



Fourth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

STANDING COMMITTEE

on

LAW AMENDMENTS

42 Elizabeth II

Chairperson
Mr. Bob Rose
Constituency of Turtle Mountain



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AMENDMENTS

Thursday, July 8, 1993

TIME — 9 a.m.

LOCATION — Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHAIRPERSON — Mr. Bob Rose (Turtle Mountain)

ATTENDANCE - 11 — QUORUM - 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Messrs. Downey, Gilleshammer, McCrae, Hon. Mrs. Vodrey

Ms. Friesen, Mr. Gaudry, Ms. Gray, Messrs. Martindale, Pallister, Mrs. Render, Mr. Rose

APPEARING:

Jack Penner, MLA for Emerson

WITNESSES:

Terry Peterson, Private Citizen

Brett Buors, Private Citizen

Gary Joynson, Private Citizen

Corrine Normand, Youth Employment Service

Laurie Leveille, Winnipeg Adult Education Centre

Brian Chappell, Winnipeg Adult Education Centre

Barbara Teskey, Private Citizen

David Turner, The Manitoba Teachers' Society

Ryan Craig, Private Citizen

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS:

Lorraine Moore, Private Citizen

Lori Balharry, Private Citizen

Lynne Swabuk, Private Citizen

MATTER UNDER DISCUSSION:

Bill 32—The Social Allowances Amendment Act

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Good morning. Would the Standing Committee on Law Amendments please come to order.

This morning the committee will be considering the following bill, Bill 32, The Social Allowances Amendment Act. For the committee's information, copies of the bill are available on the table behind me. Also for the committee's information and the information of presenters, this committee is scheduled to meet again tonight at 7 p.m.

It is our custom to hear presentations from the public before detailed considerations of the bill. I have before me a list of persons' names registered to speak to Bill 32. For the committee's benefit, copies of this list have been distributed; also, for the public's benefit, a copy of this list is at the table at the back of the room. I believe it is also posted at the door into the committee room.

At this time I would like to canvass the audience and ask if there are any other persons who wish to make a presentation who are not currently on the list. If so, would you please identify yourself to the staff at the back of the room, and your name will be added to the list.

The committee has received two written submissions for Bill 32. They are from Lorraine Moore, private citizen, and Lori Balharry, private citizen. Copies have been made available for committee members and were distributed at the beginning of the meeting. Copies of written submissions appear at the back of the transcript of the committee's meeting.

Does the committee wish to put a time limit on presentations? No? Very well. It is our practice to hear from out-of-town presenters first. Are there any presenters in the audience this morning who are from out of town? The honourable Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) does not count. Hearing none, we will move then directly to the list of persons wishing to make presentations.

I will call Ms. Rita Emerson, private citizen. Mr. Terry Peterson, private citizen.

Mr. Peterson, do you have a written copy to be distributed.

Mr. Terry Peterson (Private Citizen): Yes, I do.

Mr. Chairperson: It is being distributed. You may proceed.

Mr. Peterson: With education, you can go a long way. You can make new businesses in factories and hire people who are on welfare and unemployment. If you take away education, you take away jobs. It is like the Third World where there is no education and no work. Why does the Manitoba government want to go backwards?

On welfare you get paid to stay home and not go to school. With bosses wanting at least a Grade 12 diploma, how can you get a job and go off welfare? Part-time school will not work. The welfare has a Gateway program for people who are on welfare to go to Red River Community College, yet the welfare will not let people on welfare go to full-time school if they are not in the Gateway program.

The Manitoba government makes all the welfare laws, saying that if you are on full-time welfare you cannot go to full-time school. The Manitoba government is taking away Student Social Allowances. Girls who do not have a Grade 12 diploma and cannot get work or go to school to get a Grade 12 diploma will have to become hookers to keep off welfare, and that will be the fault of the Manitoba government.

The Manitoba government cuts their own pay, which is a drop in the bucket, but they are crying the blues. But they cut off our lives from education. A student loan does not work. The student loan will pay your schooling and your cost of living until you graduate. Then you have to pay it all back with interest. How can you pay back the schooling plus the cost of living plus interest and at the same time pay your current cost of living?

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much, Mr. Peterson. Sometimes committee members like to dialogue with the presenters with questions and comments. Are you prepared to do that?

Mr. Peterson: Sorry about that.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you. That is fine.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Chairperson, I would like to thank Mr. Peterson for coming forward and presenting his views today. I would like to ask you, Mr. Peterson, if you have been enrolled in the Student Social Allowances Program?

Mr. Peterson: Yes, I have.

Mr. Martindale: For how many years were you on the program?

Mr. Peterson: It is like this, welfare does not tell you nothing. When you find out something, it is only because you did some digging. They do not tell you anything about what goes on, what you have got coming to you. It is all secretive and hush-hush.

I stumbled on to it accidentally, and so I was only on there for the first term—I mean, this last term. That is only as long as I have been on there.

Mr. Martindale: What grade are you in?

Mr. Peterson: I am in basic education, because I am not even in Grade 9 yet as far as education goes. I am working hard to get there. My goal is to finish at a Grade 12, but go and get 300 so I can go to University of Manitoba and take a course in fashion designing there, to become a fashion designer. Plus, before I go there, I would go to the art course on figure drawing at the Winnipeg Art Gallery so that I know how to draw the human body so I can draw fashions on people.

Mr. Martindale: I presume that you are employable; therefore, you would be on city social assistance.

Mr. Peterson: Yes, I am on city social assistance now.

Mr. Martindale: Do you know what the rules are for going to school and being on social assistance now that the student social assistance program is being eliminated?

Mr. Peterson: Yes, and I was at a meeting. What they are doing, I think this is terrible, it is a crime, it is criminal. They are putting a bunch of us students—they are separating us from the welfare people. They put us all into one big room; they lecture us. They told us that we have to be clean-cut. Now, I wash my hair and keep my hair clean, and I keep my beard. It is discrimination to tell us to get haircuts and shave. That is against the law.

Also, they are trying right now, so that we have no chance of getting to school, to cram us into jobs that are not suitable. They are trying to cram us into any job they can force us into right now. They are working hard to cram us into jobs, where other welfare cases, they are not even trying to push them into a job. The object of that is so that we have no chance of getting into school in the fall.

That is a crime, because we need our education so that we can get better jobs and get off welfare.

Mr. Martindale: Well, I assume that you are aware that when you are on city welfare, you have to be available for work and looking for work, but I presume you would like to be in school full time. Is that right?

Mr. Peterson: Yes, I would.

Mr. Martindale: How many courses can you take? For what period of time can you be in school and on social assistance? Did they tell you that?

Mr. Peterson: Two courses they allow you.

Mr. Martindale: Two courses, and you do not have Grade 9 yet?

Mr. Peterson: No, I do not.

Mr. Martindale: At the rate of two courses, how long will it take you to finish your high school education?

Mr. Peterson: It will take a super long time, and at this point I have got a lot of recommendations. I am good worker. I work hard; I have got a lot of recommendations. But bosses are getting picky nowadays. They are telling me, you at least should have a Grade 12 or we will not hire you. I have been told that by a number of bosses. So it is like, I cannot get a job either. So I am forced with no job, and then I am forced with no education. It is a crime.

Mr. Martindale: By bosses, I presume you mean employers. Is that right?

Mr. Peterson: Yes.

Mr. Martindale: So, when you have applied for positions, you have been told that you do not have the educational requirements because you do not have Grade 12.

Mr. Peterson: Right, and so therefore I am forced out of a job. Can I make a statement, too? I would like to say, a part of our bad economy, a lot of the blame goes on bosses. I will tell you why, as I see it. A lot of the bosses keep the wages low, very low. They jack their prices up very high so that you cannot afford to buy their product. A lot of people cannot afford it so that they are not buying products. I have seen this happen; it happened at two places I worked. They folded up.

Because their prices are kept high, no one is buying their product, and then they start cutting jobs because there is no one buying. They start

cutting jobs. You are doing double work; you are doing yours plus somebody else's job. Your pay stays the same; it does not go up. Eventually, it keeps on until eventually they fold up. If the bosses would either give you a higher raise so that you can afford to buy products, everything would circulate and go good.

Or, if they could not do that, they could at least lower the prices where people could afford them, it would circulate and go good. So bosses are a part of our bad economy today.

Mr. Martindale: Do you anticipate that in September you will be working part-time, or working full-time and going to school part-time, or what do think is going to happen to you in the future?

Mr. Peterson: I have two part-time jobs lined up already. These jobs are lined up—because I have no Grade 12 diploma, to get a job is hard for me. Because of that, it is like I am being forced into prostitution because I am going to become a figure model at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Also, I am going to have to become a stripper to support myself if I go to college.

Mr. Martindale: While you are holding down these two part-time jobs, you will be trying to go back to school as well?

Mr. Peterson: Yes, I am going to try my hardest to get back into school. I need my education.

Mr. Martindale: How many years do you think it is going to take you to finish high school?

Mr. Peterson: I have no idea.

* (0910)

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Could you tell us why you did not complete high school or junior high school in the first place? Do you have any sense of that, of why that happened to you?

Mr. Peterson: I completed it. I graduated in 1973 with a special education diploma. But the high schools do not tell you anything either. When I was in high school, my teacher never once told us we can better ourselves and get a better education. I stumbled on to that accidentally, too. I stumbled on that through Manpower. I was applying for a job, and they told me to see one of their workers. I saw a worker, and she tried so that I could get training at Red River Community College.

I took a test and I failed because I could not understand a lot of the words. I could not even

read the words or know how to even do it. My spelling level was not that high. My mathematics is not that high, and they said I was not eligible at all for Red River. So I cannot even get a training course there.

So then she told me about Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, and that is how I found out about it.

Ms. Friesen: It seems all along that it has been very difficult for you as a member of the public to get information about what is available to people at every step of the way, even starting with the end of your high school years.

Would you have any recommendations for the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey), who is here, or for any of the other government ministers on what could be done about this?

Mr. Peterson: Yes, I think that for schools it should be their job to tell students, those who are in special education especially, that there is hope for them and that Winnipeg Adult Education Centre does exist and what it is all about so they can go on at their high school and finish their education.

Ms. Friesen: When you first presented your paper, you talked about some very specific plans that you had had, some very clear goals, where you wanted to go in further education. Have you given some thought now to where you will be five years from now as a result of this bill?

Mr. Peterson: No, I have not. If the bill is put back on and they decide not to cancel it, I plan to finish my education and then, like I say, become a fashion designer, and I will be hiring people off welfare and off unemployment when I make it. I know what it is like to be there. I want to hire people off there and get them on their feet.

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Just for clarification, you said you graduated in 1973, from a—

Mr. Peterson: Tech high school in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Mr. Gillehammer: In Minnesota?

Mr. Peterson: Yes.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): I do not have any questions for Mr. Peterson. They were asked by my colleagues, but I just want to say, thank you very much for coming this morning, and I commend you for giving us your presentation and giving us a bit of insight into the program and some of the

difficulties you face. I wish you a lot of luck in the future.

Mr. Chalrperson: Thank you very much, Mr. Peterson, for your presentation this morning.

I call Shirley Neufeld, private citizen. Naomi Clarke, private citizen. Silvana Rojas, private citizen. Brett Buors, private citizen.

Mr. Brett Buors (Private Citizen): Good morning, I do not have a—

Mr. Chalrperson: Excuse me. Do you have a written presentation?

Mr. Buors: No, I do not.

Mr. Chalrperson: It is not necessary. We just have to ask for the record. You may proceed.

Mr. Buors: I would just like to do my best to try and get this Bill 32 back, in effect. I just started back to school the last semester, and I do not see what the point was if I cannot go back next year.

I technically have two more years of schooling left, but with a little bit of extra work next year I can graduate with Grade 12 and Red River credits. That is all I have to say.

Mr. Chalrperson: Thank you very much.

Ms. Friesen: You said that you had the prospect of between one and two years left in your schooling. What level are you at now?

Mr. Buors: This year I just completed Grade 10 and Grade 11 car mechanics. I have 11 credits left that I need, and I am eligible to get 10 in the next school year, but I have already talked to all my teachers and I can make up the extra credit on my own time with my teachers to graduate at the end of next year.

Ms. Friesen: That is, if you had the opportunity to go to school full time, you could do that. What alternatives are you looking at as a result of this bill?

Mr. Buors: I am trying to get a job, but there are none out there, so I am back in school. I quit school when I was 15, with family troubles. I was working ever since, and the jobs just kept getting worse. Finally, I just kept losing them and losing them. I had nothing else to do, so I figured I should go back to school.

Ms. Friesen: When you say you quit school or you left school because of family difficulties, have those family difficulties changed? Do you have the support of your family now?

Mr. Buors: My father lives out of town, and my mother and myself do not get along very well. I talk to her very seldom.

Ms. Friesen: And so in order to go to school full-time next year you would need family support. Is that family support going to be there for you?

Mr. Buors: No, it is not.

Ms. Friesen: I am not sure if Hansard is recording all the answers. It is just a formal thing.

What prospects, what kind of jobs are you looking at next year, either full-time or part-time? How are you going to support yourself this coming year?

Mr. Buors: I am trying to get a job, any kind of job. I do not care if its minimum wage, as long as I can make enough money that I can pay my rent and buy food and go to school.

Ms. Friesen: Could you tell us about what job search you have been involved in so far? You talked about the last few years of your experience, where the jobs kept getting worse and it became more difficult for you to get the jobs. What kind of experience are you having now in looking for jobs?

Mr. Buors: I was a courier for a little less than a year. I worked at a lumber store for a few months. I worked at a parts shop for cars for a couple of months, various other jobs. I have applications in at Woolco, everywhere in the East Kildonan-Elmwood area that you could think of, all the hardware stores, The Bay, Eaton's, Woolco, all the little stores. There is nothing out there. They all want Grade 12, and I do not have it yet.

Ms. Friesen: Thank you. It sounds as though with all those applications—how many applications do you have out there? Do you know?

Mr. Buors: At least 40 or 50.

Ms. Friesen: It sounds as though you are making a full-time job of looking for work.

Mr. Buors: That is right.

Ms. Friesen: Have you had experience in the recent past, say, over the summers, in looking for work with the level of education you have? How successful have you been?

Mr. Buors: I have a part-time job right now doing lawn work, but I do not have a licence until next year. If I had a licence, I could get a job, no problem, but I lost it. I am having a really bad time finding a job.

Ms. Friesen: By licence, do you mean driver's licence?

Mr. Buors: Yes.

