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite well knows the jurisdiction of the federal government dealing with First Nations is constitutional.

Dakota Tipi First Nation Judicial Inquiry

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, we know that this Government was made aware of the issues concerning Dakota Tipi as early as April and in letters to ministers on May 8, May 10, a response from the minister on May 16, another letter to a minister on May 22. This issue came to the floor in this House when we raised it in July. I want to ask the Premier why he sat on this file for so long and ignored the pleas of the people of Dakota Tipi for as long as they did and made them suffer while they waited, while he sat on his hands.

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister responsible for The Gaming Control Act): Mr. Speaker, I think that all of us regret the deterioration in the conditions on the Dakota Tipi First Nation. All of us regret the violence that took place, well documented,

on that First Nation. I think all of us when we heard allegations did what you do with allegations, that is, we passed them on to the appropriate authorities.

The member opposite appears to feel that simply the presence of an allegation indicates guilt. He believes that you should have someone saying something and the person against whom it is said is assumed to be guilty. We assume you need a forensic audit, which we did. We assume you need an auditor's investigation, which he asked for and which we asked for, and we are glad that was done. We assume that you need careful thought, careful investigation, but, above all, Dakota Tipi First Nation needs time to heal and does not need its name dragged through this process anymore.

Mr. Tweed: This Government sat on its hands and stonewalled us for months while these people were suffering. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier (Mr. Doer) to explain to the women and children of Dakota Tipi why he and at least four of his Cabinet ministers including the minister responsible for Native affairs who ignored his own people and their pleas and supported the disgraced and ousted chief, Denis Pashe.

Mr. Sale: Mr. Speaker, I am deeply proud of my colleague the honourable then-minister for northern and Native affairs. The citizens of Manitoba are all citizens. We are all people. We all have our people. They are all Manitobans. Furthermore, I listen to my honourable colleague rise in his place and call for a process of respect and healing. It is regrettable that the other side does not understand either respect or healing.

* (14:20)

Mr. Tweed: Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans cannot believe anything that this Government says.

I now call on the Premier to call for an independent inquiry to find out whether it is an incompetent government or a cover-up and find out who is involved in the criminal activities and who is involved in the cover-up.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have had—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The provincial Auditor General has received all the allegations from all of the members of the public and from—[interjection] Yelling will not change the facts.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General received all the allegations made by members opposite. They received all the allegations from members of the community. They reviewed all the financial records through a forensic audit and a test audit of those same numbers. I believe the provincial Auditor General and the evidence, the facts that the individual has presented, we believe those are credible findings and they are credible recommendations which we are following up in a serious way.

Dakota Tipi First Nation Judicial Inquiry

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that the Auditor General's report has vindicated the women that were abused and beaten on Dakota Tipi and pled with the Government back in April of last year to take some action and to do something on their behalf. It took us writing to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Ms. McGifford) in May, after the Premier (Mr. Doer) received a letter in the middle of April, and it took till the end of May for her to respond and say that she would even meet with these women that had serious concerns.

I would like to ask the Premier of the province of Manitoba why he sat by when members of this Legislature saw first-hand the abuse and the bruises on women at Dakota Tipi and did nothing. Why?

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister responsible for The Gaming Control Act): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I regret as much as any member does what

happened on Dakota Tipi. I think the member opposite needs to remind herself that when there are allegations of criminal activity, whether it is in the form of assault or whether it is in the form of arson or whatever form it takes, there are well recognized and appropriate mechanisms. They involve the police, they involve the office of the Attorney General, the deputy minister's office, they involve the courts.

It is my understanding that the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Police as well as the RCMP investigated all of the allegations and criminal activity when they were passed on to them, that they found in many cases that charges should be laid and charges were indeed laid. While it is regrettable that happened in the first place, the appropriate things did happen and do not involve individual members of the Legislature acting as judge, jury and executioner.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I take some offence to the comments from the Minister responsible for Gaming when he takes his holier-than-thou attitude towards members in this Legislature.

We saw first-hand and obviously there are women in other parts of the province that come forward with allegations of abuse, and I hope that this Government does not sit on their hands like they did in the case of Dakota Tipi. The treatment of residents on Dakota Tipi—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am reluctant to get up, but would you please remind the honourable member that a supplementary question requires no preamble, *Beauchesne's* Citation 409.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, we have women that have been treated in a pretty shabby manner by this Government, and I was just trying to make sure that Manitobans understood what took place last year.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, I

would like to take this opportunity to remind all honourable members that *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble. I ask the honourable member to please put her question.

* * *

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier (Mr. Doer): In light of the fact that the women in Dakota Tipi have been vindicated by the provincial auditor and in light of the fact that many of his ministers have told conflicting stories around dates and times and what they knew and what they did not know, would he now just clear the air and call for an independent public inquiry so we can get to the bottom of this and find out whether it was just incompetence or cover-up by this Government?

Mr. Sale: I think if the honourable member would take time to read the act that governs the opportunities of the Attorney General for holding people accountable, she will find that the Attorney General has the right to compel witnesses, has the right to require the production of records, has the right to take evidence under oath. In other words, what the Attorney, what the office of the Auditor General—I am sorry, the Auditor General. I beg your pardon, Mr. Speaker. I was referring to the Auditor General all the way through. What the office of the Auditor General could do is exactly the same as what any other inquiry could do.

I believe that, with the chronology of events which he has put forward with the help of Deloitte & Touche, we have a very thorough investigation into both the allegations, many of which, if the member would take time to read the report, were not substantiated. We have had very sound recommendations, which our legislation answers. They had years in government to deal with this. They did not.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, the member for gaming forgets that this issue occurred under his watch and his Government's watch and they sat back and did nothing.

I know that the women on Dakota Tipi have asked for an independent public inquiry to get to

the bottom of this issue and to ensure they are vindicated through that process.

I would like to ask the Premier: Given that he knew there were issues in Dakota Tipi in April of last year, given that his Minister responsible for Lotteries and the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Ms. McGifford) knew in April and did nothing, given the fact that the Minister of Gaming knew in April and did nothing and given the fact that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) knew and did nothing, will the Premier today call an independent public inquiry to get to the bottom and ensure that there was not ministerial interference in any of the proceedings that went on in relation to Dakota Tipi?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the Auditor is independent. I know members opposite, when they do not like the findings of the Auditor, feel there is a question about independence. We found that 18 months ago. The Auditor is independent. When the provincial auditor says that the operating losses of the hockey team are going to be \$43 million, that is what it is going to be.

Mr. Speaker, the question was asked by one newscaster: Did you discover any sort of government influence or any problem with the Doer government in connection with the VLTs there? No. That is the answer and that is the answer of the provincial independent auditor.

*(14:30)

Budget Reporting Process

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I, too, believe we should listen to the Auditor General when he speaks about financial management and reporting. I would refer the members of this House to page B20 of the Budget papers presented in the Legislature last week where the summary Budget using what the Auditor General refers to as the normal accounting procedures shows a deterioration from a surplus of \$431 million in 2000-2001 to a Budget deficit of \$10 million in 2001-2002 to a forecast Budget deficit of \$271 million for the year just ended.

I ask the Minister of Finance to admit that the change from a surplus of \$431 million, a real surplus, to a real deficit of \$271 million in this past fiscal year represents a most unfortunate deterioration of \$702 million in the finances of our province.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we had a question on this matter last week, the summary budgets, and we indicated that we follow the laws of the Province of Manitoba, among the most rigorous laws in the country. The line that the member forgot was the four-year total was a \$40-million surplus or budgetary balance.

So what we have done here is we are the first government in the history of this province to publish a summary Budget in our last couple of Budgets, and this is another example of it.

We are the first government since 1961 that has acknowledged that there is a pension liability for civil servants and public school teachers, and we are the first government since 1961 to actually put in place a plan and invest money in paying down that pension deficit to make sure that it will be there for those retirees in the future.

This is our desire to be transparent and accountable, and it is all here in the Budget for the first time in the history of the province.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister of Finance to admit the truth of what the Auditor General has said in suggesting that there is a real Budget deficit which was projected initially last year to be \$133 million but which came in on page B20 at \$271 million and that this represents a rather drastic deterioration in the quality of fiscal management in the province during the year.