Ms. Friesen: What kind of plans did you have for post-secondary education? Had you thought of that or were you going to stay at the Grade 12 level for a while?

Mr. Buors: Well, I have talked to my teachers and the counsellors at the school I go to, and they all told me it would be better for me to stay in that school, because I could go to Red River next year. It would not be a problem, except in enrolling; I would not be able to get in for a couple of years. I thought, and my teachers told me, that if I stayed in school, I could get my Grade 12 plus my first-year credits at Red River, and then when I enroll next year, I put an application in at Red River for the remainder of the course.

Ms. Friesen: The kind of situation that you have described to us is one that we have often asked the minister and ministers about in the House, and the answer that we have got consistently is that people in your position should go back home. Could you tell us while those ministers are sitting here why that is not an option for you?

Mr. Buors: I am going on for 21, and my parents cannot afford to keep me at home. They are having financial difficulties as well.

Ms. Friesen: Thank you. How much do you earn, say, by the month, when you have a part-time job?

Mr. Buors: The present job I have got?

Ms. Friesen: Yes.

Mr. Buors: One hundred dollars a month.

Ms. Friesen: Can you give us an idea of how you budget on that? How do you eat, how do you pay for rent? Do you share an apartment or what?

Mr. Buors: I am on social assistance right now.

Ms. Friesen: And have you talked to the social assistance people at the City of Winnipeg, I assume?

* (0920)

Mr. Buors: Yes, I was there yesterday morning.

Ms. Friesen: Have you talked to them about the possibility of going to school, of finding some way of completing your education?

Mr. Buors: The only way I would be able to complete my Grade 12 through social assistance, it would take me minimum three years.

Ms. Friesen: Have you worked out the cost to the city of keeping you on social assistance for three years, compared to keeping you for one year in education?

Mr. Buors: No, I have not. It would cost about the same amount to keep me on social assistance for one year as it would to keep me on Student Social Allowances where I would be able to get a job after a year.

Ms. Friesen: I think your calculations are right, that at the end of one year you would have a Grade 12. As you said, doing some of it on extra time with the extra help of your teachers, who are prepared to work with you on their own time as well, it seemed to me you had a straightforward plan and a hardworking plan to get to Grade 12, where you would then have other opportunities. What has been cut away from you is that rung on the ladder, in fact, that would make any difference to you.

Mr. Buors: That is right.

Ms. Friesen: Is there anything else that you would like to say from your own experience of people in your own class whom you have met and whom you have been at school with, anything that should be said to the ministers and to the government here who are cutting this program?

Mr. Buors: Just that I am in a power mechanics course; that is automotive repair. The new technology they are coming out with now, the school I go to is the first school in the city that has a compulsory electronics course for the power mechanics department. Who is going to fix these cars if they are not going to allow people to go to school? The people that are 15, 16 in high school are not serious about school.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, I think that your observation on the labour market is a very good one. In fact, what we do see in the labour market is the demand for automotive, electronic repair and servicing and that kind of thing. So to be in that school and to be in that program, I think, is a very good and sensible choice and one that would have benefited you and benefited the Manitoba economy.

I want to thank you for coming and explaining to us your particular situation.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Chairperson, the Winnipeg Free Press editorial of Sunday, June 13, said in their lead paragraph, and I quote: "Premier Gary Filmon is putting himself into Manitoba history as the premier who kicked poor people out of high school and into welfare. Why he wants this reputation he alone can explain." I think I should add that the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), who is sitting here beside the Chair of this committee, is doing the same thing since he is responsible for administering The Social Allowances Act. Do you agree with that statement, that by terminating the social allowances program or the Student Social Allowances Program, people like yourself are being kicked out of school?

Mr. Buors: That is right. I was talking to a worker at city social assistance yesterday, and she said that they have a caseload of 1,000 students so far. So that is bringing up the social services department there. Their funds are going to be higher.

Mr. Martindale: I presume that you mean people that were formerly enrolled in the provincial Student Social Allowances Program who are now on city social services?

Mr. Buors: That is right.

Mr. Martindale: Did your worker explain to you the work incentive policy of the City of Winnipeg—that is, how much money you can earn before it is deducted dollar for dollar?

Mr. Buors: Ninety-five dollars.

Mr. Martindale: Ninety-five dollars. Okay, so even if you do work part-time and you are on city welfare, you can only keep \$95 a month.

Mr. Buors: That is right.

Mr. Martindale: Thank you.

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): Yes, I think I heard you say that students who are in school right now around the age of 15 or 16 do not seem to care too much. What do you mean by that?

Mr. Buors: Five years ago when I was in school, I was not serious about it. For students, when you are 15 years old, it is the law that you have to be in school. So that is the only reason a lot of 16-year-olds go. There is so much drugs and alcohol out there right now, that that is all a lot of people care about—students. I am not one of those people. I want to be in the workforce, but I cannot do it without the education.

Mrs. Render: Why did you drop out of school?

Mr. Buors: Due to family problems.

Mrs. Render: You could not remain at home and felt that you had to get out into the workforce, is that correct? Thank you.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Chairperson, I would like to follow up on Mrs. Render's questions because I think she is on to something very important here. I hope that there are teachers who are going to present later this morning that we might ask similar questions of, because I have been talking to a high school principal who says that the students who have returned to school under the Student Social Allowances Program are much better motivated. They make better students; they try harder; they work harder; and they complete their high school much faster. Is that true in your opinion or in your experience?

Mr. Buors: Yes, it is. There are, that I know of in my shop class, two students that were on Student Social Allowances. We have the highest two marks in the class. There is one student that was 15 years old, and he failed; two students that were 16 years old, and they failed as well.

Mr. Martindale: So what this government is doing is kicking out of school some of the best students, and best-motivated students, would you agree with that?

Mr. Buors: Some of them, yes.

Ms. Friesen: You mentioned that you were going to a particular school which had a new vocational program and had the new machinery and equipment and teaching for that. If next year, in the worst-case scenario, you can only go to school either in the evenings or part time, will you still be able to have access to those courses and those workshops? Will they be taught in the evening?

Mr. Buors: No, they will not. The school I go to, you have to take a minimum of three courses, and the city social services department only allows two classes per day.

Ms. Friesen: So that in those two classes per day, will you be able to have access to the vocational courses that you are already enrolled in?

Mr. Buors: I would have access to them, but I would not have access to the power mechanics department that I am also in. That is like a full-time job; every morning I go for two classes every day

throughout the whole school year, and the rest of the day is for academics.

Ms. Friesen: So what you will be able to do, over perhaps two or three times as long a period, is that you would be able to complete the academic part. You will eventually, four years from now, perhaps, have a Grade 12, but it will not have the vocational part that you wanted and that you were set on the path of.

Mr. Buors: That is right.

Ms. Friesen: That, to me, of course, seems quite counterproductive. I am sure it does to you too.

Mr. Chairperson: If there are no further questions, I thank you very much, Mr. Buors, for your presentation this morning.

Mr. Buors: Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairperson: Just for the information of the committee, on procedure, we are trying to develop perhaps just a little less formal procedure inasmuch as trying to keep the flow between the presenters and the questioners. I have discussed this with Hansard, and they really do not require recognition of the presenter during the exchange as long as there are just two of you. They have told me that they will certainly inform the Chair if it is not working, but I would ask the committee members to wait to be recognized, just to facilitate that discussion.

I will now call Jason Hansen, R. B. Russell Student Advisory Council. Gary Joynson, private citizen.

Do you have a written presentation, Mr. Joynson?

Mr. Gary Joynson (Private Citizen): Yes, I do.

Mr. Chairperson: It is being distributed now. You may begin.

Mr. Joynson: Hello, my name is Gary Joynson. I reside in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I would like to express my concerns about Bill 32 and the cutbacks to the Student Social Allowances Program. In particular, I refer to the withdrawal of funding to the Student Social Allowances office. To people like myself, these offices are our only hope of getting upgrading to continue into a higher form of education.

I have just completed a semester of night school at Adult Education Centre. I need four more Grade 12 credits to complete Grade 12. My plan was to enroll in Adult Ed in September, full-time days, but

with the death of Student Social Allowances, now I cannot do this.

* (0930)

To provide you with some background information, I am currently on parole from Stony Mountain, Rockwood farm, and I was released last March. Due to a back injury, I cannot work at my old job of construction. I have a letter from my doctor stating my injuries, and that I need to be retrained for another line of work.

Because of this, I had to go on city welfare to provide for my welfare. City rules state that I am still able to work and so would not put me on provincial welfare. I went back to school to get off the welfare rolls, but I am told that I can only take two credits at one time so as to be available for work. The Catch-22 here is I need training for new work, but cannot get it. By taking two classes a semester, it would take me three semesters to finish Grade 12. By letting me take only one more class in one semester, I would finish in two semesters. This, in turn, would save the city and province, because my wife and I have temporary custody of our granddaughter, many thousands of dollars.

I will explain how this is done. We receive \$29.36 a day plus the rent. The rent is \$350 a month. We receive our money every 28 days and that comes up to \$1,172.08 including rent. Over a period six months, which is the time it would take me to finish a semester, that would add up to a sum of \$7,032.48. All of this money would have to be paid out because I was not allowed to take three classes a day, but was only allowed to take two.

It seems contradictory to say that by cutting student aid the government will save money. I have proven that what the government will save on one hand, it will have to pay out on the other. I do not want to stay on welfare for the rest of my life. But the rules state that I must do it on my own, or I will have to remain at home and be a drain on the city coffers.

I would rather be working and paying taxes, but I am hitting all of these stumbling blocks that prevent my doing so. This is only one case in hundreds. When you multiply the money paid to me by all of the other cases in the same situation as I am, you can see that the government is not saving any money, but it is spending even more so now.

The reason for myself taking upgrading is so that I can take the business administration course at Red River. I thank you for your time, and I hope that you will take what I have said into consideration.

If you can see at the bottom, it has a piece from the Winnipeg Free Press from June 16, 1993, called An Albatross. This is from the Premier of Nova Scotia, I believe, that says: "Social programs that foster dependency on government are an albatross around the neck of Atlantic Canada's economic future. . . . Efforts to encourage welfare recipients to go back to school or take job training while receiving benefits are a step in the right direction."

This currently applies to Manitoba right now, in my opinion.

Mr. Chalrperson: Thank you very much, Mr. Joynton.

Mr. Martindale: Thank you very much, Mr. Joynton, for an excellent presentation. I would like to ask you a few questions, beginning with your honesty in telling us that you are on parole from Stony Mountain.

I have visited Stony Mountain, and I have visited inmates at Headingley jail and at the Remand Centre. So I know a little bit about people in those institutions. Would you say that there are a lot of people there who have not finished high school?

Mr. Joynton: In those institutions, yes.

Mr. Martindale: Do you know if other former inmates like yourself have been enrolled in the Student Social Allowances Program?

Mr. Joynton: Yes, they have. My probation officer tells me of several cases of parolees that have gone to Student Social Allowances, and with all the checks and balances that were in the program already, it was very hard to try and rip them off.

Now that they are not around, several have to go to assistance, and with more time on their hands, some of them get reinvolved in crime and go back, therefore creating another drain on provincial funding by having to pay for a prisoner.

Mr. Martindale: I presume this is because it is much more expensive to have people sitting in institutions than going to school, including through the student social assistance program. Would you agree with that?

Mr. Joynson: Yes, I believe to pay for a prisoner is approximately \$30,000 to \$50,000 a year. In my situation, by letting me go to school for one year, it would cost maybe \$10,000, \$12,000 or a bit better. Yes, it would take a little bit more than that, but it would be a lot cheaper to put me in school and let me take the education training than to have me go back to prison where I would be doing nothing.

Mr. Martindale: You have also pointed out in your presentation that in your view it is more expensive to have you on city social assistance than on the Student Social Allowances of the provincial government because you are going to spend longer on city social assistance in order to complete your education because you can only take two courses at a time.

So it would seem that this is not going to save the government money. We have been asking the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) why he is doing this, in Question Period and in Estimates. He has given us a number of reasons, none of which we agree with, and none of which, I think, are the real reasons.

One of them, he said, was that this was the only province in Canada that had this kind of program. Now, since then, my colleague from Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) has done some research and found out that that is not true. The minister, I think, is doing it to offload expenses to the City of Winnipeg, but he has never admitted that on the record. So why do you think this Conservative government is cancelling the Student Social Allowances Program?

Mr. Joynson: I really do not know, but I intend to enroll in night school again this fall, and at the present time I can take two courses. I need four credits of Grade 12, one of which is a Math 300. I have just finished my Math 190 at Grade 10. So now I have to take Math 290, and then a 300. So there are five credits altogether that I must get, and that will take three semesters. As you can see that by taking two at a time, it will take six months longer and cost over \$7,000.

I do not know why the government is closing Student Social Allowances. It just seems, in my opinion, a very foolish move.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I would like to correct my honourable friend from Burrows (Mr. Martindale). Manitoba is the only province where there was a

special category of social allowances whereby social allowance recipients can attend school.

I would also indicate to him that within our other social allowances program, our Single Parent Job Access or other training programs, we have many, many social allowance recipients who are attending training institutions.

Ms. Friesen: The minister is defining this program very narrowly, of course. It suits his purpose to do so, but there are many programs across Canada in five other provinces where students are given social assistance in order to complete their Grade 12 education, not just as the minister is saying here, to enter into particular training programs.

These are ones where students do get a Grade 12 at the end, which gives them the flexibility for jobs or for further education. That was one of the significant aspects of this program. It did give you the opportunity, as you yourself pointed out, to go on to Red River. New Careers, and some of the other programs, Single Parent Job Access, which the minister is talking about, do not give students that opportunity.

This is, in effect, a way—the Student Social Allowances Program was a way of enabling students to get onto the educational ladder. What the government has done here is cut away those bottom rungs of the ladder and left people like you and others who have presented really with very, very few opportunities.

I wanted to ask you about the budget that you presented here. Is this what you received on Student Social Allowances, or is this what you currently receive from the city?

Mr. Joynson: This is what I am currently receiving from the city. I do not know what I would get on Student Social Allowances, but I am married. I have two children at home. Plus we have temporary custody of our granddaughter. I am 36 years old right now, and most training courses offered by the unemployment insurance offices in the city go up to 25-26 years old. I fall out of that realm. Therefore, I would like to go back and take a training course or something similar, but I cannot do that because I am too old for that now as is stated here. I want to go back to school to get my Grade 12 and then on to Red River, and then I can get a job and start paying taxes and will not be a drain.

With the premier of an eastern province encouraging welfare recipients to go back to school or job retraining, that is a step in the right direction, as it says, and I hope that our government here will take that in consideration and do the same thing.

* (0940)

Ms. Friesen: During the time you were in Stony Mountain and Rockwood, what kind of education courses were available to you?

Mr. Joynson: I applied for and got a mail-order type Grade 12 English course. That was one English course, and it was about this big. I was released before I ever finished it. They do not have full-time—well, they have full-time day schools for inmates with a Grade 10 or lower. My level of education, right now I am working on my Grade 12. I just finished my English 300 course with a 70 average. I finished my 190 or Grade 10 math with a 89 average. I refer to some of the questions that were put before. I have been out of school for a terribly long time, but I am not a dummy by any means. I went back and things are sticking with me more now than what they did before.

I do have a back injury. Like I said, it is a Catch-22. I am told I need to be retrained, but every time I want to be retrained somebody throws a stumbling block in my path, and it is like they want to keep me at home on welfare rather than trying to get a job or working.

Ms. Friesen: So, while you were in Stony Mountain, you took advantage of what was available, which was essentially a correspondence course?

Mr. Joynson: Yes.

Ms. Friesen: Do you know any reason why there is nothing for people beyond a Grade 10 level in the federal institutions?

Mr. Joynson: My only opinion there is they only had two teachers at Rockwood, and there were not all that many students, considering the population there, but to save money they do not want to go up in the higher levels. That is just my opinion.

Ms. Friesen: Are you the sole support of your family?

Mr. Joynson: Yes, I am.

Ms. Friesen: How large is that family? You say you have a granddaughter, a wife—

Mr. Joynson: A granddaughter and two sons and my wife, yes. Both my sons are 15. One is my stepson and one is my real son.

Ms. Friesen: Are both of those children in school still?

Mr. Joynson: Yes, they are. They have just graduated Grade 10.

Ms. Friesen: So, by providing for you to complete your Grade 12, in effect, what the community would be doing is providing for a large family as well. It is not just providing for one individual here.

Mr. Joynson: That is correct.

Ms. Friesen: Is this budget that you presented here for all five of you?

Mr. Joynson: Yes, it is.

Ms. Friesen: Can you give me some idea of how you budget that?

Mr. Joynson: It is very tough.

Ms. Friesen: Two 15-year-old boys?

Mr. Joynson: Yes, my one son has size 14 feet, so he goes through clothes quite rapidly, and we have to try and get the clothes, get the food. He is six-foot-four and has a very big appetite.

Ms. Friesen: I can appreciate that life must be very hard, and it is a very hard blow to have this rung on the ladder on education taken away from you.

Mr. Joynson: Yes, that is why I am trying my best to somehow get the funding to go back to class. If I have to do it by staying on city assistance and taking two classes a week, I will do that. But I will get the education one way or another; and, if I cannot get it here, I will do it on my own somehow, but it is making life rough for not only myself but my family.

Ms. Friesen: Thank you.

Mr. Brian Pallster (Portage la Prairie): Thanks very much for your comments, Mr. Joynson. Just by way of understanding more fully your situation background, how old were you when you dropped out of school?

Mr. Joynson: I believe I was about 16.

Mr. Pallster: What were the reasons that you chose to drop out at that time?

Mr. Joynson: Cockiness. I did not think I needed it at the time. When I dropped out of school, jobs were a lot easier to find. If one place would not hire

you, you would go next door and get hired there. So, just like I said, cockiness led to me withdrawing from school.

Mr. Pallster: It is fair to say that you are impressing on your 15-year-olds the importance of staying in school, I guess.

Mr. Joynson: I sure am trying, and they are not all that interested in staying in school, but like I said, look at me, I do not want this to happen to you in 20 years.

Mr. Pallster: Thanks.

Ms. Gray: You are the second presenter that has talked about 15- and 16-year-olds who do not necessarily want to stay in school and want to drop out. Do you think there is something that—I mean, obviously you as a parent, as you say, are impressing upon your sons to stay in school—do you think there are other things that the school system can be doing that might assist young people in wanting to stay in school? Do you have any suggestions for us here on that?

Mr. Joynson: I know with my one son in particular he has a hard time with authority, and he does not grasp things like he should. Therefore, he does not ask questions. I think regular testing of all the students should be performed to see what their levels are. If they are in Grade 9, they should be tested and made sure a Grade 9 level is achieved before they pass them. That goes with any grade.

Ms. Gray: Is there anything else, any other suggestions that you might have?

Mr. Joynson: Just common sense, and that is about all I can think of right now.

Ms. Gray: Thank you very much for your presentation. You are very articulate.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Joynson, for your presentation this morning. We appreciate you taking the time to come.

Corinne Normand, Youth Employment Service? We have a written presentation being distributed. You may begin whenever you are ready.

Ms. Corinne Normand (Youth Employment Service): Thank you. I would first like to thank members of this committee for providing the general public with the opportunity to express their concerns over the amendments included in Bill 32.

My name is Corinne Normand, and I am the executive director of Youth Employment Service, a nonprofit organization funded as an outreach

project of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. Since 1973 the mandate at Youth Employment Service has been to assist young people between the ages of 16 to 24 to enhance their employability. This is accomplished by offering a variety of employment-related services to our clients. Some of these services include: providing instruction on how to seek employment, supplying job search assistance, and offering information about and referrals to available education and training programs.

Youth Employment Service annually assists approximately 600 young people to access either employment or education. Our most recent client profile statistics indicate that 34 percent of our clients are female, 15 percent are aboriginal, 11 percent have criminal records, 55 percent are social assistance recipients, and 55 percent are high-school dropouts.

In 1992 about 75 of our clients were able to continue efforts to complete their high school education with support from the Student Social Allowances Program. The provincial government is now contemplating cancelling the funding for this program, and I am deeply concerned over the adverse effects this action will have on the approximately 1,400 people this program supports annually.

Close to 70 percent of these 1,400 individuals are youth between the ages of 18 and 24 years. The Student Social Allowances Program clearly provided a means for people in need of financial support to receive a high school education. A predetermined eligibility criterion set up by the department ensured that only low income students qualified to receive assistance. Many of these students were either from welfare families or were former wards of Child and Family Services. In other words, these were people who were receiving some form of welfare payment prior to their involvement with the Student Social Allowances Program.

For most of the clients involved with a history of dependency on the social welfare system, this program supplied an opportunity for a better education in the hopes of breaking the welfare cycle. While in the program, clients' performance and attendance levels were monitored monthly to ensure financial support continued only for those individuals completely serious about their studies.

In this regard I feel the program demonstrated responsible, effective, fiscal management.

* (0950)

Employer expectations have increased and are more rigid than in the past. A minimum Grade 12 education is now a requirement for even the most basic entry-level type job. Previously recognized as jobs requiring only a Grade 8 or 9 education, positions such as dishwasher, gas station attendant or factory worker are now filled with high school graduates. As this is the reality of the present labour market, it is also realistic to expect that people with less than a high school education will remain dependent on the social welfare system until they can get past this barrier.

In May of 1993, I sent a letter outlining my concerns over the potential cancellation of provincial funding for the Student Social Allowances Program to the Minister of Education. Attached is the copy of the reply I received from the Minister of Family Services, Harold Gilleshammer. In his response the minister indicates that students have financial options in regard to continuing their education. He identifies part-time employment or possible family support among these options.

I challenge this response with the fact that at the end of June the City of Winnipeg's Department of Social Services anticipates between 1,100 and 1,400 new cases will register with them. It is no coincidence that the same number of individuals attending high school with funding assistance from the Student Social Allowances Program is the same number by which the city welfare rolls are going to expand.

With respect to the minister's suggestion that students work part time as a means of financial support to attend school, in my opinion this is completely unrealistic. To expect that a student can work enough hours at a minimum-wage part-time job to provide the basic necessities, rent, food and transportation, and still have sufficient time and energy left to devote to their education is unreasonable.

I propose that there are several more realistic options people may consider in attempting to live in poverty for a lifetime: single parenthood as a means to receive additional welfare dollars; criminal involvement to supplement a low income; and a growing dependency on the welfare system as educational opportunities are taken away from

welfare recipients. Faced with a desperate situation, young people are more likely to make some less desirable choices.

The provincial government contributes 80 percent towards city social assistance payments for each client. The government is now faced with making what it calls a difficult decision. The choice is to provide financial support to recipients for a limited time, while efforts are made to educate themselves to become employable, or to provide 80 percent of their financial support for a lifetime. I cannot comprehend the logic for selection of the latter.

Over the last couple of years, the provincial government has taken steps to address the shortcomings of its two-tier welfare system. Efforts to do so resulted in a standardization of welfare rates and eligibility requirements for municipal and rural welfare recipients. The outcome of this action was a reduction in benefits to the City of Winnipeg welfare recipients.

Provincial welfare recipients qualify to attend high school full time. If this government is bent on standardizing welfare rates and eligibility requirements, then they must be active in making revisions to the national Canada Assistance Plan affording the same educational benefits to municipal recipients that rural recipients are now entitled to.

In summary, I would like to say that this government must stop penalizing welfare recipients as a means to address short-term budget problems. Instead, the government support for client empowerment and long-term fiscal responsibility could be clearly demonstrated at this time by continuing to fund the Student Social Allowances Program. The taxpayers of this community should not be left with the burden of supporting these people indefinitely.

Thank you.

Mr. Chalrperson: Thank you very much, Ms. Normand.

Mr. Martindale: Thank you very much, Ms. Normand, for an excellent presentation. I appreciate the statistics that you have, the research that you have done and the experience from your agency that you have put into this brief.

Just so that the minister does not have to correct some of the statistics, I will do it for him in order to get at a point. I guess you are aware that under the

Canada Assistance Plan provinces cost-share social assistance 50/50 with the federal government.

Ms. Normand: Yes.

Mr. Martindale: Okay, and my understanding is that with city social assistance recipients, the federal government is still cost-sharing 50 percent, and the province pays 30 percent and the city 20 percent. I think that is correct.

So if the province offloads people from provincial to city assistance, instead of paying 50 percent of their welfare costs, they are paying 30 percent. Do you think it is possible that the only reason this government is doing it is a budgetary reason, in order to save the 20 percent and pass it on to city taxpayers and the City of Winnipeg, in particular, because that is where most of the people are going to end up on social assistance who were in the student social assistance program?

Ms. Normand: Do I think it is possible? I do not know what the government's motives are at this point.

Mr. Martindale: Okay, and—

Ms. Normand: But I would be interested to find out.

Mr. Martindale: Well, I would be too. I mean I have been trying to understand what motivates this government, and it is pretty hard to figure out. It does not seem to me that it is going to save money if people are going to take longer to finish high school on city welfare than they would on the provincial student social assistance program.

The last presenter gave us some figures on how much it was going to cost for him to go to school for a longer period of time while he was on city welfare. I cannot understand why they are doing it if it is going to cost more money.

The Free Press editorial of Sunday, June 13 said, and I quote: Governments do nutty things from time to time, but this is nutty beyond belief.

What do you think of that statement?

Ms. Normand: It just does not make sense to me. If an individual is putting in the effort and is motivated enough to return to school, I am then going to give them credit that they are motivated enough upon completion of school to obtain employment and get off of welfare. If that opportunity is taken away from them, and it took them three or four or five years and the provincial

government is paying the additional 20 percent that it would pay if that person were collecting city welfare, the alternative is for that person to then remain on city welfare until they are 65, and that is a lot more support in the long term provided to those individuals.

Mr. Martindale: I think you hit on a key word when you said "motivation." We have heard several times from presenters that when students go back to school on the Student Social Allowances Program, they are very motivated to finish their high school. Mrs. Render, in her question, and I give her credit for asking a question about this and picking up on what a previous presenter said about motivation, also, I think, recognized the significance of this. In your experience, in talking to some of these students, maybe you could comment on their level of motivation and, because they are well-motivated students, they finish high school faster than they would normally.

Ms. Normand: It is interesting to note that individuals coming from a low-income background will sometimes cite the same reasons for why they dropped out of school: boredom; I was immature and lacked the motivation to attend school; I thought I could get a job. Those are the same reasons that some middle-class students will use to drop out of school. The statistics, though, indicate that low-income members of society are much more likely, at much higher risk, to drop out of school.

I think that is interesting that the reasons for that are, when they are 15 or 16 and perhaps still living under parental conditions or support, problems of family abuse and social problems are a lot—I think they are contributing much higher. These people are still not going to come up and say, you know, I am getting beaten up every day, and my parents are both alcoholics, so I am going to drop out of school. Those are not the reasons they cite.

They cite this lack of motivation, that kind of thing when they are 15 or 16. I would disagree. I think that if they are put into an environment where their general safety and well-being is being looked after, then they probably would not drop out. When they are adults and make that decision to return to school, in many cases, I do not believe that motivation was not there and suddenly now they have become these motivated people. I think that those social problems at an early age were the bigger factors in their dropping out of school.

Ms. Frlesen: You indicated on page 2 of your presentation that many of these students were former wards of Child and Family Services. You included a letter from the minister which indicated, as one of the replies that he has given consistently, that students can go home or, as he says here, they may take advantage of assistance from family members.

* (1000)

Could you give us something from your background, from your experience of working with these families and students as to what proportion of students would be able to follow the minister's advice?

Ms. Normand: Well, I believe it would be a very low proportion. Many of the students were wards of Child and Family Services for many years before they went on to the Student Social Allowances Program. That is, they were taken out of the home at the ages of 10 or 11, and I do not think it is realistic to then expect them when they are 20 or 21 to be able to go home and get help to go to school.

Ms. Frlesen: Would you say it was 10 percent or more, or less?

Ms. Normand: Less than 10 percent. Perhaps five percent.

Ms. Frlesen: The minister had two other suggestions in his response to you, and one was that students could find part-time employment and go to school part time. With your experience of the employment market, how many students with a Grade 9 or 10 education, for example, would be able to find the kind of part-time employment that would enable them to go to school full time? Are we looking at 10 percent there?

Ms. Normand: It has got to be one or two percent. Right now the information that we have that would indicate what types of jobs a young person could get with a Grade 9 or 10 are all definitely minimum-wage jobs, and I just cannot see someone being able to pay rent on a minimum-wage part-time job. So it is a very low number again.

Ms. Frlesen: I think the reference you made to the minimum wage and the amount of minimum wage one could earn on a part-time job is a very important factor to consider in the future of all these young people. At \$5 an hour, 20 hours a week, again the opportunity, even if you were sharing a room to pay rent and food, let alone provide for

books or any other smaller fees associated with schooling, it seems to me impossible.