Mr. Selinger: For those who understand summary financial budgeting, it includes the results of all the Crown corporations in the province and all the wider government entities, and, as we do in our quarterly reports, we report what is going on with each of those Crown entities.

There was a reduction of profitability in some of our Crowns, and those have been

reported here. But unlike any other government in the history of the province, we report this information in the Budget. We make ourselves fully accountable for it, and if you read this carefully without the pension liability, this Government and any government would probably in all cases be in surplus. They would be in a situation where the overall affairs of the government were in good shape.

Let us not forget that it is the bond rating agency Moody's which recognized our work on the pension liability and gave us a credit upgrade which is something that we appreciate, and that credit rating—am I out of time?

Mr. Gerrard: I give the Minister of Finance marks for trying to pull the wool over people's faces, but I took a degree in economics at one point.

I ask the Minister of Finance to come clean, as the Auditor General has recommended and urged. I ask the Minister of Finance to acknowledge that his Budget presented last week projects a real deficit of \$110 million, as shown on page B20, when the procedures used in most other provinces of this country are applied to the finances of the Province of Manitoba.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, according to my calculations, Question Period has now expired, approximately 30 seconds ago.

Mr. Speaker: Order. According to Manitoba practice, when a member is in his question and time has expired we usually allow the question to continue and then the answer to be responded to.

Mr. Laurendeau: Mr. Speaker, the time had expired prior to him asking the question.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, as the Speaker, it is the Speaker who indicates when time expires. I had not picked up the signal from the table that the time had

expired so I recognized the honourable member. Once I recognize a member, they continue to finish their question and then we get a response.

Mr. Laurendeau: Regrettably, Mr. Speaker, I must challenge your ruling.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in support of sustaining the rulings, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Formal Vote

Mr. Laurendeau: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (15:40)

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained. All those in favour of sustaining the ruling, please rise.

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Aglugub, Allan, Ashton, Barrett, Caldwell, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Friesen, Gerrard, Jennissen, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Mihychuk, Nevakshonoff, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith (Brandon West), Struthers, Wowchuk.

Nays

Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Dyck, Enns, Faurschou, Gilleshammer, Hawranik, Helwer, Laurendeau, Loewen, Maguire, Mitchelson, Murray, Penner (Emerson), Pitura, Reimer, Rocan, Schuler, Smith (Fort Garry), Stefanson, Tweed.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 31, Nays 22.

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Now we will revert back to Question Period.

The honourable Member for River Heights, have you concluded your question?

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I had finished my question.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. So now we will get the response from the minister.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote chapter and verse from the Budget, but actually what I would really like to say is we are the first government to do a summary financial budget, reported annually in our Budget papers. We are the first government since 1961 to have a plan to deal with the pension liability, and all of this has been recognized by Moody's with our credit upgrade.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month

Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, it is with great honour that I rise to highlight the beginning of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month in Canada.

Imagine being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Imagine feeling hope and shock. The biggest shock would be realizing that you have a

disabling disease that has no cure. The hope would come from knowing that existing MS treatment can reduce the threat of future MS attacks and that MS research is advancing the promise of new treatments.

During May, MS Society volunteers and staff carry out numerous public awareness activities, both nationally and locally. Numerous cities and towns proclaim May as MS Awareness Month and many MS Society chapters honour outstanding women with MS as MS mothers of the year. In May the MS Society is also in the midst of the spring fundraising season. The MS carnation campaign held just before Mother's Day enables Canadians to help to fund MS research and services by buying carnations from volunteers in their local communities.

Since its inception in 1976 the MS carnation campaign has raised over \$30 million to help support MS research and services. The bone marrow transplant study in Ottawa is just one example of some of the exciting research projects that are funded by programs like the MS carnation campaign. In 2002, volunteers and staff sold one million worth of flowers in over 280 communities on Mother's Day weekend. It was an outstanding success and they are looking to reach even greater heights in 2003.

An estimated 50 000 Canadians have multiple sclerosis, an often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system. Currently there is no known cause or cure. MS strikes young adults between the ages of 20 and 40, and women twice as often as men. Canada has one of the highest rates of MS in the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to raise awareness for multiple sclerosis and to help fund research.

Peace in the Middle East

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, this truly will be my last opportunity to speak in this Chamber and I would like to do so by calling upon all members on what I believe they can all support, that is for a genuine hope for success for that troubled region that has troubled most of us. I talk about the Middle East. The road map of

peace that has been presented to them as we meet right now is surely an opportunity that we hope will succeed.

Ever since another United States president, namely Harry Truman, formed a homeland for the persecuted Jewish community in 1948, there has been trouble, war, strife and terror in that region that engulfs us all. Another president, George W. Bush, has the courage to involve the American nation in a process of peace in this region.

Let us all wish him success. It will take a great deal of doing but it is certainly probably the most important initiative that is being undertaken internationally at this time. For far too long we have seen that people, people in that ancient world, that world that is so important to us in terms of our heritage, in terms of those of us who have religious beliefs, have been troubled with strife, terror and hostility.

Let us give this opportunity, this road map of peace a chance.

St. James-Assiniboia Senior Centre

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to speak of the St. James-Assiniboia Senior Centre. This centre provides many services and programs to senior citizens in the St. James area. The dedicated staff and volunteers at the Senior Centre have organized a diverse set of activities with wonderful results. Membership has grown by over 100 members per year for the last four years. The centre now has approximately 1000 members.

The popularity of the centre becomes obvious when one considers the wide range of health and wellness programs offered. These include a community outreach program with a registered nurse and support groups that deal with lung disease, Parkinson's, post-stroke, diabetes, depression and healthy eating and exercise. Additionally, the centre has a fitness area, and they offer exercise classes that range from chair exercise to jazz dance.

Mr. Speaker, the senior centre's secret of success is that it works in conjunction with many

other organizations in Winnipeg. I believe this to be instrumental. For example, it is the only senior centre in Manitoba to have an agreement with the WRHA for the St. James-Assiniboia Health Promotion Resource Team that services the community outreach locations. This team is comprised of a registered nurse and a dietician. The centre also provides training opportunities to University of Manitoba faculties of Nursing and Human Ecology, Assiniboine Community College, MFC fitness leaders and adult peer leaders.

Furthermore, the centre has taken a lead role in the Health Canada diabetes strategy by reaching a partnership with Mount Carmel Clinic, the WHRA and the Anne Ross Resource Centre.

Of course, fun and games are also offered. Seniors can socialize by playing cards, shuffleboard, darts or doing arts and crafts. Our Premier (Mr. Doer) even got a shot in the house in a curling game while touring the facility. It is little wonder then that my colleague from Assiniboia and myself have both nominated the centre for the Reh-fit Healthy Living Award which they won this year.

In closing, it is an honour to support this invaluable asset to seniors in west Winnipeg. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the staff and volunteers at the centre. They put together wonderful programs. Without their work and dedication, the centre would not be what it is today. I express much of my appreciation to executive director Karen Pirnie—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Ms. Korzeniowski: Thank you, Karen Pirnie and to the chair of the board of directors, Merv Jones. Their enthusiasm and commitment to community have been essential to the centre's success.

West Souris River Farm Family Award

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): It is a great honour for me to rise in the House today to recognize the significant achievements of the Elliott family of Pipestone who were recently

awarded the West Souris River Conservation District Conservation Farm Family Award.

Garth and Barb Elliott, and their two sons, Ryan and Corey, live and work on a farm south of Pipestone beside the Stoney Creek. Garth's parents, Charlie and Jean Elliott, reside near the farm and are also actively involved in the farming operation.

The Elliott farm is a true example of a family farm, with Garth being the fifth generation to farm the land that was originally occupied by the Elliott family in 1885. The Elliott's farm consists of both beef cattle and crop production.

Throughout the operation the Elliotts employ several conservation practices in order to maximize the use of the land while minimizing their inputs on it. The special care they invest in the land is an assurance that the farm will continue to serve the Elliott family in generations to come.