Ms. Normand: Well, I think that, combined with the amount of hours that you then have to put toward a part-time job—we are not talking about a middle-class student looking at working at Thrifty's 10 hours a week to have extra purse money. We are talking about someone having to worry about having enough financial support to pay the rent and buy their groceries every month, in addition then having the energy and time left to devote to their studies.

Ms. Frlesen: Thank you. As well, one of the things that I find in talking to some of my constituents is the cost of transport to get to and from your job as well as the cost of transport to and from school if that is required. That eats a great deal into \$5 an hour as a minimum wage, and of course this government has not touched the minimum wage in the last three or four years. It is in conditions like this that we see the impact of that upon the poor and the poverty line in Manitoba.

The third area that the minister suggested as an alternative for students in his letter to you was periods of full-time employment to support periods of full-time schooling, a sort of sandwich approach to schooling. You should take one year on and one year off, I assume. Again, I wonder if you could give us an idea of what percentage of students with Grade 10 or 11 education would have the opportunity to have access to full-time work.

Ms. Normand: Well, we are hearing right now reports from the Summer Youth Employment Centre student office, that high school and graduates and university students are having an increasingly difficult time securing even minimum wage jobs.

My experience has been that when I have dealt with an individual with Grade 10 or 11 and they have secured a restaurant job, a full-time restaurant job, one of two things will happen. They will get so discouraged by the fact that they are in this job, and it is a dead-end job for the rest of their life. I think that sort of takes away their motivation, certainly more even than the family problems they might have encountered at a young age, that they just go back—they quit their job and end up on welfare.

A very small number will actually work at a minimum wage job full time and be able to save up

the amount of money it is going to take to then go for 10 months or 12 months receiving no income. How long would it take you to work full time at \$5 an hour to save up \$6,000 or \$7,000 to go to school full time for a year?

Ms. Friesen: I want to come in fact to that particular calculation in a minute, but I am trying to add up the percentage of students who may be able to follow the minister's instructions. We had 5 percent or less, you thought, might be able to go back to their families or receive some kind of family assistance. We had 1 percent whom you thought might be able to find part-time work and go to school full time. What percentage would you say might be able to find full-time work?

Ms. Normand: Might be able to find full-time work, enough to supplement their income as suggested by the minister? I have worked in employment services for 13 years. I have never seen one individual be able to do that.

Ms. Friesen: And again, in the hypothetical case then that somebody could find it, in order to provide for the suggestion that the minister has that you work one year, I assume, and then one year in school, you must essentially work for that one year at \$2.50 an hour in order to provide, at least to create the surplus for yourself of the \$2.50 that will enable you to exist another year at \$2.50 an hour as well as paying for your transport and your books and the other things that are required.

Ms. Normand: That is correct.

I think another thing I would like to mention at this point is that we are talking specifically about people to access high school education, not university degrees or college degrees, where the incentive is there: If I save up X number of dollars, I can at least apply for a student loan to help me pay this.

I know the student loan covers the cost of the course, but there is also a certain amount of dollars involved in the student loan for living expenses. When you are talking about somebody just finishing high school, there are no dollars available at all. So you do have to kick in the whole amount yourself. You will not qualify to even receive city social assistance because you would be cut off.

Ms. Friesen: But in fact, for these 1,200 or 1,400 people who have been using Student Social Allowances, they are not even going get to that loan stage because they are not going to get the Grade 12 within the next four or five years that

would enable them even to begin the process of post-secondary education.

Ms. Normand: That is correct.

Ms. Friesen: The minister's final response, and I think it was probably, he gives the reason, after having suggested a number of options for people, which we have discussed here, he says, unfortunately, the costs of social assistance having increased by about 65 percent over the last three years, this decision was necessary to ensure that the social safety net can be maintained for those persons most in need. This, of course, is the basic Conservative ideology of breaking down the universality of our programs under the name of targeting.

I wonder who you think might be in greater social need in the city of Winnipeg. I am sure there are some. I wonder if we could perhaps have a scale from your perspective of who the minister might have been thinking of in this case.

* (1010)

Ms. Normand: I do not know who the minister was thinking of in this case.

Ms. Friesen: In that case, it is a question we will perhaps pursue with him at a later date when we do go clause by clause through this bill. I thank you very much for your experience. It is very useful to hear from somebody who both has the concerns of education and the experience, long experience in fact, in youth employment issues in Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Chairperson, I just have one or two short questions for this presenter.

Ms. Normand, I would hope that before the minister made this decision that the staff in his department would have done an analysis of the short-term costs of this decision or even savings to the province or that he would have done an analysis of long-term costs or savings to the province. Do you think this would be reasonable, that we would expect that the minister should have done this before he made the decision?

Ms. Normand: Yes.

Mr. Martindale: I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) if he would table any studies that his staff did on long-term costs or short-term costs. Would he do that?

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. This is not a time for questioning the minister. I would remind

committee members that the purpose of the public hearings is for information and practices for public presentations in committee. The committee members may question the presenters for clarification or to elaborate on statements made in their presentations. In the questioning, I would also remind that committee members should not develop into a debate between the members and the presenters or between committee members. The question-and-answer component of the presentation is for the benefit of the members and their understanding of the presentation made, and I would ask the committee members to confine their questions and comments to that portion. There is ample opportunity to question the minister at a later date.

Are there any further questions or comments from Ms. Normand? Hearing none, I thank you very much for your presentation this morning.

Donna Wilson-Kives, Winnipeg Adult Education Centre.

Ms. Laurie Leveille (Winnipeg Adult Education Centre): Good morning. My name is Laurie Leveille, and I am one of the vice-principals from the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre. My colleague is Brian Chappell, the other vice-principal. We are going to co-present the information that you are receiving now as our principal, Donna Wilson-Kives, cannot be here this morning. May we begin?

Mr. Chairperson: Yes you may.

Ms. Leveille: We represent the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, a high school for adults in the Winnipeg School Division. In the past six years our enrollment has averaged over 2,000 students, 1,300 in the day school and another 800 who attend evening school. One-half of these students are studying at the Grade 12 level.

The importance of the Student Social Allowances Program is reflected in the following statistics. In 1992-93, 160 adults received their high school diplomas at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre; 81 received Student Social Allowances. Since 1987, of 920 graduates, 460 received Student Social Allowances.

For the record, in the past three years, two students who received assistance were awarded the University of Winnipeg alumnae entrance scholarship. In the last two years alone, 11 of our graduates who were in the Student Social

Allowances Program won major awards at both the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba. Since 1988, five of our students have been Canada's scholars, two of which received Student Social Allowances.

(Mrs. Shirley Render, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

There is no way of knowing if these individuals would have pursued their education without financial help. Perhaps it could be argued that their desire to learn and move their careers and lives forward would have happened without assistance. Our belief, however, is that without the Student Social Allowances Program a significant number would not have graduated from high school, much less excel at university.

There is another myth that students who receive financial assistance drop out at a greater rate than those who pay their own way. The facts do not support this conclusion. In the spring of 1992, a study showed that the withdrawal rate for students not receiving funding was 20 percent; for those on Student Social Allowance, only 13 percent withdrew. These numbers compare favourably with provincial withdrawal rates among 16- to 18-year-old high school students.

Mr. Brian Chappell (Winnipeg Adult Education Centre): Madam Acting Chairperson, in the past six years, over 400 individuals who were recipients of Student Social Allowance have graduated from the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, 400 who have been able to become successful, productive members of society, who contribute to the tax base rather than drawing long-term financial assistance.

All of us in this room are concerned about accountability and a reasonable return on our investment. We know the cost of supporting adults who wish to return to school. We can examine a bottom line and draw conclusions. However, we do not know the bottom line, if the Student Social Allowances Program is abandoned. How do we calculate the cost of long-term social assistance? How do we calculate the impact of chronic unemployment?

We all know that education is the key to having a productive, employable population. If money is the issue, we cannot afford not to invest in the short term, because in the long term our investment will be refunded, returned manyfold.

We have come this morning to share this information and express our willingness to work with you to provide a program that would not penalize adult secondary students who are sincerely motivated and yet need some assistance. The challenges of weighing fiscal responsibilities and social concerns can be a daunting task. In this instance, we believe that it is fiscally responsible to maintain some form of the Student Social Allowances Program.

Thank you.

The Acting Chairperson (Mrs. Render): Thank you very much. Just for clarification, to make sure we have your name spelled correctly, is it L-e-v-e-i-l-l-e? Leveille?

Ms. Leveille: Yes.

The Acting Chairperson (Mrs. Render): Thank you. I am sure there are some questions.

Mr. Martindale: Thank you, Ms. Leveille and Mr. Chappell, for an excellent presentation. I find it rather difficult to ask questions because what you are saying seems so obvious and seems to be so true, and since I agree with you, it is hard to know what to ask, but I will do my best in any case.

Part of what you said on page 2 is almost exactly what the Free Press editorial of June 13 said. In fact, what they did was they quoted part of the throne speech of this Fourth Session of the 35th Legislature in which the government said, and I quote: "My government realizes that education and training are the keys that unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity."

So you have recognized the importance of education to the future of these individuals. What do you think your students are going to do if they can no longer access this program because it will not exist anymore? Do you expect you will have fewer students at the Adult Education Centre, or will they be forced to be part-time students and therefore take longer to finish their high school?

Ms. Leveille: I think it is a combination of all of those. I think we will lose some, some who will just give up. I think that some will struggle, as a former presenter has said, to do it some way, but it takes quite a bit of intestinal fortitude to do that when you have a family to support. I believe some will try to attend night school and have a full-time job during the day.

We do not know, and we probably will not know until next September exactly where we stand with our enrollment.

Mr. Martindale: Do many of your students have families, and if so, do you know how many or what percentage, the students on the Student Social Allowances Program?

Ms. Leveille: We know that of the 400-plus students who are on the Social Allowances Program, about one-quarter would be single parents. Some would be single people. A number would be married with families, and a great number are new Canadians to the country.

Mr. Martindale: Would any of them be eligible for any other social allowances programs?

Mr. Chappell: Those who are single parents, those who are incapacitated in some way and otherwise qualify for provincial assistance, those people will continue.

The people whom we are concerned about are the other, we would think about 350 currently enrolled who do not qualify on other bases for the support.

* (1020)

Mr. Martindale: Have you talked to these students and asked them how they feel about the elimination of the program? What are they saying, and what are they telling you about their plans in September?

Mr. Chappell: There is considerable despair. It has been reflected in a number of ways. We would expect considerably more people to have committed themselves to taking school next term than currently is the case. We would have expected considerably more new people coming into the building, based on our previous experience. When we speak to people individually, they just do not know how they can manage without this type of support. They do not know the situation with welfare, what welfare is going to be able to contribute and even if they would be able to manage with welfare.

Mr. Martindale: You said that you believed it is fiscally responsible to maintain some form of the Student Social Allowances Program. Why then do you think the government is eliminating the program?

Mr. Chappell: I do not know.

Mr. Martindale: Neither do I. This is a government that is really obsessed with being fiscally responsible. You have pointed out that if these people finish high school, they have a much better chance of being employed as Grade 12 graduates, or if they go on to university, which many of them do, they have a much better chance of being employed. You pointed out that then they are going to pay taxes and contribute much more to our society. I guess another obvious question, why would a government eliminate a program which enables people to become taxpayers rather than sitting at home collecting social assistance?

Mr. Chappell: I do not know that either.

Ms. Friesen: I was struck by one word you used about your students, and that was the word "despair." I take it you did not use that lightly. I wonder if you could give us a portrait, perhaps, of the immigrant families that you talked about who are students at the Winnipeg Education Centre and who have come under this program. What backgrounds—can you give us a sort of a type rather than a particular family, some generalizations on where they have come from, what their level of English is, what their expectations are, what the sizes of their families are and essentially what this program has been able to accomplish for them?

Mr. Chappell: There is a vast array of students from all parts of the world. The thing that they come with most, I think, is hope, that there is hope in this country to develop themselves and their families. Along with that is a real dedication to hard work. The majority of them are very serious about getting ahead, and it is amazing as to what they are prepared to sacrifice. Some of them are husband and wife. Some of them do have families. Some of them perhaps fall under the—well, I do not know that there is any other assistance. What I do know is that this assistance that they are receiving is very important to them.

When I see the look on people's faces when they come into the office and talk about getting through school, the opportunity that they have to finally get a Grade 12 and move out somewhere into the workforce, there is a certain sparkle and a certain, just, "hey, we want to get on and do it." I am afraid that is being replaced with a "we do not know." "Despair" is the word now that just comes to mind this morning as I think further about it.

I think that there are so many individual situations, and I am unable to say to people, well, look things are going to work out. You are going to be able to come back here next year and complete your Grade 11. Then we are going to get your Grade 12, and you will be on your way. They do see people who have graduated each term. A lot of our graduates are immigrant students. They have done extremely well. They are very hard working. We have tried to focus on our presentation of information today on the success stories, and I think the success is impressive.

A lot of these immigrant students will go on from our high school and go into university. Some might go to Red River College. They are filled with hope, regardless of their personal circumstances. They really do not want to talk about their personal circumstances. They would just prefer to get on with life. They do not want people to feel sorry for them. They do not want handouts. That is not where they are at. They want to get on with their lives and contribute, and they feel glad to be here. Right now, with that door, I am afraid for some of them, they do not know which way it is going to swing.

Ms. Friesen: I notice that you did emphasize in your presentation the academic success in post-secondary education of your students. Is that something which students come to you with and they are set on a career track, in the sense they have figured it out that what they need is the Grade 12 through you and then they are already planning to go into post-secondary education, or is that something that happens to them at your institution? Have you put emphasis on that, or is it the collectivity, is it the nature of that student body that leads people to begin to think in those terms?

Ms. Levellie: I think it is a combination of those things. Many students, I think, come with a thought that they want to better themselves and education is the way. They do not really understand the end of it all, they just know that they want to do that. But when they get into the environment, they get motivated. They see other students that have specific goals that might be university or some other occupation, and there is an atmosphere at the school of moving ahead and doing the best you can and achieving something for yourself. I think a great deal of it has to do with that.

One of your other questions had to do with, are they solely directed only there? It was an

interesting experience I had about a month ago. I went into our basic program. We have already had a speaker here from our basic program this morning, and it was not this gentleman, but another gentleman. He approached me and he said, you know, he said, you guys are on the right track. He said, you know, I just came from Alberta and there was no way I could upgrade myself, there was no avenue. All I want to do is get Grade 11 so that I can be a baker, and I am going to do it. This year I am going to finish my Grade 9, and next year I am going to finish my Grade 10, and I am going to become a baker.

So although the history of the school and the potential of the school has been focused on academics, there are people coming with other goals that perhaps are not headed towards university, but they know they have to have a Grade 10 standing or a Grade 11 standing or even a Grade 12 standing to do those things.

Ms. Friesen: I am interested in your confirmation of my sense that there is a kind of collective feeling or ethos at the school when you get people together in that situation, and they are able to learn from each other and to have peer examples as well.

What do you think the impact of losing 300 to 400 of your students is going to be on that institutional sense?

* (1030)

Mr. Chappell: I really do not know. It is going to be an impact. To me, the greater question is what is the impact on those 300 or 400 students. That is my concern. An institution will change and be flexible and adapt. I think that is my concern.

Ms. Friesen: Do you know how the loss of those students is going to impact upon the programs you can offer at this stage? Do you have any sort of plan A, plan B, plan C? What happens if your numbers are down considerably? How does it affect the programming?

Mr. Chappell: Our program is fundamentally an academic program. It offers the core subjects at all grade levels. Below the Grade 12 level, we have what are called preparatory courses. This is to upgrade people to the point where they should be able to challenge the 300 level.

The main impact, I think, therefore, is the flexibility that people would have to choose sections. Right now, we are able to offer full programs from eight in the morning to 4:15. Just

the way the numbers work out, we can do that. If it happens that we are forced to cut back, it is obvious we are going to have combinations of classes, or certain classes are going to have to be cancelled which means that some of that flexibility will be removed.

Ms. Friesen: From the students' perspective, then, I assume those who now have to find part-time work are also going to find a less flexible opportunity at your institution. That is very much a Catch-22 situation there for them.

Mr. Chappell: Right now, we are prepared to be flexible with students and provide morning timetables, afternoon timetables, combinations of both, whichever they require if work is a possibility for them.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would like to just ask some questions for clarification from your presentation. You have enrolled this year about 2,100 students, is that correct?

Ms. Levellie: Yes, that would include the day school and the evening school.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Of those, you said between 300 and 400 were on Student Social Allowances.

Ms. Levellie: About 460.

Mr. Gilleshammer: You have, as part of your student complement, a number of single parents who are on provincial social allowances?

Ms. Levellie: Yes, we do.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Could you tell me how many you would have in that category?

Mr. Chappell: We are unable on our data base to differentiate. We do not have somebody who is on the single-student social allowances program and on the married or the single-parent social allowances program.

It looks to us as about one to four being the ratio of the single parent and the single student.

Mr. Gilleshammer: You also have, as part of your complement of students, some who are on provincial social allowances because they are physically handicapped?

Mr. Chappell: It would be very minor, that number. In fact, sir, I would be unable to say that it would, in fact, be one. It might be one.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Back to the single parents, you are unable to give us a number out of your 2,100?

Ms. Levellie: When we take information from students when they first register, we do not ask them personal information because we are not allowed to do that, so unless they have actually registered for the Student Social Allowances Program and then get regular reporting from us in terms of attendance and marks, we have no way of knowing who is on what programs.

Mr. Gilleshammer: But you are able to identify the Student Social Allowance ones.

Ms. Levellie: Yes.

Mr. Chappell: By the way, sir, if I may, the 2,000 that we talk about there, that includes evening school. The people we are talking about on the social allowance program now are day school, so we are basically talking about that number who are at day school.

Mr. Gilleshammer: So you have 1,600, 1,700 who attend your institution, the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, who are funded by other means other than Student Social Allowances or have their own resources?

Ms. Levellie: We do not know, but we know that it would be about that number that do not receive social allowances.

Mr. Gilleshammer: And their support is from a variety of sources that you are not able to identify. Thank you.

Ms. Gray: Thank you very much for your presentation. Do you have any statistics on those individuals who have attended your program and are on Student Social Allowances who have completed their courses, and do you have any information on those individuals as to what type of employment they have been able to get or where they have gone? Are you able to collect that type of data?

Mr. Chappell: Not that I could present to you in statistical form.

Ms. Gray: Do you have any anecdotal information that gives you a sense of what happens to your students when they complete the program?

Mr. Chappell: Recently we had our 25th anniversary and a number of people returned. There are people in the business community, the medical community, the legal community. All of these people, how they got through their high school I do not know, but it is certainly impressive when they come back and say, we are glad we took

the opportunity to complete our schooling and carry on, and there are a number of those students that we meet.

Ms. Gray: Are you familiar with the Workforce 2000 program at all, that this government has funded? No? Thank you. The reason I asked that question is that it is a program through the Department of Education that, interestingly enough, they hope to improve the marketable skills and abilities of both employed and unemployed Manitobans. They have allocated about \$2 million more to the program this year than last year, which certainly we do not have a difficulty with, but it is quite interesting how they have given to one program that is probably going to provide some training for one sector of the population yet have chosen to delete the Student Social Allowances, which provides training and education for another sector of our population. It is interesting irony how they have made those decisions. Thank you very much again for your information and your presentation.

Ms. Friesen: I remember, I think it was about two years ago, that you were affected by the loss of adult bursaries, and I wonder if you could explain to us what that program was and who funded it and what the impact was on your institution and the students who came there as a result of that cut.

Mr. Chappell: There are two levels of the bursaries for adult students. One is for the nonresident student, and one is for the resident student. The resident student bursary was cut a couple of years ago. It had a payment of \$275 per term to each resident student, and I do not know what the qualifications were to—I know that they had to fill in applications and meet certain qualifications of that department of government. That was cut. I think it was about two years ago that that was cut entirely, the resident portion of that.

Really, the impact on us as an institution, in terms of the numbers of students that we provide educational service for, was not impacted. We continue at a fairly—well, we are pretty close to full each term. The nonresident bursary continued. There were presentations made to the government and the decision made to continue with the nonresident bursary, which was a lot smaller group of people.

The resident bursary seemed to affect about 450 to 500 students. The nonresident bursary was significantly smaller; it was about 50 to 60 students. That amount is \$450 a term, and what that was to assist is those students who had to pay very high fees at the Grade 12 level, \$320 a course. So you get a student enrolling in a term paying \$960 to attend that institution, and \$450 of that would be used, of course, to try to offset that amount.

* (1040)

The impact now of the total removal of that has meant that there are fewer nonresident students, of course, wanting to come to the school. They just cannot afford it. We have attempted some things to try and make it easier for them, but I think what is so significant to us is that in those programs, students have been able to rebound and kind of find a way around that, whereas we go back to my comments earlier of noticing fewer people indicating that they can come back to school and in fact making a commitment or fewer people who are currently in school making a commitment to come back. They are really being affected.

That is where we are noticing—like, if you compare the two programs and the cuts in both programs, this is where we are noticing the cuts in terms of our enrollment. This one has really hurt. The other ones, I think, people can say, yes, the options that the government is suggesting to us, we can get along with. This one, people are saying, when we apply for social allowance, like we are at the bottom. It is so hard to get on it in the first place, and there is just nothing else that they can see. So I see comparing the two programs that way. I do not know that they come from the same department of government. I do not think they do. I think the bursary came from Education and Training, and I think this one comes from social services.

Ms. Friesen: I certainly understand the distinction you are making that, although there have been a series of blows to the kinds of students who want to have access to continue their education, this one, in fact, has been the harshest cut of all, and that there are so few, as an earlier presenter suggested, alternatives for people.

You are an unusual program and an unusual institution in the province of Manitoba, which is why, of course, there were nonresident students who wanted to come, in fact, had no alternative in

their own school divisions at that time, although there may be some expansion of that in some areas now.

Could you give us a sense of what, and I do not know whether you can or not, exists outside of Winnipeg, both in the suburban school divisions and in rural areas, where students who are in this same situation, who have a Grade 9 or a Grade 10 education and know, have come to the realization that they need the rest to even begin to get anywhere as opposed to spending the rest of their lives on welfare? Do you know what other opportunities there are in Manitoba?

Ms. Levellie: The only opportunity that I am aware of is the opportunity for any-aged persons to go to their local high school. That is the only one that I am aware of, and that students that I talk to anyway are aware of. That might seem like a very simplistic and easy answer, but in talking to students that I deal with on the student council and just in general around school—the average age of our students, by the way, at the Adult Centre is 28. Our highest age category is 22 to 32 years old. Over 50 percent of our students are in those age categories.

What they tell us is that they would have to really think long and hard if they wanted to go back to school with kids. It does not sit well with them. They do not feel comfortable. They feel very comfortable in an environment of other adults who are upgrading, and this is the statement by and large of most of them.

In thinking about it, I guess, the ones that I think that we would lose, if the only chance they had were to go back to school in their own local community, would be the ones who are in Grades 9, 10 and 11, because for them it is kind of degrading and humiliating to be in a class of 14-, 15- and 16-year-old students. The Grade 12s, who have had an opportunity to succeed and to get involved in this ethos so far as school and this motivational sort of milieu, may be more motivated and find it more comfortable to attend a local Grade 12 class with local Grade 12 students.

That is purely a personal point of view on my part. It does not necessarily reflect everyone's view in my school.

Ms. Friesen: I think what you are suggesting for the attitudes of those who have Grades 9 and 10 is

perhaps also true, because the road is longer for them. It is a long road from Grade 9 to Grade 12.

Ms. Levellie: It is, and their level of self-esteem is not very high either at this point. They are feeling pretty humble, and you know, they are not sure whether they can do it, and then to be thrown into a class with a 14-year-old—

Ms. Friesen: Yes, I think what you are also saying is confirmed by educational practices that I have looked at in other provinces as well. I talked, for example, to the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal to see what kind of programs they ran in this area, and they maintain two types of adult programming. One is for the age group up to about 21, where they say it is quite feasible to put them in classrooms with 17-, 18-year-olds, and that educationally that will work and they will be comfortable and they have the opportunity to succeed. But once you get much beyond that level, your rate of success in, I suppose we might call it, mainstreaming anyway into the regular classroom of 15-year-olds or 16-year-olds simply has not been productive in their experience. So I would think from an educational practice point of view that it is not particularly realistic, but for many Manitobans that is going to be the only alternative.

What you are saying is that they have the option of going to their local high schools. Now do you know as teachers, as educators, who have other professional contacts, whether in fact all schools accept students over the age of 21?

Ms. Levellie: I believe the rule is if there is room.

Ms. Friesen: That room is determined by the principal or by the school division? I know this is not your area, but it is not mine either, so I am just looking for some indication of what you know.

Ms. Levellie: Well, in every classroom there is a maximum class size that is allowed, and I would think that would dictate the decisions.

Mr. Chappell: I would suggest that the principal of the local school would make that decision—is accountable to the superintendent.

Ms. Friesen: Thank you.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Ms. Friesen brought up the issue of nonresident students, and you mentioned somebody transferring from Alberta. Do you have any idea of your 2,100 students how many are nonresident?

Mr. Chappell: Well, the day school situation, I think I suggested around 50 or 60 were nonresident. That is the day school population. I should indicate that is the nonresidents who had applied for bursaries. There may be other nonresident students, I do not know, sir. The only nonresidents that I would be aware of at this point would be that number. At night school we would have well over 200 of our population are nonresidents.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Gilleshammer: One other question. Historically, municipal social allowance recipients have been allowed to take two courses. Of your enrollment of 2,100, do you know how many of your students are on municipal assistance and taking a part-time program at your institution?

* (1050)

Mr. Chappell: I do not know the exact numbers, but it is not many, currently, that we have.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Would it be fair to assume they would be amongst the 800 who are in the evening part of your program?

Mr. Chappell: We have about half a dozen, right now. There is an arrangement with the Winnipeg School Division and the welfare department that exempts the welfare students from having to pay fees. We have about half a dozen of that number.

Mr. Gilleshammer: But the municipal recipients who are allowed to attend school while looking for work are allowed to take two courses, and you are saying you are not able to break those out from your total student body?

Mr. Chappell: In our day school programs, sir, no. We do not know.

What typically happens is this. A student will come to us. We have no idea if they are on municipal welfare. If a student requires some explanation from the school that they are either taking a certain number of courses or that they are no longer enrolled in school, that is the only indication we would have from a student that they are on welfare, because they require that information for the welfare worker.

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Penner, did you have a question? If there are no more questions or comments for the presenters, I would like to thank you very much for your presentation this morning.

We will now call Barbara Teskey, private citizen.

Ms. Barbara Teskey (Private Citizen): Good morning.

Mr. Chairperson: Good morning, you may begin. Your written presentation is being distributed.

Ms. Teskey: Well, referring to what I have to say, as requested by your Clerk, I am here with written copies of this presentation, although I would have been just as comfortable speaking off the cuff.

I am a teacher. I am teacher at Kelvin High School in this city. I find myself delighted to have the opportunity to speak to you on this summer day, especially as I know that each and every one of you is dying for this session to be over and this particular business, good, bad or ugly as it may be, to be passed, disposed of, copied, recorded, filed in the library, flung to the bureaucrats or got rid of in some way or other, so it is out of your hair and, preferably, forever.

It is a joy to me, already on vacation, footloose and carefree, to have the pleasure of saluting you about-to-be holidaymakers, to anticipate with you that feeling of euphoria one has in the first few hours and sometimes even days of a well-deserved break from toil.

Surely, one of the more gratifying aspects of our holidays is the fact that we are paid our salaries during the holiday period, and that when our jolly vacations are over, we go back to our jobs that continue to pay us comfortable salaries. "Comfortable" is the appropriate word, my friends.

"Comfortable" is the word that applies to you and to me and to others like us. We are comfortable because we have incomes that allow us some latitude in the decision-making processes that affect our lives. We are comfortable because we have a reasonable expectation that those incomes will continue, and if they do not, why, we are comfortable in the knowledge that our salary continuation insurance will kick in.

How have we arrived at such a comfortable state of affairs? Some of us have been born comfortable and have inherited sufficient income that we do not have to worry. Some of us have achieved comfort by dint of hard work, and some of us have had comfort thrust upon us by marrying rich or winning the lottery, I suppose.

Virtually all of us have had, if not as a causative factor, as an accompanying factor, a good education. Comfortable incomes and good educations go hand in hand in this day and age. I

would like to believe that it is our comfortable situation and not malice, ignorance or blind stupidity that has insulated us from a true appreciation of the plight of those people from whom we propose to withdraw the Student Social Allowances.