This family not only shows concern for the land, but they are also highly involved in caring for their fellow community members. Charlie, Jean, Garth and Barb Elliott have all served in a multitude of organizations, community groups and service clubs. The boys, Ryan and Corey, are actively involved in 4-H, various sporting activities and in the day-to-day running of the farm.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Charlie and Jean, Garth, Barb, Ryan and Corey Elliott on being presented with the West Souris River Conservation District Conservation Farm Family Award to thank them for their committed service to the environment and to the community.

Day of Mourning

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, April 28 is designated in Canada as a day of mourning to remember those workers who were killed or injured in the workplace. The slogan for this day is Mourn for the Dead; Fight for the Living.

* (15:50)

As always, I was privileged to participate in the wreath-laying ceremony at the Steelworkers' monument in Flin Flon honouring slain or injured workers and continuing the efforts to improve workplace safety.

United Steelworkers of America Local 7106 spearheaded this event. Steelworker Chuck Woods was master of ceremonies. Safety and health rep Tom Lindsay gave a powerful speech stressing the need for government involvement in workplace safety.

At approximately the same time 200 kilometres away in Snow Lake, Steelworkers Local 7106 president Bill Bage gave a stirring speech at the monument there. Steelworker Marc Jackson was master of ceremonies and deputy mayor Brenda Cairns and RCMP Corporal Bob McKnight also spoke. Bill Bage pointed out that in Canada every day four workers are killed on the job. Corporal McKnight talked about fallen comrade Dennis Stronquill and other slain RCMP officers. The street in Snow Lake where the memorial is located has been renamed Memorial Way.

In conclusion I want to thank the best Minister of Labour in this country, the Member for Inkster (Ms. Barrett). I thank her for her numerous visits to Flin Flon for labour liaison meetings. I could also mention improved health and safety legislation, the Workplace Safety and Health Task Force, resource manuals on safety and health for high school teachers and the new SAFE Manitoba initiative.

Lastly, I would like to thank Ellen Olfert, executive director of the Workers of Tomorrow campaign, and commend her and her associates for the sterling work done in Manitoba classrooms in raising workplace health and safety awareness among Manitoba youth.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Arthur-Virden, on a point of order?

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): No, Mr. Speaker, I have a private member's statement.

Mr. Speaker: No, we are allowed five a day and we have already had our five. So if we are going to go beyond our rule of five, the honourable

member would have to seek unanimous consent of the House, would have to seek leave to do a member's statement.

Mr. Maguire: I would ask for leave to present this private member's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Member for Arthur-Virden have leave to do a member's statement?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: It has been denied.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ADJOURNED DEBATE (Eighth Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: To resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the Government and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray), standing in the name of the honourable Member for Southdale, who has 18 minutes remaining.

Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale): Mr. Speaker, I just got into my reply to the Budget yesterday, and, naturally, with the time expiring, I do have a few more moments, and there are a few things else I would like to put on the record.

It is really hard to say where we are going to start about this Budget. It is a shotgun approach to funding and to spending which they are very, very good at. The Government has enjoyed huge surpluses of money that have come into this Government over the last few years. In fact, I believe their overall spending is up over a billion dollars over when they first came into government in 1999. It reminds me of the fact that they were saying that, when they first came into government, they could not find the money that we were projecting on our fiscal plan of how we would manage the government when we were going to the people in 1999.

I would like to spend a little time talking about a few things. One of the things that has

always been brought to my attention in my constituency of Southdale is the fact of education and the quality of education and the ability for some of the parents to go to some of the schools that they and their children go to.

Just as a matter of history or record, Mr. Speaker, my constituency of Southdale is mainly made up of areas of the community of Southdale, the community of Island Lakes, the community of Niakwa Park and Niakwa Place, Royalwood, Southland Park. So they are more or less neighbourhoods themselves. They have each developed their own character, their own characteristics, their own community sense of belonging and involvement with residents' associations within those groups. They have all been very, very active in my community, and I am very fortunate that these are people that are concerned about the quality of life, the quality of education that they want in their community. They come together for various events, whether it is community club events, like in the Southdale Community Centre or the Winakwa Community Centre. They come together for school concerts, school plays and school endeavours, and it really is a sense of togetherness in the various components of the overall constituency of Southdale.

One of the areas that has struggled right from the very beginning for an identity in itself is the Island Lakes area in my community. That, just for the record, is in the area that is bounded by Bishop Grandin Boulevard, Lagimodiere Boulevard, the south Perimeter and the Seine River. It truly is what you might call an island in itself of homes, and it certainly has had a fair amount of significant growth over the last few years. In fact, in the last election, my boundaries were redefined because of the fact of the southern migration of homes in my constituency and the amount of activity of development in that particular area called Island Lakes.

One of the things that we lobbied for very, very strenuously throughout my tenure as the representative in this area is the fact of getting a school into that area. I know the Island Lakes Residents Association, the parents, the people that were involved with that community worked very, very hard along with myself to get a school in that area. We finally did get a school in that

area a few years ago that was opened, and lo and behold, the school is now overcrowded. In fact, it has come to a point where students have to get bused out of the area to other areas.

The one thing that was quite unique about the design of that school when it was first proposed was the fact that it was laid out in a way that if expansion did happen to that school, the infrastructure, the layout of the school would complement any type of future expansion so that the costs involved of adding on classrooms were not prohibitive in a sense that the facilities, the infrastructure, the mechanical were all set up so that it could naturally be tied in so that there could be an expansion of this school.

It was recognized that the eventuality of this community needing further expansion was a strong possibility. It came very, very swiftly in this community, as I say. The school is too small now; the school does need expansion. I have lobbied very hard with the former Minister of Education for an expansion in this area. He said that there is no room for expansion in the Island Lakes community for the school when he was minister, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell).

Now we have the Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Lemieux) who is the Minister of Education. I am looking to him for guidance, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), as they listen intently to the request for funding for the addition of this school in their Budget, but they did not come forth with it. In fact, we were even willing to settle for what they call portables to be brought into this school so that the community could stay together.

It is very, very important that a sense of community be maintained in this particular area because there is very little other commercial development. In fact, there is only one little strip mall that is involved at this community of Island Lakes. The school itself becomes a centre of activity, a centre of focus for events and functions, for a playground that is around there, the structures for the children to play in.

It is something that I feel that is more than just a school; it is a community centre, in a sense. In fact, one of the parts of the design of

this school was in co-operation with the City of Winnipeg to include a community hall as part of the school. Very unique. I believe there is no other school that had this type of design incorporated into it so that the community could not only access the school, but could access a room for its own community events for not only young children, but for people of all ages and seniors so it would become part of that school. It was a very, very unique situation, plus the fact that we incorporated through Family Services a day-care centre in that school, also, with a significant amount of children that attend this day care. So it truly is, Mr. Speaker, a community centre and a centre of activity. The school is enjoying significant success with the programs and the wonderful teaching staff there and the people that are volunteering to help to make this school truly something that we are very, very proud of in the community.

So I think that, when the Minister of Education (Mr. Lemieux) was hoo-hooing the fact that these people in Island Lakes want an expansion, and he was comparing it to a Taj Mahal, I think that this was a bit of a slight to the people in the area, thinking that all they are asking for is recognition of the fact that the place is too small; it needs expansion. We will continue to look towards trying to get this made into truly a school for the community with the addition of that school.

* (16:00)

Speaking of education, I have got to reflect on the direction that this Government went in the fact of amalgamation. I know the Minister of Education has stood up and talked and railed about how much they have decreased the cost to the taxpayer for education, but the one thing that he fails to mention is the offloading that they have done onto the taxpayers in the constituencies.

I look at our constituency of Southdale, which also overlaps the school district of Louis Riel, which overlaps the constituencies of St. Boniface, part of Radisson, all of my constituency of Southdale. It also encompasses the riding of St. Vital, Riel and part of, I am not too sure whether it goes as far as Seine River, but I believe that it does cover a bit of that. That whole area now, because of the amalgamation

and in the Budget report that the Louis Riel school brought forth, they are contributing, because of amalgamation, it is going to cost an extra \$2.1 million of expenditures in the 2002-2003 Budget.

Now that relates to an increase in taxes in those constituencies that I just outlined of 7.2 percent, I believe it is, to take up this shortfall. The report from the Louis Riel school division clearly states, and I will read into the record: For 2002-2003, in order to provide sufficient revenues to address the first-year cost of amalgamation, the St. Boniface and St. Vital School divisions each raised revenues from property taxes beyond what would have been raised were the divisions not being amalgamated.

So they recognize that amalgamation is costing the taxpayers in our constituency, the Member for St. Boniface's (Mr. Selinger) constituency, the Member for Riel (Ms. Asper), the Member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan), the member, like myself, from Southdale, and part of Radisson. It is going to cost the homeowners in that area an extra 7.2 percent in their property taxes on education, only because of amalgamation and the fact that this Government made a decision that this was going to happen no matter what.

I would like to point out that the Minister of Education keeps talking about how they have increased educational funding, but I have got to mention, too, at the same time, that the percentage of operating funds that is revenue by the provincial government is now down to 57.5 percent; 57.5 percent is what they provide to the school for school operating funds. This is the lowest it has ever been. Then this is something that I think has to be brought to the attention of government when they keep saying that to see how far their funding has gone down to.

When we look at what this Government is saying about what they are doing for funding of education, you have to look at the percentages of how much they are funding. Like I say, it is down to 57.5 percent of the operating Budget. Let it not be said that they are dedicating all this funding towards education.

I would like to talk a little about the economy, Mr. Speaker. I would like to point out

something that I know the members across the way, especially the Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines (Ms. Mihychuk), has said, that this Government is creating so many more new jobs here in Manitoba. They throw out figures like 9000 jobs have been created. But, when you look at the statistics that just came out by Stats Canada—and when I mention Statistics Canada, these are the figures that the Government relies on for its equalization payments. It relies on these for when they are doing their funding formulas. These are the figures that they use from Statistics Canada.

Statistics Canada has come out with their figures on net jobs. We are talking net jobs that are in the provinces across Canada and the comparison over the last year from 2002 to 2003. It is March, so these are very, very current, March of 2002 to March 2003. You look at what is happening across Canada with the various provinces, and you can start on the east coast with Newfoundland that has created 3800 jobs in that year. You go across to Nova Scotia, which is over 9800 jobs. Québec is over 74 000. Naturally, Ontario is very big with over 200 000. You go next door to Saskatchewan, and it is over 11 400 jobs. Alberta is over 40 000 and British Columbia is over 77 000. These are the jobs that are created, minus the jobs that have left the market.

We look at Manitoba after all those numbers that I just said and you say, well, what is Manitoba doing? Manitoba comes out to 100 jobs. That is incredible, Mr. Speaker. One hundred net jobs. I will agree, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) and the Minister of IT say, well, there are over 9000 jobs. But you have to look at the final number. You look at the net jobs, which are the jobs that are created minus the jobs that are gone from the market. It relates to 100 jobs. This is the final number in here.

It is a problem, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we had a meeting with the Manitoba Federation of Labour, and we talked about various things. One of the things that they admitted to was the fact that they are losing people. They are losing skilled people and they are losing them to other provinces. They recognize that there is a problem there. There is a labour shortage here in

Manitoba. It has been documented; it has been talked about and it really is something that we have to be very, very concerned about. You have got to ask the question: Why is there a labour shortage? Why are other regions or other provinces coming here and more or less raiding our qualified people? They even mention that in Inco up in Thompson they are losing jobs to other provinces, especially to Alberta.

* (16:10)

Granted, the comparison to Alberta is maybe a bit skewed because we are talking about one of the richest provinces in Canada, but when you start to even do your comparisons to a comparable province like Saskatchewan, which is right next door, it is brought to your attention that we are not even competitive with Saskatchewan. We are losing people to Saskatchewan. The reason behind that, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the taxes here in Manitoba have not been touched significantly. Now they will say they have cut here, they have tinkered there and they have dropped down a little bit here and there, but in the overall comparison, we are way out of line in regard to what we do in comparison of taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I see that it is very close to when my time is up. I would like to say that this Budget here does have a lot of spending in it. The spending has gone up over \$7 billion. I believe it is \$7.3-billion worth of spending in this year's Budget. You have programs that are being added, and the fundings they are going to, but you have no room, you have no place in this Budget where they have said that they are going to make significant tax cuts, that they are going to keep Manitoba competitive in a sense of finally leaving more dollars in the taxpayer's pocket.

I think that that is something this Government can be accused of, that the middle-income earner here in Manitoba is the person that is carrying the brunt of a lot of these tax increases.

So, with those few short words, Mr. Speaker, I will thank you very, very much for my address to the Budget. As I mentioned in my very first comment about the Budget, I will not be supporting this Budget.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by saying this is the fourth Budget that this Government has presented to this Legislature. It goes without saying that the preparation of a budget is an onerous and challenging task. It is not accomplished without the tremendous efforts of many people, not only in the line departments in the preparation of their Estimates, but also in the Department of Finance and, significantly, in the Treasury Board, who put in many, many weekends, many evenings to finalize the number, to help bring all the decisions to fruition and pull it together into a document that is readily available for the public to scrutinize.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

I would like to thank my colleagues on this side of the Legislature for their suggestions and their contributions to the budget consultation process. They have made many useful suggestions because of their close contact with their communities. I would like to thank all members of the House for the comments they have made, and suggestions they have made, not only in budget consultations across the province, but in the House, and during Estimates, in the past three years. Many of those comments have been noted. Where we have been able to make improvements, we have done that, and many of those things you can see in the Budget.

I have also, during my time as Finance Minister, had the honour of having several critics: first, Eric Stefanson, the Member for Kirkfield Park, in my first budget; followed by, for a brief period of time, the former Minister of Finance—as well as Eric Stefanson, who was also a Minister of Finance—Harold Gilleshammer from Minnedosa; and then, of course, the member from Fort Whyte, John Loewen; the Member for Arthur-Virden who was just before him; also the Member for Steinbach, Jim Penner; and now Larry Maguire. So all of these people have played a role in keeping us accountable.

I think, actually, debate is very important on a budget. I am glad we are privileged enough to be in a democratic system where we could have this kind of debate on a budget—*[interjection]* What can I say? There are many varying views.

It is important that we focus on the debate, on the questions, the issues, and skip some of the more acrimonious comments, which tend to sour people's perceptions of the democratic responsibilities we carry as elected representatives. I think we always do a better job when we make each other accountable through questions relating to the policies and the programs and the resources we are allocating to things, rather than cast aspersions on people's character, and try to use Question Period as a place to belittle people, as opposed to building up the democratic process, and seeking information, which is really the purpose of Question Period. It is to obtain information that will be available to all members, all citizens of the province.

I would like to just mention before I go any further some of the people that are retiring in the Legislature. There are a number this year. I count nine.

I would like to start with the Member for Steinbach, Jim Penner. I understand he is not well right now. I have always found him to be a very honourable man, a man who, I think, expresses great decency in the way he conducts himself. He has been a thoughtful critic. He has been here the same amount of time as I have. I think we are all going to miss him. In his life prior to coming to the Legislature, he was a very successful businessman, and the way he ran his businesses, as I understand it, was with a high degree of respect for his employees. Also, he made a great contribution to his own community. So I would like to thank him for his contribution to this Legislature.

Furthermore, I would like to talk just for a moment about the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns). He is the longest serving member of the Legislature and has voluntarily decided to retire. I think it was, what is it, 37 years of service. It is a remarkable record. Would that take him back to 1967 when he was first elected, 1967, '66, '67? That is a remarkable record of endurance and stamina.

I cannot always say I have enjoyed his questions. Sometimes, he can be as partisan as any member of the Legislature, but he also brings a sense of humour, a tremendous memory of the growth of this province. He presented me

with just last spring, he gave me a copy of the first budget he was involved in. I think the total amount of spending in this province in the first budget he was involved in as a rookie MLA was a sum of \$300 million in 1967. When you think about a budget this year of \$7.26 billion from \$300 million, I mean, there has been a lot of growth in inflation; there has been a lot of growth in expenditure; there has been just a change in the way we do business in this province.