Stories of the orphaned, impoverished, illiterate shoeshine boy rising to company president and living happily ever after—and stories they were—belong to the era of the writer Horatio Alger, and he died in 1899.

These days, if one is to compete in the marketplace of what we are now starting to call the global economy, one needs a first-class education. The entry-level ticket to get into institutions offering appropriate training is a high school certificate. That is only the beginning. Post-secondary technical and professional programs take from one to six or however many years to complete. As any of us who has taken such training and supported herself or has supported her children in pursuing such training knows, the costs are high.

In my day, thirty-five years ago, and as I look around me, I see that there are others who were in my day as well, it was possible to work at Eaton's for 78 cents an hour and make enough, working all day in the summer and Friday nights and Saturdays in the winter, and living rent-free at home, to pay the \$250 a year that the Faculty of Arts at U of M demanded for its fee and the approximately \$50 necessary for books. Now fees are \$2,500 a year, a tenfold increase, and books upwards of \$500.00. The minimum wage has not increased tenfold, and jobs are very difficult to find. As well, life is very different in other ways.

Jobs, by the way, for students of the sort that the minister was suggesting to other members here are the sort that we would never have had to take in my day. We worked—this is off the cuff—an eight-hour day in the daytime. Nowadays, children work at night for these kinds of jobs. They start at 5 p.m.; they end at 1 a.m. They start at 8 p.m.; they end at three in the morning.

As a group, we are experiencing a breakdown in family life, a decline in religious influence and a polarization of society in terms of rich and poor. Schools are one of the few institutions that offer coherence to many students' lives. The people from whom we propose to withdraw the Student Social Allowances are not people such as I, who

was able to live at home at the expense of my parents, or my children, who had the benefit of a mother with a good job and a good education.

The Student Social Allowances recipient is a young person from a poor, breaking or broken family whose members cannot support him or her, who cannot keep the student in the secondary education to which he or she is legally entitled. This student is a person who believes in the value of an education and is trying to complete the basic requirement, the high school certificate. Do not underestimate the importance of the presence of this person in school. By staying in school, this person increases his or her skills. The student improves his or her self-image by having success. The student benefits from the salutary effect of a regular routine. The student is off the streets and out of trouble. The situation for the student in school is one of hope rather than depression and despair.

The consequence of not getting a high school certificate for the individual is a life of poverty, and poverty for the children of that individual. The consequence for society as a whole is that potential tax revenues are lost, and social welfare costs increase. As far as any government interested in collecting taxes is concerned, X number of people earning \$20,000 or \$30,000 per year will provide more revenue and cost less than the same number earning zero to \$10,000 per year. Furthermore, a cursory examination of the people on welfare and in our prisons reveals that they are not the rich and well educated, but the poor and the ill educated. It makes no sense to clout the weaker members of this society by withdrawing the support of Student Social Allowance.

Student Social Allowance is cheaper than welfare, the usual support of poor, uneducated people, and cheaper than prison, the other support of the poor and disadvantaged, by about five or tenfold. What sort of outlay is really under consideration here? Student Social Allowances amount to a payment of about \$5,500 a year to about 900 to 1,000 or more, including rural students. This money serves to maintain these people while they finish high school. It is a temporary measure, lasting from one to three years.

Why should this government or any other government be involved in such a support function? The answer makes both compassionate

and economic sense. These people have few if any other resources. Without the support, most of these people will not attempt to finish high school. Also, the return on investment is high. By improving their education these people become eligible for higher-paying jobs. When they make more money they will pay higher taxes back to the government that sponsored them. Over their working lifetime this amounts to a substantial amount of money. What appears to be a welfare program is really an investment program with a high payoff.

It is easy to say that student social assistance will still be available in the form of loans. However the debt burden that will follow on the shoulders of these students will seriously impede their willingness to undertake further loans in the pursuit of post-secondary education. As we have already noted, in this era high school education is only the beginning. How much expense in the pursuit of education can any student, let alone those already poor, be asked to bear? It is in the best interests of this society that all its citizens be educated to the highest level that each individual can attain in this, the information age, the age of technology and we, the individuals with responsibility and power, must ensure that it happens.

* (1100)

Let me close with a cautionary note. As a private citizen, I find myself wondering if a presentation before any committee of the Legislature is not an exercise in futility. Twenty-four years ago almost to the month, I, along with many others, made a presentation to the Public Utilities Committee of the Legislature with respect to the Churchill River Diversion. The arguments against the construction of the diversion ran the range from scientific through economic, cultural, anthropological and spiritual. Not one argument moved the legislators of the day, the Walter Weirs, the Jack Carrolls or the Harry Ennses. The diversion was constructed and every predicted disaster followed, along with a few surprises, mercury uptake by white fish and the destruction of the Southern Indian Lake fishery, for example.

With the exception of Harry Enns—he does not appear to be here—none of the leading actors of the day is around to answer to his actions, and only the most uncharitable would suggest that if they had it to do over again they would make an even bigger botch-up than they did. Not surprisingly,

committee members open? Are they even listening? Will information presented here affect the bill in any real way?

In spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, one can only hope for the best. Please do not follow in the footsteps of your partisan and close-minded predecessors. Keep in mind the human consequences of this bill, and if those move you not, consider the economic consequences. Remember that as this government has had to deal with the groaning burdens left to it by ill-informed, short-sighted, small-minded politicians from a previous era, somebody else will have to try to redress the wrongs made by you. This is a bad piece of legislation, an unjust piece of legislation, and that which is not just ought not to be law. I urge you to defeat Bill 32.

Mr. Chalrperson: Thank you very much, Ms. Teskey.

Mr. Martindale: Thank you, Ms. Teskey, for an excellent brief. Your views were very well spoken.

I would like to comment on some of the things, almost every page, I have comments on. You make a link between the fact that most of us here in this committee are comfortable due to our incomes, and then you go on to say the reason is a good education, and I certainly believe that is true. It is a very obvious statement that most of us are comfortable because of education rather than winning wealth or inheriting wealth or whatever.

I would like to assure you that I am very aware of the plight of these people. Many of them are my constituents in the north end and the inner city in the constituency of Burrows. Some of them are here today.

Going on to the third page, I am glad that you commented on the cost of education and the minimum wage and the differences from the time you went to university and today. I think those differences apply to high school as well, because a number of years ago it was possible to get good paying jobs and to save up enough money to pay for university by summer employment and maybe casual employment during the year. Today that is no longer true, because those jobs are not available.

In spite of that, we have been hearing continually—in fact, I heard this when I spoke on this bill in the Chamber—government members heckling me from across the other side saying that

they worked hard and they had three part-time jobs, and they put themselves through—very self-righteous and judgmental views in my opinion, because I think circumstances have changed greatly and they have not taken that into account.

We have had numerous people say that the jobs, first of all, just are not there, and that they do not pay sufficiently to pay for education. We have had presenters this morning who have told us that, who have said that—a previous presenter this morning said he had 40 to 50 résumés out or applications to different employees in East Kildonan and elsewhere in the city, and that paying employment is just not available.

We have also heard people say it is extremely difficult to work part time and go to school full time. In fact, I think most of them have concluded that it is impossible to go to school full time and work part time. So I am glad that you pointed out the differences between the time that you went to school and today.

I also certainly agree that the results of many of these policies are a polarization of society between the rich and the poor. Could you expand on your comments please on the difference between government and society having to pay someone social assistance as opposed to people being employed because they got an education and therefore are paying taxes? This seems to me to be quite obvious, but it seems to be lost on the government, so perhaps you could expand on what you said in your brief.

Ms. Teskey: I am not quite sure of the question. Are you suggesting that if you have a good education you are, as we all seem to have been suggesting this morning, that as soon as you get an education you are more likely to be able to get a better job; with a better job comes a higher income; with a higher income comes a more taxable income, a greater return to the government? That kind of thing?

Mr. Martindale: Yes, what you said on the top of page 4. The consequence for society as a whole is the potential of taxpaying is—

Ms. Teskey: All right. If someone makes \$20,000 a year, presumably he pays a few thousand dollars in taxes. If he makes \$10,000 a year, he probably does not pay any taxes. Let us say, he pays \$3,000 a year in taxes when he is making \$20,000 a year. His working lifetime is 40 years. Forty

times three is \$120,000 in tax revenue, which if he is making \$10,000 a year, he is entirely lost to the government. Is that the kind of—[interjection] Oh, dear.

Mr. Martindale: You have also said on page 4 of your brief that you see the Student Social Allowances Program as a return on investment, and you talk about education as being an investment. I think this government only sees the cost, and therefore, they are trying to offload the cost to the City of Winnipeg. Can you expand on your views on why you see education as an investment?

Ms. Teskey: I guess it depends on how you regard investment. If investment is something that gets a return, then having people paying taxes is clearly giving the government a return that it otherwise would not have. Now the larger the number of people paying taxes, clearly the larger the revenues of the government. If the government has put something into generating that ability of people to pay taxes, then it seems to me that it is a return on investment. Is that what you mean?

Mr. Martindale: I would like to quote one of your sentences on page 5, where you said, "It is easy to say that student social assistance will still be available in the form of loans." Are you aware that there are no loan programs for high school students?

Ms. Teskey: No, I was not. I was using limited information available to our school for that statement, because at the time that we discussed this, we were not really sure what was going to be available.

Mr. Martindale: Are you aware that the only alternative that most of these students have is to be on city social assistance and that when they are on city social assistance, they are deemed employable? They must be looking for work and available for work, and therefore, they are restricted to taking only two courses?

Ms. Teskey: Yes, I am aware of that, and that strikes me as a clearly retrograde step. It is certainly requiring people to say that they are not taking courses when in fact they are because of a necessity to finish high school. It seems to me evidence of a lack of—what can I say; I do not know—sensitivity, awareness on the part of the people administering the programs.

Mr. Martindale: Did you say that you are a teacher at Kelvin High School?

Ms. Teskey: Yes, I am.

Mr. Martindale: Do you have students at Kelvin who have been enrolled in the past in the Student Social Allowances Program?

Ms. Teskey: Yes, we have. We actually do not have a large number of students there. You may be aware that Kelvin is probably situated in one of the more affluent areas of the city, and even though we draw from the city proper, we have probably no more than 10 or 12 students in our school on Student Social Allowances.

Mr. Martindale: What is going to happen to those students in September? Do you expect to see them back or not?

Ms. Teskey: They will not be there.

Mr. Martindale: Do you know this from talking to the students? Is this what they are telling you?

Ms. Teskey: The students in a high school rather than, opposed to, a centre like the Adult Education Centre are a much more desperate group on Student Social Allowances. They are like other children. They are immature. They are trying to deal with the world around them as best they can, and when these people are obliged to leave home, this already is a very traumatic experience for them. Then they realize very quickly that there is no way out except staying in school, and they try to take whatever is necessary to stay in school.

* (1110)

Most of them do not have the social skills or the homemaking skills or the emotional resilience to be able to do more than one thing at a time. It is school or it is a job, even though the jobs they get, if they can find them, will be very poorly paying jobs and barely enough to keep them afloat as it is. Even if they can get that kind of job, they are not likely to be able to maintain full-time attendance in school and working at a job for any more than a couple of months, and that is the best of them.

Student Social Allowances has enabled people in this disadvantaged situation to continue either living with a grandparent or whoever is able to support them, or in a shared accommodation sometimes with other students which is not the best situation either, to get through school.

Mr. Martindale: Where will these students go in September? What do you think is going to happen

to them? What will they be doing if they are not at Kelvin High School?

Ms. Teskey: God knows. I do not.

Mr. Martindale: The minister has said on numerous occasions that students, if they cannot live on their own on the Student Social Allowances Program, then they can go home. Do you know if any of your students will be able to go home?

Ms. Teskey: Many of these students cannot go home because of severe friction with their parents, because of abusive situations, because of parents simply not being there, having left the country, because of parents with severe mental problems, large numbers of younger brothers and sisters, put-together families, new stepparents that somehow they do not see eye to eye with.

These are difficult situations. They are not going to be going home. They would rather live in a house or an apartment with a bunch of other kids their own age and do whatever they can. Home is not an option.

Mr. Martindale: My last question has to do with your observations about, I guess, the futility of presenting a brief to committee stage. I have had some experiences myself, first of all as a presenter before I was elected, and now sitting in the committee and listening to people, and I certainly share some of your cynicism.

You will be interested to know that Mr. Penner and I sit on an ad hoc committee on rules, and one of the things we are going to be looking at in the next year is possible changes to the way committees of the Legislature function. I think I should also point out that from time to time, bills are amended in committee, sometimes even significantly, and I would hope the government today would listen to the presenters and scrap this whole bill.

I do not know if you are aware of it or not, but this bill basically consists of three sentences, all of which say repeal. This is a one-page bill that repeals three parts or three sections of The Social Allowances Act. They probably could not amend this bill. They could only scrap it altogether.

Ms. Teskey: Scrap it.

Mr. Martindale: Thank you.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): I want to thank the presenter for coming forward with her presentation. I find it interesting that—and I will be a bit cynical as

well, I find it interesting that you name three former ministers of the Conservative administration, one a Premier, and—

Mr. Chairperson: Excuse me, Mr. Penner, could you bring your microphone up a little bit, please.

Mr. Penner: And their lack of concern, in your words, about the destruction in regards to the Churchill Diversion and those kinds of things. I find it also interesting that in your presentation you make note of our lack of sympathy for funding, those that have been funded under one form of assistance or another to ensure that they can, in fact, live outside of their homes and in another environment and attend school.

I find it also interesting that you do not name the previous two Premiers of the NDP party that were largely responsible for the huge deficits that this province has at this time which causes us to pay somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$500 million or better a year in interest costs. Had we not had those debts inflicted on us, that we would not have to pay those interest costs, we would have an extra half billion dollars a year to spend on these kinds of programs. I find it interesting that you do not make note of that.

I also found it interesting that the previous two presenters from the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, when asked whether they were aware of the Workforce 2000 program that we have initiated, which in fact, trains on the job those very people that we are discussing here and allows them to educate themselves while they work—I refer to the Friesen College that has been established in my home town, which just this past year graduated 35 students out of the graphic arts class, that did not have the kind of formal education that you talk about that is needed to get into the workforce, and encouraged the kind of people that we are talking about here today, that have not got formal educations, even have not got high school educations, to come into a work scene type of a setting, gain an education, a very substantial education, and move on from there into the workforce to work in graphic arts fields the printing industry. I refer specifically to this one because it is the Friesen College that had been established simply within a printing industry to educate people, and then that they allow them to proceed into other areas.