That is not to say that that growth has been unwarranted. It is just a reality that all across this country that the numbers change as you go forward and the quantum of resources you deal with in addressing Manitobans' priorities changes in both volume and significance. With inflation, you have to recognize that it is not as large an increase, but still \$300 million to \$7.26 billion really shows a change in the way we have allocated resources in this province and also reflects the capacity of our economy to support programs. We have seen a tremendous growth in our economic base in this province. It is a very diverse and strong base.

Also, I would like to comment for a second about the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer). I know he has served in many ministries during his time in office here. He was an educator before that, I believe a principal in a school as well. He conducts himself with dignity. I think he has always been a strong member of the Legislature. He is retiring as well. I wish him the best in his retirement.

As well, the Member for Morris (Mr. Pitura) I think has been an insightful member. I remember his role during the '97 flood as the Minister of Government Services. He played a strong role there. He has a strong knowledge of the area he served and, indeed, all Manitoba, given his previous experience in the Department of Agriculture.

Of course, Ed Helwer from Gimli presents a very gentle nature. He is obviously a man who is very comfortable with people. He has decided to take his retirement. I know his constituents will miss his presence.

If there are any other volunteers who wish to receive my commendations, there is still a full

opportunity here. A quick decision will allow me to work you onto the list.

Now, on our side of the House, Becky Barrett, as we know, the Member for Inkster, is retiring. She has been a tireless worker both inside and outside of government for the things she believes in, a strong organizer at the constituency level and across this province, a person who, as the Minister of Labour, brought forward, in my view, some of the most important legislation for working people in this province. Even when that legislation has been controversial, she has stood her ground, made her case, and, in the face of strong gale forces, stood up for what she believed was important legislation. I think it has proved to be successful legislation in avoiding more serious labour conflicts and allowing people to find a resolution to collective bargaining issues in a way that did not detract from their ability to earn a living or the company's ability to produce a good or a service. So she has served us well.

The workplace health and safety legislation, landmark legislation, very important legislation, protects people from serious injury, ensures that companies can be more productive and do not suffer the loss of injured workers, legislation that really speaks to the dignity of why we need to protect working people in this province and why governments are important. Governments provide laws that ensure that people can work with dignity and in safety and have a quality of life that without these kinds of laws would be at great risk. We must remember that in the Industrial Revolution, when it started out, there were no laws to protect either child labour or adults working in the workplace. Many people were worked to the point of sheer exhaustion, to sickness and to a point where they were not able to carry on any kind of quality of life at all.

It has been labour legislation brought in by progressive governments all over the world, particularly the industrialized world which has been a big factor in improving the quality of life for people and also acted as a stimulus for increased productivity of companies. In order to ensure their profitability, they have had to be productive, not just wear out working people as part of their process of producing a good or service.

As well, I would like to talk about the Member for Wolseley, Jean Friesen. I have had the privilege of serving on Treasury Board with her for the last three and a half, almost four years now. She has made a very strong contribution. She understands social policy. She understands public policy. She makes very good and insightful comments, always asks good questions. For me it has been an honour to serve with her. I think her presence will be missed, and I regret her leaving, as well, but I respect the fact that she made her own choice at this stage of her career.

* (16:20)

Thirdly, we have the Member for Radisson who has decided not to run again, Marianne Cerilli. She has been a source of creative ideas, a very broad vision of how we could improve the quality of life for people in this province. I think she has many good years of public service left. I hope that she will find a way to continue to offer her ideas in this province of Manitoba as we go forward. I see a lot of future potential there.

Linda Asper has made a decision to continue her career as an educator outside of this Legislature on an international level through an organization called Education International. She will bring a lot of experience as a legislator but, as well, as a member of the Manitoba Teachers' Society staff, as an administrator, as a teacher, and she will transfer that expertise across three continents in her new role. So we will miss her expertise and competency as well.

Now, as for the Budget, Budget 2003 continues our balanced approach of providing sustainable tax relief for individual Manitobans and Manitoba-based businesses. It allows us to maintain a competitive environment in Manitoba as is amply demonstrated in *The Manitoba Advantage* booklet. It invests in key social programs that allow Manitobans to meet their full potential. It is balanced with a positive balance of \$10 million. It continues to pay down the debt and the pension liability to the tune of \$96 million a year. For the fourth year in a row, the Province is committing \$96 million to paying down the debt and pension liability with a draw of \$48 million from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund, half of what we are using for paying down the pension and debt liabilities.

The Government has put aside \$384 million in our last four budgets for debt and pension liabilities. That is a significant amount of money that has gone a long way towards reducing our long-term liabilities. It is a slow and steady approach which I think in the long run will pay great dividends for the fiscal soundness of the public accounts in this province.

The cost of servicing the public debt for the fiscal year 2003-2004 is expected to decrease by \$37.3 million to \$331 million. Debt-servicing costs for our general purpose debt represent 4.5 percent of expenditure, the lowest level in over 30 years.

Reviews of our Budget this year have been positive from organizations such as BMO Nesbitt Burns who, in their analysis, say Manitoba is more tax friendly now. Manitoba's Budget had a little of something for everyone, with a balanced budget, spending increases and modest tax relief.

Scotia Economics goes on to say: Manitoba continues to chip away at its debt and pension liabilities as it trims its tax burden and meets a broad range of spending priorities. Going forward, hydro-electricity represents a key competitive advantage providing clean, inexpensive energy and substantial export earnings.

CIBC World Markets goes on to say: Manitoba is staying the course on its debt pay-down plan for 2003-04 when many other provinces, I might add parenthetically, have stopped paying down their debt. Manitoba plans a further \$10-million surplus, again putting \$96 million against the debt and pension repayments, with only half that amount represented by a Fiscal Stabilization Fund withdrawal.

Since 1999, Manitoba has posted some of the strongest employment gains in recent memory. In spite of factoids to the contrary, our employment growth has averaged over 8000 jobs a year since 1999, more than two and a half times the rate of employment growth or gains over the 1990s. While it is convenient for some to focus selectively on monthly data year over year, the private, independent forecasters predict that employment in Manitoba will continue to grow by a healthy 1.5 percent a year, or about 8500 jobs.

As well, Manitoba's research and development spending remains the fourth strongest in Canada. We continue to invest in a number of major research and development projects that will promote the development of new and important products in our province. These include \$9 million for the Richardson Centre for Nutraceuticals and Functional Foods; \$5 million for the I.H. Asper Clinical Research centre located on the campus of the St. Boniface Hospital; \$7.9 million for the Food Development Centre in Portage la Prairie recently announced by the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), which will be a facility that will allow agriculture producers to generate and produce value-added products with modern packaging to allow those products to enter the marketplace in a competitive fashion; \$2.4 million for TR Labs at the University of Manitoba's SMARTpark. As well, Manitoba's research and development tax credit continues to support significant R & D investments in private firms.

When you combine our research and development tax credit with the federal research and development tax credit, a company that invests \$10 in research and development will get \$6 back on their tax credits for a net contribution of \$4. So, for every \$10 you spend, it costs you \$4 as a company to invest in research and development to keep your company modern, to develop new products and a competitive edge in your market of choice.

As well, we are making significant progress toward our goal of reducing net migration out of the province, a long-standing issue. Over the last four years, we have cut the net out-migration of young people by almost 60 percent. This turnaround is due in large part to the tremendous growth in opportunities for our young people in Manitoba. Youth employment last year hit its highest level in more than a decade. Our youth unemployment last year was the lowest in Canada. That bodes well for young people seeking employment as they continue to go to school or as they enter the labour force full time.

Budget 2003 also makes significant new investments in health care and education. It builds for the future while holding overall spending to less than 5 percent, which is the third lowest overall spending increase of all the

provinces in this annual season of budgets that we have just gone through.

The Government has met its commitment for four consecutive years to increase annual funding for public education by at least the rate of economic growth. This means an additional \$23.8 million in operating funds for public schools, an increase of 2.8 percent in Budget 2003.