I am wondering whether you are aware of those kinds of educational facilities that have been

established under Workforce 2000 and are continuing to be established, and whether you are aware that that will lead towards the betterment of young people that we described that are not able to at all times access or have not got a willingness to go and enter into high school or university type of educational facilities.

Ms. Teskey: No, I am not aware of it, and I can only suggest that a lack of publicity on your part has meant that this is the case. Our school does its best to disseminate information. My experience as a teacher in receiving information from the Department of Education would suggest that, in fact, your government is quite good at disseminating information that it wishes to send out. We did receive a letter from the minister at one point, so it is possible for us to find out these things.

Secondly, it seems to me that this college that you are describing is a very salutary form of endeavour, all to the good, more of it. If you are suggesting that this should replace the normal education process, it would be an adjunct, is that it?

Mr. Penner: Mr. Chairperson, what I am really suggesting is that there are people in society that have no desire to gain a formal education within our school systems, whether it be high school or post-secondary education or any other types of education. They have no desire to continue. But they do have a desire to work within a given setting. This program, Workforce 2000, allows for the education within that workplace and allows those people to gain experiences and knowledge of certain industries and allows them to gain meaningful employment.

The reason I ask you, because I am interested whether you know about this program, and the previous two presenters indicated they also had no knowledge. I am going to be somewhat critical of my minister in suggesting that he or she has not done a good job of communicating this program to your kinds of institutions, the high schools as well as the other educational institutions that we have, to ensure that if there are those people that need counselling, those young people that need counselling that cannot, for some reason, continue their formal education, that they are attracted to and directed towards these kinds of programs that they can gain some meaningful training. Because I am beginning to think we have not done a good job of communicating that.

Ms. Teskey: It seems to me that initiatives are being taken at all levels to try to integrate workforce and schools in such a way that people of the sort you describe who do not want formal education or cannot access schools for whatever reason, are getting training.

It seems to me that training is education, in some fashion or another. But I think there is probably a need for a greater co-ordination of all efforts in this regard and a dissemination of information throughout everybody who is connected with it, and all to the good.

As for my not mentioning the other governments that you brought to my attention just now, it is true, there is no doubt about it that whatever mess we are in is a collective mess. Unfortunately, for the sake of the reputation of whatever government it was, I believe it was Progressive Conservative, it was their idea.

Mr. Penner: Would you also agree that there are certain people in society that simply either have not got time nor do they wish to proceed with a formal education or simply do not desire to gain a post-secondary education?

Ms. Teskey: Sure, so?

* (1120)

Mr. Penner: So you would then suggest that the Workforce 2000 type of a program has a meaningful place?

Ms. Teskey: I would imagine.

Mr. Penner: Thank you.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairperson, well, it would be tempting to take the time of the committee to discuss the surplus that the NDP left this government and to discuss the interest rates of the federal Conservatives which have fueled, in large part, the debts and deficit problems of this government, high interest rates which have gone to bond holders, to banks, to corporations who have been able to use their power in the Tory party at the federal and provincial level to shift the burden of taxation away from themselves and onto the middle and lower-middle class.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please.

Ms. Friesen: It would be tempting to develop that position.

Mr. Chairperson: Ms. Friesen, are you prepared to come back to the topic?

Ms. Friesen: However, it would be more useful to discuss, at this stage, the misunderstandings about Workforce 2000, which Mr. Penner has put on the record.

Workforce 2000 is an interesting program, and it has some training merit, but I think the way in which the questions were put perhaps might have misled our presenter here. One of the basic ways in which in fact you have access to Workforce 2000 money in the grants to small- and medium-sized businesses is, in fact, that you have to have a job.

Workforce 2000 does not create jobs. You must have the job, be in the company, and then you can perhaps be chosen, selected by the employer to receive training.

Mr. Penner: Not so. No.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Penner wants to disagree, and I guess he will have his time, and I see the minister here, and in fact we have the minister on record, that is exactly the process of Workforce 2000. [interjection] Mr. Penner has made reference to Friesen Printers, and indeed Friesen Printers have had a good training program for a long time.

Some of those people may indeed not have secondary school education, some of the older people, but increasingly, and I know from the people who have graduated from Gordon Bell High School, for example, and have gone to Friesen Printers, they have had Grade 12 education. In fact, increasingly, as earlier presenters have told us, to get into any training program, any educational program, any job, you need a Grade 12 education, which is where this program led.

These students are now, in fact, being eliminated from the opportunities even of getting the job that will give them the access to the Workforce 2000 training program, which is the only educational initiative of this government.

I think you might also be interested to know that Workforce 2000 money is not used primarily to train people who do not have high school education. It is used to offer computer design, for example, to people in architecture companies. It is used to take manager-owners of building companies to Clear Lake for three-day seminars to discuss the nature of their products. It is used to train university students who are cashiers at private golf and country clubs where the entrance fees, for example, are between \$8,000 and \$10,000—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Ms. Friesen, will you come to order, please. Your microphone is cut off until you are recognized, I would suggest, and I am sorry that this has developed the way it has. I would follow the situation as the Chair sees it. Mr. Penner asked the question of the presenter, if she was aware of the program. The presenter responded that she was not.

There was some discussion about the fact that the availability of the program should be more widespread, but at no time did we want to get into a discussion about the program itself. So I would suggest to you, Ms. Friesen, that we are not here to discuss the Workforce 2000. We are here to discuss Bill 32, and I would appreciate it if you could keep your questions, and I will remind you again that this is not a time for debate. That opportunity will afford itself at clause-by-clause discussion. Please confine yourself to questions on Bill 32 to the presenter.

Point of Order

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, I am wondering if you could—I am having some difficulty understanding the rules here, having sat in committee a number of times over the last week. Perhaps you could clarify a bit more as to what nature of questions and discussions we should be taking in this committee, because I find that my colleagues and I, from the NDP and myself from the Liberals, that our line of questioning seems to oftentimes be similar in terms of discussion and then questions as that of the government, yet oftentimes we are called to order. So I am just wondering if you could, for the sake of my understanding and so that I do not make mistakes in committee, perhaps clarify more what we are allowed to ask and what we are not. Is it correct that when a presenter brings up an issue or a subject that we can then question on that matter for instance?

Mr. Chairperson: I believe there is no point of order but certainly for the information of the committee, I have tried, as I said at the beginning of the meeting, to facilitate discussion for the information of committee. I think the Chair has allowed wide latitude for all members in their presentations and questions of the presenters.

I was just pointing out that in this situation in the view of the Chair, Mr. Penner asked a question of the presenter if she was aware of a certain program, the presenter said no. There was some

conversation about whether or not the availability of information on that program was being properly presented, and then Ms. Friesen, in my mind, began to debate the merits and the particular features of that particular program. I am just suggesting to you that that particular program is not before this committee, and the Chair has ruled that that discussion on Workforce 2000 is out of order. Is that fair, Ms. Gray?

Ms. Gray: Well, I guess I am still a little confused because when I get to a point of when I can ask presenters questions, I am going to refer to Workforce 2000, certainly because it was brought up by Mr. Penner and because I felt it made it sound like the individuals from Winnipeg Education Centre should have known about the program and did not, and I feel somewhat responsible because I am the one that asked them the questions.

Mr. Chairperson: Again, the Chair will rule that the presenter did not bring up Workforce 2000, the questioner did. The questioner did only to the point of whether or not the information about the availability of the program, not the program itself, but the availability of the program. That is where the discussion was, and if you wish to ask questions about the information as to the availability of that program, I would rule that in order because that discussion has taken place, but not the discussion about the program itself, which I felt that Ms. Friesen was doing.

Ms. Friesen, to continue her remarks.

* * *

Ms. Friesen: In my estimation, what I was doing was enhancing the understanding of the program that this presenter indicated that she did not have and offering some different versions of it than certainly Mr. Penner has.

I wanted to ask the presenter, there were a couple of elements in her paper which I found very interesting. One of them, particularly, I think the idea that this government in its education policies has consistently, as I have said in the Legislature many times, taken from those who have the least and from those who have no alternatives. That is what you have stressed to us today, I think, is that these are people who have no alternative and are attempting at least to get to a Grade 12 education.

We know that over half the new jobs that are going to be created in Canada, or in North America, are going to require at least two years of

post-secondary education. So in order to have access to at least half of the new jobs, these students are going to have to begin with Grade 12 and then try and find some way to make those extra two years. Is that your understanding of the job market and the educational levels that we should be looking at?

* (1130)

Ms. Teskey: I believe that it—I know that it is. The job market these days, as we all know, is extremely tight. Training in schools for the requirements of a job market, and unfortunately these are the areas on which we seem to have to focus these days. Training is hard to come by, partly because schools are modestly equipped, at best.

The ability for schools to upgrade facilities is difficult in times of restraint. The courses available to students are in the developmental stages. The need for high quality courses in the sciences and mathematics is there. These courses are not easily available to everyone. Not all students are well prepared, for whatever reason, and students who graduate do not have access to very many programs of this nature.

Ms. Friesen: I wonder if you could tell us, as something about your experience in teaching, particularly, the impact of part-time work upon students. Now I know, at Kelvin High School, that is perhaps not as extensive as it is at some other schools in the city or in Manitoba generally, but do you have information or experience or contact with other teachers which would give us a sense of the impact of X number of hours of work upon the studies of a particular student at a particular level?

Ms. Teskey: I have also taught at Daniel McIntyre school which has a quite different population and whose students work probably more hours than the students at Kelvin, but in any event if a student works more than 11 or 12 hours a week, and that is a Friday night, Saturday type of job, we can expect to see students suffering in terms of the amount of time available to spend on studies, certainly extracurricular commitments, sports, music, drama, what have you, become sacrificed to the job.

Most of our students who work, work more than 20 hours a week. They generally work in the evenings or at nights. When you look around the classroom and you see the child who is nodding off at half past nine you know he is the one who has

been up till two working. It is a serious business. Students who are working do not get the best grades, and at one point in my own family I had a discussion with one of my children, because I did not require my children to work. I raised the issue, do you suppose I was a lax mother in not requiring you to get a job? My child said, of course not. I never would have got straight A's if I had to work.

Ms. Frlesen: Do you know of any research on this? I mean, obviously, this is something that the minister is proposing, that students work part time and go to school part time. We have already discussed this with earlier presenters, I do not know if you were here or not, looking at the actual financial possibilities of that, and so I am asking you, the other side of that coin is the educational consequences of that.

I am aware of, in fact, research which argues along the lines that you have suggested, that beyond 10 hours a week that it is detrimental. Up to 10 hours a week may in fact be beneficial to some students, not all but some, and I am looking for further work on this.

Ms. Teskey: I do not know of any particular research conducted by the Department of Education in Manitoba, and I do not know of any conducted by the Teachers' Society, which would be a likely organ to find such information.

Perhaps we might look in the usual sources, sociology departments at universities and so forth, but apparently, work benefits some students in that it focuses them and brings them to an understanding of what the work world is all about and gives them some notion of what they might want to do after high school and that sort of thing, and perhaps it does, but there are only so many hours in a day. In our school, we have heavy programs. We require a lot of work from our students, and if students have full-time or even major part-time jobs, this amount of time definitely impinges on their performance.

Ms. Frlesen: There is one last comment I wanted to make, and that was your expression of your feelings of futility in coming to such committees. I guess, under those circumstances, I perhaps want to say, I hope you do not feel that it is futile. It seems to me that it is important for every government of whatever stripe to be faced with the human consequences of what they are doing, to be faced directly with public opinion, and in both those cases, I think you have brought both those things to

our attention. I think it is also important, from the point of view of any citizen, to resist.

I remember very strongly, very clearly a letter that you wrote to the Free Press—I think it must be about five or six years ago now—on behalf of one of your female students. That made a very strong impression on me and was something that was certainly talked about amongst people that I knew, so I do not think that that kind of resistance in the larger sense is futile at all. I am very glad you are here.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Just a question or two for clarification. You had indicated that there were eight or 10 students at Kelvin High School.

Ms. Teskey: No, probably about a dozen.

Mr. Gilleshammer: A dozen. Are you directly involved in classroom work with some of those students?

Ms. Teskey: I have been.

Mr. Gilleshammer: What generally is the age group of those students?

Ms. Teskey: They are generally in the upper ranges, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would just point out to you that the 16- and 17-year-olds are part of the child welfare system in all likelihood—

Ms. Teskey: No. No, the child welfare system rejects children of that age.

Mr. Gilleshammer: We have thousands of children in care at this time that the child welfare system is responsible for, and the the Students Allowances are basically for adults from 18 to 24.

Ms. Teskey: Well, if you think that the child welfare system is addressing the needs of the 16- and 17-year-olds, come in and meet some of our guidance counsellors who are trying to place those students with the child welfare services, and what they get is, sorry, we have to deal with the young ones.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am just making a distinction for you that because of the age of some of them, they are accommodated within other programs—

Ms. Teskey: Not very well.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, we have a variety of programs that we have brought reforms to in the last few years to make the programming better for them. I am simply making the distinction for you

that the Student Social Allowances Program is basically for adults.

Ms. Teskey: I appreciate your distinction. In fact what happens is quite different. The children 16 and 17 years old are caught in the cleft. There is not enough money to go around; younger children are getting more assistance. It is deemed that they need it more, and they probably do, but in the meantime, kinds of programs that used to address the needs of 16- and 17-year-olds, home maintenance programs and so on, have been withdrawn, and these students are without resources.

Ask yourself, what kind of place is it that has to operate a food bank in one of the most affluent areas of town? That is what happens in our school. We have a food bank. It is a disgrace.

* (1140)

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am informed by the Winnipeg Child and Family Services Agency that they have 200 or 300 young people, aged 16 and 17 years of age, who are on an independent living program, and the distinction I am making for you is where the funding comes from, that the program we are talking about here today is an adult program.

Ms. Teskey: I will take your word for it.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Thank you.

Ms. Gray: Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Teskey. There was a question asked by Mr. Penner about people who do not have a desire, I believe he said, or time to attend school, and in the other presentations, there was some discussion about why do kids or children drop out of school at 15 or 16.

Although some of the reasons given are things such as lack of motivation or boredom, there was a comment made by other presenters that perhaps the real reasons may be related to breakdown in families, child abuse, et cetera.

Do you have any sense, in terms of children dropping out of school, as to what the reasons are for them doing that?