As well, we have negotiated additional funding following the release of the Romanow report. We see it as a positive step forward, but more work is required to re-establish a meaningful federal partnership in providing sustainable financing for health, education and other social programs in the future. While the additional federal dollars announced for health care as part of the 2003 health arrangement are welcome, the federal share of funding health care and other social programs will now stand at only 16 percent. Romanow, as you know, recommended 25 percent. So the Romanow gap of 9 percent still remains to be closed to allow for a sustainable federal-provincial funding arrangement for the most important of universal social programs that we have in this country.

The premiers, of course, have called on the federal government to restore immediately its funding share for major provincial and territorial social programs to 18 percent, and to raise it by 1 percentage point per year until it reaches the 25% target identified by commissioner Romanow. As well, the federal government agreed to provide a one-time CHST, or Canadian Health and Social Transfer supplement and an additional Canadian Health and Social Transfer supplement contingent on the size of the federal surplus to be used to relieve existing pressures within the health care system.

* (16:30)

Manitoba, like other provinces, will use its share of this supplement and the additional supplement to help offset cost increases associated with existing pressures in our health care system. In '02-03 and '03-04, program costs associated with health, education and social services are cumulatively estimated to be \$760 million higher than they were in 2001-2002.

Manitoba's share of the amounts identified in the federal budget for health reform, approximately \$275 million, will be utilized over the next three years to continue the work of restructuring and enhancing health care delivery in the province.

In 2003-2004, the Government will use \$36 million of this amount to continue improving health care, home care and catastrophic drug coverage for Manitobans. Notwithstanding our significant investments in health, education and early childhood development, following a decade of neglect, Manitoba continues to have the third lowest per capita total government expenditures among provinces and the third lowest total expenditure increase among provinces in 2003-2004.

Budget 2003 provides a further reduction of \$39 million by reducing the middle bracket rate from 14.9 percent to 14 percent. Total personal income tax reductions will total \$220 million by 2004 when fully implemented. Tax reductions in Manitoba are significant, broad-based and sustainable. Manitoba has not run deficits to finance tax reductions. Members opposite will note that B.C., while introducing tax cuts, is also running multi-billion-dollar operating deficits in its budgets as the new Liberal government. Manitoba has not used significant drawdowns from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund to finance tax cuts, unlike Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan estimates that reducing its personal income tax rates and broadening its sales tax base will cost \$260 million per year by 2003-2004. It is also forecasting withdrawal from its fiscal stabilization fund this year of \$393 million; in effect, financing its tax cuts by drawing down its fiscal stabilization fund.

Manitoba has chosen a more modest drawdown of its Fiscal Stabilization Fund to help pay for debt in pension liabilities. We have chosen to implement sustainable tax cuts and a modest increase in spending on key social programs, a more balanced approach for the future.

This House will also be interested to know, of the last 11 budgets introduced by members opposite, all but two called for a draw from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Of the two that did not, one budget was balanced by tapping a

lotteries trust fund, a second rainy day fund that members opposite called on when they needed to meet their balanced budget commitments.

All members in the House would do well to realize that while we do have a Fiscal Stabilization Fund draw of \$48 million, the draw in 1998-99 was budgeted at in excess of \$200 million, and, in 1999-2000, at \$186 million. We are also continuing to reduce corporation income taxes, the first reduction since World War II, to 15.5 percent in 2004 and 15 percent in 2005. Income eligible for the small-business rate will increase again in 2004 and reach \$400,000 in 2005, twice the level in 2000.

In addition to already significant reductions in the ESL, the Government has established a ministerial working group to examine strategies to reduce Manitoba's use of property taxation in support of education while respecting the province's fiscal capacity. Farm properties, land and outbuildings are exempt from the provincial Education Support Levy, and farmers pay ESL on their residences at the lower residential ESL rate. The Government has provided tax relief to farm operators by reducing the portion of assessed farm properties subject to taxation from 30 to 26 percent, saving farmers approximately \$7 million annually.

Manitoba Finance estimates the tax benefits for farming property, inputs, income and transactions, as well as the \$500,000 capital gains exemption for farm property, saved farmers over \$150 million per year. The Province has provided an additional \$53 million in annual tax savings to Manitobans over the last three years by increasing the Manitoba Education Property Tax Credit by \$75 in both budget year 2002 and budget year 2001. This results in a net reduction of up to \$400 in residential property tax bills each year since 2001. The increases in the Education Property Tax Credit and reductions to the ESL make owning a home more affordable. Taken together, these measures will provide Manitobans with \$301 million in personal income tax and property tax reductions by the 2004 tax year.

Other provinces have chosen to finance tax cuts with higher deficits. Some have had to postpone planned tax cuts. We have delivered on

our promises. We have delivered balanced budgets.

In addition, this year we have introduced two new tax credits. The Community Enterprise Development tax credit is a new 30% personal income tax credit that provides local investors with encouragement and a vehicle to participate in the economic well-being of their communities. As well, the Co-operative Education Manitoba tax credit, a new 10% corporation income tax credit for employers will provide students in participating co-op education programs with valuable workplace experiences before they graduate. Estimated at costs up to \$600,000 based primarily on Ontario's experience, Manitoba's credit is more generous than Ontario's, as any co-operative work placement in a recognized, post-secondary institution qualifies. The tax credit is expected to expand co-op programs offered in Manitoba.

These programs, I believe, are vitally important because they provide a bridge between education and work. It allows people a full opportunity to get that experience before they graduate. Co-op education programs in other jurisdictions have proven to be very successful in allowing young people to get jobs and in allowing employers to find people that they will have confidence and trust in. I hope this tax credit will be a real incentive to expand co-op education programs in post-secondary institutions all across this province.

Further, extending the Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit by three years and broadening the eligibility to include energy conservation in efficient equipment is also another incentive to Manitoba business. The broadening of eligibility to include energy conservation is another measure intended to show our concrete support for Kyoto. It will allow companies to have a faster rate of depreciation on equipment that they use for energy conservation. We think this is a way to incent companies to be innovative in their use of energy inside this province.

As well, we will have modest increases in tobacco taxes to raise an additional \$7 million for health care. For the '03-04 fiscal year, it is estimated that all of the tax changes, including

those announced in previous budgets, will result in a net reduction of \$82.7 million in taxation revenue that otherwise would be collected and \$142.2 million on a full-year basis.

Finally, we have improved accountability to Manitobans through more complete and transparent reporting, including the first ever annual report for government and annual summary budgets encompassing the entire government reporting entity, along with other measures.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Budget 2003 continues to build on the Manitoba advantage. It continues to support some of the lowest tuition costs for our university or community college education. I noted in this paper this morning there was a report talking about Manitoba's contribution to post-secondary education. You may have seen it. That report said we are the second best in the country after Québec in our support for post-secondary education. That was a recognition of our four years of tuition fee reductions. It was a recognition of our expanded bursary programs. It was a recognition of our college expansion initiative which has dramatically increased the number of seats available for young people to attend community college.

I think it was a recognition also of the work we did in this Budget with the co-op education tax credit, as well as our student debt load interest rate relief program, which will double the period of exemption for student loans from six months to a year. So, when a student graduates now in this province, instead of having to pay their interest on their Manitoba student loans upon six months after graduation, they will now have a full year of exemption on that student loan and be able to pay down the principal on that loan before any interest costs are incurred that they have to pay for as part of their payments.

We believe that with our bursary program, tuition fee program, interest rate program, that the total burden of student debt will be dramatically decreased for graduates who have entered into post-secondary education during our period in office. That will be a period which probably will be known as the second

Renaissance of post-secondary education in this province, with our capital programs over \$100 million, with our expansion of community college education, with our increase in programming for universities and our increases in operating funding that have, I think, been among the most generous in the country.

* (16:40)

When the Member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) returns to that university setting, I am sure that she will find it a different place than when she left, at a time when things were deteriorated, capital programs were being ignored, student tuition fees were dramatically accelerating. All of these programs really exemplify our desire to support young people to have the kinds of training that they need, the education they need to be able to have productive lives here in this province. I think they have been very well-received by young people and their families all across this great province.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we have improved accountability, as I have mentioned earlier, not only through being the first government in the history of this province to publish a summary budget, not only through our legislative improvements to The Provincial Auditor's Act—not only have we had an annual report, which I have mentioned earlier, which gives key statistical indicators, but we have made this all available to Manitobans and to the credit-rating agencies across North America.

As well, we have continued to support low auto insurance rates. Our auto insurance rates are probably the second lowest in the country. The only one that may be a little better than us, as I recall, is the only other province to have a fully-funded program of auto insurance, and the first one, of course, and that would be the Government of Saskatchewan. But our auto insurance premiums went down this year at a time when auto insurance premiums in other jurisdictions were climbing 30 percent and more. That is a very significant benefit to young people. A young person who wants to operate an automobile in this province has among the lowest premiums of any place in Canada.

So, when you think about the Manitoba advantage for young people, you have to think

that public auto insurance is one of the competitive advantages for retaining young people in this province, and I think it is an important one as we look at the various options that people have.

I am looking at auto insurance and the Manitoba advantage here, and we are without question among the lowest in this country, no question about it as you look across the table here. For example, for a one-earner family of \$60,000, our auto insurance premiums are the lowest in the country, absolutely the lowest in the country.

Now, on the other hand, if you want to take a look at another part of our competitive advantage, electricity rates, you will see that they are by far and away the lowest in Canada. There is no jurisdiction that has a lower electricity rate, but then you can take a look at telephone rates, and you will see that when it comes to telephone rates—actually the telephone rates have now become—yes, it looks like the third most expensive in Canada, and that is a result of the former government's desire to privatize that organization. We are glad that it remains in Manitoba. We only wish that the benefits, the dividends were accruing to Manitobans.

The other thing we have done in this Budget, Mr. Speaker, is support affordable housing costs and an affordable housing program. We are building more units than we have ever built. Our housing market remains—even though it is very buoyant, it has been very strong in the last two years, and even though we have seen appreciation of housing values in the order of 10 percent and 11 percent, housing in Manitoba remains one of the most affordable investments that you can make in this country.

As well, unlike provinces to the west of us, such as British Columbia and Alberta, Manitobans do not pay health care premiums. So, taken together with our commitment to affordable government, Manitobans face some of the lowest taxes and living costs in the country. Manitoba is a low-cost place to invest and to do business. We have lower land costs and some of the lowest industrial electricity rates across North America. They are supported by our tax reductions for the corporate tax; the

small business tax reductions of 37.5 percent; the corporate tax reductions, the first since World War II.

As well, this year, we have changed our capital tax structure from an exemption to a deduction. Now that does not sound very significant, but under the old exemption scheme, your first \$5 million of capital tax was exempted, but as soon as you got to \$5 million and \$1 of capital tax, you paid the tax on the full \$5 million and \$1. Under our new deduction scheme, you only pay tax on the incremental dollar. That first \$5 million is permanently exempt. For any of you that are involved in any businesses, you will notice that that will be a tremendous incentive. It will allow companies to accrue capital in this province and to retain capital investment in this province. That is a significant change, one that has been talked about for years, but finally brought into place by this Government.

We have made some additional investments in R & D and tax incentives for manufacturing equipment, as I have mentioned, but also for filmmaking. Those of you will notice that Manitoba is increasingly becoming a very attractive place to do first-line films. We have been seeing in the front page, lately, big name actors such as Jennifer Lopez and—who is that other chap with the grey hair? [*interjection*]—Richard Gere. How old was he? He is about 51, 52, as I understand. He is a mature man, but a good actor as well. We are glad he is going to be doing a film here. Perhaps we will be in session and be able to invite him down to see the kind of work we are doing for Manitobans.

Nonetheless, the film tax incentives we are providing are proving to be increasingly attractive in this province. We are getting some first-line films. We are also really hoping and seeing that our local film industry is continuing to expand and participate in productions which are making a significant impact in the global marketplace for the film industry.

So the proof of our Manitoba advantage is demonstrated every day as we see the dynamism of our economy, as we see the growth and enrolment in our post-secondary institutions; as we see the buoyant housing market in this province; as we see people having a high quality

of life, in their ability to have a cottage and to have decent recreational opportunities available to them. In this Budget, we have put more money into camping spots. We have put more money into cottage lots. We are creating more opportunities for Manitobans to have the kind of recreation where their family can thrive and prosper on their weekends and on their vacations.

So, all I can say to the members of this House, this Budget has continued to be balanced in every sense of the word. It also invests in our future prosperity. It builds a strong future, both in terms of key public programs such as health care and education, but also in terms of infrastructure. There has been over \$40 million invested in clean water and sewage programs in this province. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen) has been a key player in that, along with the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Lathlin). Clean water projects are things we are investing in.

We had a question yesterday to the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs about a community that was suffering from lack of clean water. Well, I know that that minister will be following up on that. Those years of neglect of northern communities are going to be over with the investments we make in clean water and sewage programs in our northern communities. I know the minister is concerned about that. I know he is acting on that. I know, for the fourth year in a row, we put additional resources into our Budget to make sure those communities have the same standard of living and the same quality of facilities as any community within this province. So we have got a lot to be proud of.

We have accomplished a great deal. We have got much more to do. If I could just think of 10 more minutes of things to say, we will have—

An Honourable Member: You could probably take 10 hours to say it.

Mr. Selinger: I could probably take 10 hours to say it, but I would like to just find 10 more minutes of material at this stage of the game.

Perhaps I should discuss some of the things we have done in agriculture.

An Honourable Member: That would be great.

Mr. Selinger: Okay, it started four years ago with that incredible investment in those agrometeorological weather station systems. It was unbelievable. I cannot believe that one got through Treasury Board, but it did. I know the minister has found it to be very helpful in moisture detection throughout this province, in allowing farmers to have real-time forecasts of the weather conditions.

We have also expanded crop insurance in this province, an additional \$5 million in this year. Crop insurance that is not only available for moisture coverage, but a new breadth of crops that have been covered—new crops, a new diversity of crops, as Manitobans continue to diversify their crops.

* (16:50)

You will also note that we have made a significant investment in Churchill this year. That investment in the Churchill port not only supports the agricultural community, because it gives them access to lower-cost transportation and shipping opportunities, but it invests in the North. It invests in the North, and we have brought together the players in that process, not only the Wheat Board and the federal government, as well as the agricultural producers. We want that port to be—*[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Emerson, on a point of order.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, I heard the Finance Minister talk about the divergence of new crops that they were working on. I was just wondering whether one of those crops might be the tumbleweeds that the Premier was talking about in his speech, when he talked about the movement of the Tory party just to the fringes of the city of Winnipeg. I was wondering whether he could clarify that that might be one of the new crops that they were developing.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Finance, on the same point of order.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, it is clearly not a point of order. It is an opportunity for the member to inject a question into the closing speech on the Budget. An unacceptable abuse of the rules of the House, and I hope you will rule as such.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Emerson, it is not a point of order; it is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Selinger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to take the opportunity to mention some of the things we have done, not only in agriculture, with crop insurance, not only with new infrastructure, not only with the Food Development Centre, not only with our ethanol initiative, which we have announced in this Budget. I use that as a segue to talk about some of the things that are being done in the North.

We have a Northern Development Strategy. You can see the benefits of that as we start to develop the University College of the North, as we make investments in clean water and sewage, as I mentioned, and as we continue to strengthen the Port of Churchill as not only a tourist destination but a shipping destination. So we have done things in the rural areas; we have done things in the northern areas.

We have also been a key player, along with our partner, the City of Winnipeg, in reinvesting in the downtown. We can start to see the fruits of that coming forward now. We have much more work to do there, but you can see that the downtown is starting to revitalize. All of these infrastructure investments in partnership with other tiers of government are starting to make a difference and build a base for prosperity. At the same time as we have done that, at the same time as we have put record amounts of resources into education and infrastructure and health care, we have also reduced the tax burden.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Lemieux), the other day, was doing some very worthwhile comparisons on taxation levels within various school divisions. He indicated, for example, that between the years of 1990 and 1999, there was a net increase of taxes of \$470, but during our

period of 1999 to 2003, a period of less than half that time, we have seen a reduction of \$130 in that very same school division. When we look at the River East School Division, between the period of 1990 to 1999 we saw an increase in taxes of \$301, a net increase. But, during our period, the net increase in taxes has been a mere \$13. When we look at St. James-Assiniboia, we saw during the period of 1990 to 1999 a net increase of taxes of \$241, but, during our first term of office, from 1999 to 2003, we have seen a net decrease of \$16. The differences are dramatic.

We have kept taxation low for homeowners. We have continued to make movement on that, and in this Budget this year, we also added another incremental increase to the seniors' property tax credit. We saw four years ago, when we were first elected, the seniors' property tax credit was worth \$625. With the move we made in this Budget, the seniors' tax credit has been increased by \$175 to a total of \$800. That is tax relief, which will be much appreciated by people maintaining themselves in their homes.

Capital investment and health facilities have been on the agenda. We have seen the largest increase in capital spending for the Health Sciences Centre. That is the single largest capital project in the history of the province with over \$100 million for new operating rooms. Of course, that facility will serve all Manitobans. When we go to Brandon, Manitoba, we see a \$58-million investment in the Brandon Hospital that provides services to that entire region.

We have seen innovation in this province through the Broadband Initiative. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines (Ms. Mihychuk) has been intimately involved in that. We are seeing, with Manitoba Hydro, with our provincial data network, with investments by the Manitoba Telephone System, with the rollout of the Broadband, services to communities all across this province. Small-, large- and medium-sized communities will now have access to the latest in technology, to improve their ability to be competitive as we go forward.

So we are taking a balanced approach, Mr. Speaker, that has key investments and programs that are universally valued, such as health care and education; a program that keeps taxes

affordable; a program that sees our Crown corporations offering rates for their services that are the lowest in Canada, or the lowest in North America, for auto insurance and electricity.

We are seeing investments in education to ensure young people are well equipped to enter the labour market. We are seeing a reduction in young people leaving this province that we have never seen before.

We are seeing a program on immigration and refugees where we have had 4500 people come to this province this year. Through our Provincial Nominee Program, we will be doubling the number of people in this program to 10 000 as we go forward. That program of immigration will be supported by our welcoming culture in this province, a culture that does not criticize people for trying to speak another language, a program that welcomes diversity, both in language and culture, in this province. I know it is one that will see the diversity of Manitoba people continue to expand, a program that will see Filipino people, East Indian people, Polish people, people from Iraq, people from Croatia, people from all across the world make Manitoba the place they want to live, and to make Manitoba the place they want to raise their families. Any other themes you would like me to—

An Honourable Member: Endangered species.

Mr. Selinger: It is true we have a Watchable Wildlife Program that we have announced in this Budget, and that is not just people in this Legislature that will be watched. There will be wildlife all across this province now that we all have a program. We have announced more provincial parks. I know the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Ashton) is working on more announcements in that regard. We are up to about 8.5 percent of the territory of this province being designated parks. We would like to see that increase to perhaps 10 percent. We have key protected areas that we want to convert to parks. We have an eco-tourism initiative that the Minister of Culture and Heritage (Mr. Robinson) will be championing as we go forward. We recognize the value of the tourism industry in this province. Tourism will continue to be an industry that we will grow in the future.

Manitoba has some of the best festivals. In this province, the Festival du Voyageur, which we see every year, is the largest festival in western Canada.

C'est un des plus importants festivals dans l'Ouest du Canada, probablement le festival le plus important en dehors du Québec. Et en partenariat avec le Québec dans notre nouveau jumelage avec cette province, il sera un festival très important pour l'avenir de notre province.

Translation

It is one of the most important festivals in western Canada, probably the most important festival outside of Québec. And in partnership with Québec, in our new affiliation with this province, it will be a very important festival for the future of our province.

We also have Folklorama. We have the Folk Festival. We have the Jazz Festival. We have the Fringe Festival. All of these things will enable our tourism industry to grow in this province.

* (17:00)

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

The hour being 5 p.m., pursuant to Rule 32(6), I am interrupting proceedings to put the questions necessary to dispose of the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the Government and all amendments to that motion.

The question before the House now is the proposed amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray) to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

That the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "House" and substituting the following:

therefore regrets this Budget ignores the present and future needs of Manitobans by:

(a) failing to offer any vision and to reflect the priorities of Manitobans;

(b) failing to provide a long-term tax reduction strategy that addresses the fact that middle-income Manitobans are now, under the Doer government, the highest taxed west of New Brunswick and our business taxes are not competitive;

(c) failing to provide a sustainable provincial spending plan by introducing a budget with a spending/tax cut ratio of 11 to 1;

(d) failing to reimburse, as promised, the Fiscal Stabilization Fund of the \$150 million "temporary transfer" taken in the 2001-02 fiscal year;

(e) failing to provide a strategy to address the exodus of Manitobans to other provinces, an average of 12 Manitobans each day;

(f) failing to address the challenges in health care, including: providing a cardiac care system that meets the needs of Manitobans in a timely fashion, ending hallway medicine within six months as promised, reducing waiting lists for tests and appointments, and recruiting and retaining health care professionals; and

(g) failing to provide adequate supports to Manitoba's agricultural sector.

As a consequence, the Government has thereby lost the confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the amendment, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Formal Vote

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Official Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

The question before the House now is a proposed amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No.

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Enns, Faurschou, Gilleshammer, Hawranik, Helwer, Laurendeau, Loewen, Maguire, Mitchelson, Murray, Penner (Emerson), Pitura, Reimer, Rocan, Schuler, Smith (Fort Garry), Stefanson, Tweed.

Nays

Aglugub, Allan, Ashton, Barrett, Caldwell, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Friesen, Gerrard, Jennissen, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Mihychuk, Nevakshonoff, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith (Brandon West), Struthers, Wowchuk.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 23, Nays 31.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the Yeas have it.

Formal Vote

Mr. Laurendeau: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker. We have to find out where he is.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

Order. Two things before I call the recorded vote. There seems to be a flash appearing somewhere, and if there is any member taking pictures, I would ask them to refrain because it is against our rules to do that. So I would ask the co-operation of all the members.

Order. Before putting the vote, I would like to ask the co-operation of all honourable members about a little decorum because it is very hard for the page and the Clerk to hear each

other. So I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members, please.

The question before the House is the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the Government.

* (17:10)

Division

A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Aglugub, Allan, Ashton, Barrett, Caldwell, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Friesen, Gerrard, Jennissen, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Mihychuk, Nevakshonoff, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith (Brandon West), Struthers, Wowchuk.

Nays

Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Enns, Faurschou, Gilleshammer, Hawranik, Helwer, Laurendeau, Loewen, Maguire, Mitchelson, Murray, Penner (Emerson), Pitura, Reimer, Rocan, Schuler, Smith (Fort Garry), Stefanson, Tweed.

Madam Clerk: Yeas, 31, Nays 23.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, 5:30?

Mr. Speaker: The hour being—before moving the proposal, the honourable Member for Lakeside is up on a point of order, so I have to entertain the point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, it is a long-time, long-held tradition in this Chamber that, on the successful passing of the Budget, the Minister of Finance passes out and distributes the individual Estimates, the books of the various departments, for consideration in the Committee of Supply to be held. I simply ask why the break from this long traditional rule of passing out the Estimates books.

Mr. Mackintosh: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, in keeping with long-standing tradition, the Estimates for the departments coming up, as agreed by the Opposition, were distributed during the tabling of reports in routine proceedings.

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Lakeside, he does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 5:30 p.m.? [Agreed]

The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

CORRIGENDUM

Vol. LIII No. 16 - 10 a.m., Friday, April 25, 2003, on page 629, the second paragraph in the second column should read:

I am proud that our Government is investing \$16 million a year and has kept

Inadvertently, "\$60 million" was reported.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 01, 2003

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