Ms. Teskey: If I have to think of specific examples, I can think of students who dropped out of school because of divorce, the divorce of their parents, and not being able to manage to live with either parent or a new partner. It is surprising how little we know about real child abuse in schools, even though apparently that kind of information is

more available. In my experience, it does not come readily, so I cannot comment on that.

I would say that students leave often when they have a sense of getting nowhere academically, but that does not happen very often either. There usually seems to be something else going on outside the school.

Ms. Gray: Do you believe that for those students who drop out and then want to return to school later on, whether they are in their 20s or in their 30s, as we have had some presenters here today, that they should be given an opportunity to do that, or do you believe that if they have made the one mistake and dropped out, that is it?

Ms. Teskey: It seems to me that there is a Biblical reference, the prodigal son. It seems to me they killed the fatted calf for him, did they not?

It seems to me that when people want to come back and get an education and somehow reconstruct their lives in a more productive way, that we should welcome them with open arms.

Ms. Gray: I really enjoyed your comments at the beginning of your presentation when you talked about individuals who were comfortable, and you used that word a lot for a very good reason. I know in the presentations here this morning, there was some discussion about individuals who come from different circumstances, and I think you are very correct when you say that probably for all of us sitting around this committee table, we have had opportunities in our lives for an education, and probably that is certainly one of the reasons we are here today.

You also talked about this bill and some cynicism about whether in fact it would be passed and whether in fact committee members were listening to what the presenters had to say. I think probably people are listening. Whether in fact there is an understanding of what is being said, I think that is another question.

I am wondering if with this particular bill or if this bill gets passed, when it comes to future bills that are similar in terms of basically negating an opportunity for people to get an education—it oftentimes is people who are in a certain socioeconomic class. Is there a way that you, as an individual who, as you say, has had a comfortable living and others such as yourself and ourselves, some of the committee members here, how do we get across to individuals, how do we

make them understand that people who have not had the same type of background or as comfortable an upbringing, who have had family supports, how do we make people understand that those other people, who have not had those supports, deserve an opportunity too?

I mean, to me this bill is very elitist, and I think it supports a very right-wing agenda. I do not say right wing in terms of a political party, but just a very right-wing agenda. I have seen some of the committee members here, not necessarily this morning but other days, who listen to presentations such as yours, and I know they hear the words, but I do not believe they understand what you are saying.

I do not believe they understand really what these individuals are saying who are going through the programs, because it is foreign to them. They have never had to deal with that. Certainly, you may not have had to deal with that. I have not, some of my colleagues have not, but somehow we must have more of a social conscience or more of an understanding. How do we impart that information to other people who are the lawmakers who do not have that understanding? Do you have any suggestions, whether it is related to this bill or others?

Ms. Teskey: Well, in the first place, you are talking about higher levels of thinking. You are talking about the ability to imagine. If someone here has not actually had the experience, then he or she has to imagine what it is like to live on a small income or to be the poor, the sick, the disadvantaged.

The only other way I can think of is to try it. Sit there for a month at \$500 a month and see how far you get. It is difficult. In my day, I have been a single parent on a very reduced income, and as Mae West would say, I've been rich and I've been poor and rich is better.

It is terrible. You have to be very, very smart to be poor and get by, because you have to know how to budget every penny. You have to be able to know how to repair the tires on your bicycle. You have to know how to trade off babysitting services with a neighbour you can trust. You have to be able to run your garden. You have to be able to fix things. You have to be smart to be poor.

The person who said he was able to earn \$95 a month—\$95. How many of us go out and blow \$95 on an evening at the local restaurant with the family? I mean, come on. You know we are not

even talking the same kind of thing. We are not talking about whether you buy high-quality running shoes; we are talking about whether you can get running shoes down at the Goodwill—that is what. We are talking Second-Hand Rose, we are talking about wieners and beans if you even know how to cook beans. We are talking about can you pay the electricity bill? It is difficult and it is demoralizing. It is very, very hard to be a person trying to get out of this mess.

When I was poor, I was an adult. I was well educated. I was already a teacher. I was not teaching at the time. I was able to get back into the system, and I do not know what life would have been like for me if I had not been. It was pretty nasty there for a while. I would not want to repeat it.

Mr. Pallster: Thank you very much, Ms. Teskey, for your presentation.

As far as the silver-spoon argument that the previous questioner has put forward and your points about comfortable and so on, I think it is obviously something. I believe this whole issue, this whole debate, this whole discussion is something that no one is comfortable with, not a soul.

My personal background is, I left home when I was 17. My personal background is that I worked at part-time and full-time jobs shoveling manure, throwing bales, killing gophers so I could put myself through university. The fact of the matter is, there are many in this House, of all political parties, who do have some sympathy, a great deal of sympathy for this situation, so this elitist crap is something I do not respond to very well from a personal standpoint.

Now, you have said that you decry the process, and you have tried to make the process work for you before. I think it is very understandable, when the process does not work for one, that they would say the process was flawed. I think that is just human nature common sense. The fact is, this province is the only one in this country that allows full participation and discussion of these bills. You should recognize that and, I think, recognize that the process may not work well for all people at all times, but it is a better process than other provinces in this country have, and certainly it is a far superior process than most countries in this world have.

Ms. Teskey: We should be so lucky.

Mr. Pallster: I respect your comments. As a former teacher, I felt the frustration of students leaving school and the terrible loss to them when they leave school young, too young to really be able to go out, as a couple of the previous speakers have alluded to, and really have a great hope for the future. You can see this because of your experience as a teacher, as an educator, and because you are older. The younger student cannot see it yet because of immaturity or for whatever reason.

I have heard a number of presenters say, you know, immaturity. I have heard a lot of the questioners try to blame government. I have had the impression that some had been blaming the students. I would ask you, as a professional, if you, and I believe you do, share—do you accept that this is a shared responsibility?

Ms. Teskey: Shared between whom?

Mr. Pallster: Between the teaching profession as well as the individual, as well as the government. Would you say as a teacher—

Ms. Teskey: You mean government, students and teachers all have it in them together to maintain students in school.

Mr. Pallster: Yes.

Ms. Teskey: Of course, I do.

Mr. Pallster: Okay, good. I would like you to share with us some of your attempts or ideas around the idea of trying to retain students in school. Obviously, this program is one that is there for people who have chosen to drop out and want to come back. How have you taken steps to try and encourage students to stay in school?

* (1150)

Ms. Teskey: On a school basis, our school has a be-in-school program. We had a teacher seconded to us by the school division, half paid for by Winnipeg School Division and half paid for by St. Vital division, who worked up a number of programs with our students this year specifically geared toward acquainting students with the nature of the work world and encouraging them to find materials and opportunities that would suit their interests. So that gave us a kind of specificity to the kind of things that they were doing.

As for myself personally, I think I work very hard at trying to make sure that my students come out of

the programs that I teach able to do the things that I want them to do, which is read and write.

Mr. Pallster: Do you have any belief or ideas or suggestions as to other initiatives that we as a government, perhaps, or you as a teacher could undertake to encourage students to stay in school, any other practical suggestions apart from the ones you have mentioned thus far?

Ms. Teskey: I think that, in fact, our school in particular, and I certainly ascribe to this myself, we do our very best to be as positive, encouraging and helpful with back-up programs, extra help, early identification of difficulty, parent contact. We are strongly aware of students' attendance, we monitor attendance. We do everything we can to make sure that students have access to programs that will make them happy, extracurricular programs. We try to make school as positive a place as possible.

As for the department, I think that a recognition of the universality of education and an attempt to make the people within education feel as if they are actually doing something that is worth doing might be a help. I think probably a more concrete thing might be to fund the kinds of educational changes that need to be made. I mean, if we are really to meet the technological age, we absolutely must have the equipment. We must have the training. We must have the professional development for teachers to adapt programs that are already not bad but are in place to fit a changed world.

Mr. Pallster: Thank you for those comments.

Just to finish off, you refer to comfort, and I think you try to make the tie-in, and I think do so very effectively, between comfort and education and the likely correlation between the two, as one goes up so does the other, we hope. One can be comfortable financially and very uncomfortable with the plight of others. That has no—certainly the political party has nothing to do with that, and so I guess I want to clarify to you that I am very uncomfortable with this, as are a number of my colleagues in government. Yet at the same time we recognize certain realities. For example, this year's budget, there is over \$500 million that is going to go to interest on past debts that were accumulated. I am uncomfortable with that. I think most Manitobans are. Two-thirds of that debt was incurred in six years of NDP government. I do not blame the NDP for that. Some of these people were in that government and some were not. It is

pointless to blame. The fact of the matter is it is a reality. We have to face up to it.

I hope you recognize that as government, we do have the responsibility to deal with not just this program but many more, and we do have the responsibility to look ahead. I hope you recognize that the fact of the matter is there is over \$500 million in this year's budget that cannot go to programs today, because it went to programs 10 or eight or seven or six years ago.

I hope you recognize the reality of that, because there is going to be the need for programs, I expect, even more so in the future than today, and I hope we have the funds to do it. I hope we have the courage as leaders to deal with the reality that we cannot continue to spend millions of dollars in excess of what we have as revenue as a government.

Ms. Teskey: I certainly appreciate what you are saying, and I understand from my own personal finances just how difficult it is to balance any budget.

Clearly, long-term debt is something that nobody likes very much. Nevertheless, I am sure you have income from other sources, albeit, it may be diminishing and all the rest of it, and you are faced with the unenviable challenge of having to do the best you can with what you have. I can only wish you well in it. It is just that if I were spending my money, believe me, I would be spending it on the poor.

Mr. Pallister: Thank you for that comment. I guess what I have trouble with is members opposite who significantly incurred this debt during their term of office, pretending to be caring and—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please.

Ms. Teskey: Well, you never know when they may be faced with it.

Mr. Martindale: Ms. Teskey, I listened to what Mr. Pallister said about partnerships and how parents, teachers and students all have a responsibility, which is all very nice, but are you not saying that the Student Social Allowances Program is absolutely crucial to these students staying in school?

Ms. Teskey: Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much. If there are no other questions or comments for the presenter, I thank you very much for your

participation. [interjection] Oh, one moment, please.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): I just had a question regarding recognition for the work you are doing. One of the last points you raised was that an important aspect of the work of people in the schools is a recognition of that work. I am wondering if you could tell us what that recognition might be.

Ms. Teskey: You mean, what I would like it to be? More money.

Mrs. Vodrey: I thought so.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much, Ms. Teskey, for your participation this morning.

Ken Guilford, private citizen. David Turner, Manitoba Teachers' Society.

Good morning, Mr. Turner. A copy of your brief is being distributed. You may begin when you are ready.

Mr. David Turner (The Manitoba Teachers' Society): This is a submission by The Manitoba Teachers' Society to the Manitoba legislative committee reviewing The Social Allowances Amendment Act, Bill 32, of 1993.

By way of introduction, The Manitoba Teachers' Society welcomes this opportunity to provide a committee of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly with its views on The Social Allowances Amendment Act, Bill 32 of 1993. The Manitoba Teachers' Society believes in the concept of lifelong learning, in the enhancement of student equity and in the systemic encouragement of students to complete at least their high school education regardless of age or personal circumstances. The society believes also that public education is a viable means of enabling students and their families to break through the social and psychological barriers associated with lives being lived in poverty. Because of its beliefs outlined above, the society recommends that Bill 32 be withdrawn.

I come now to the Manitoba government's acknowledged responsibilities to the students of Manitoba. The mission statement of the Department of Education and Training reads, and I quote: Manitoba Education and Training is committed to ensuring that all Manitobans have equal opportunities to obtain high quality education and training programs to meet their lifelong learning needs. That comes from Creating a Framework for

the Future: Education Legislation for the 1990s, A Consultation Paper.

The Manitoba Teachers' Society endorses the objectives expressed in the mission statement just quoted. However, the society questions the provincial government's level of commitment to ensuring all Manitobans have opportunities in light of the proposed amendments in Bill 32.

With regard to adult students in Manitoba high schools, the former Minister of Education and Training Len Derkach stated, quote: The department supports the provision of educational programs to adults over the age of 21 in Manitoba high schools. All Manitobans should have the opportunity to complete a high school program and avail themselves of the educational resources present in their communities. That is Strategy 34 in Answering the Challenge: Strategies for Success in Manitoba High Schools released in June 1990.

* (1200)

The Manitoba Teachers' Society supports the spirit of Strategy 34 as quoted above. Again, however, the society questions the level of determination of the provincial government to provide support to a group of Manitobans most in need of educational opportunities—adults, many of them new Canadians who lack a high school education. Bill 32 suggests the government's support for these students is in broad principle only, not in actual financial support as presently embodied in the unamended Social Allowances Act.

On financial aspects of Bill 32, the Manitoba government's social allowances estimates for the year 1992-93 are \$238,413,600, and for the year 1993-94, the social allowances estimates are \$236,802,000. The second estimate shows a reduction of \$1,611,600 or 0.7 percent, and that comes from the Supplementary Estimates for 1993-94, Manitoba Department of Family Services. The only causal differences in these Estimates of Expenditure relate to the effects of Bill 32. Therefore, the Manitoba government proposes to reduce its social allowances budget by 0.7 percent by eliminating assistance to a group of students who fit the definition of the act, and I quote from Section 5(1)(h) of The Social Allowances Act: A person who is undertaking undergraduate academic or technical vocational training and has insufficient income to meet the basic necessities of himself and his dependents, if any; . . ."

The Manitoba Teachers' Society wishes to be on record as stating that the Manitoba government's fiscal priorities, shown by Bill 32, are detrimental to the development of a skilled workforce needed by this province in the next century. The society notes the discrepancy in the treatment between those who have, quote: "insufficient income to meet the basic necessities" and those whose families have the financial means to send their children to private schools.

The effects of Bill 32 on the students of Manitoba: The students who now benefit from The Social Allowances Act are those who are investing in the future of this province. They are striving to improve their skills, their knowledge and their chances of employment in Manitoba. Those students benefiting from The Social Allowances Act, who are in parenting roles, set good examples as role models for their children still in the public school system. Those students who are new Canadians are internalizing two of the central tenets of Canadian life: equality of opportunity and acceptance of immigrants.

Students presently benefiting from The Social Allowances Act are in the process of breaking the cycle of unemployment and poverty. They are attempting to become productive, tax-paying citizens. Bill 32 will have the effect of discouraging ambitious but indigent mature students. These students will likely sink into apathy and remain on the government's welfare rolls for years to come. In terms of investment in the people of this province, Bill 32 is regressive legislation.

In conclusion, The Manitoba Teachers' Society recommends that Bill 32 be withdrawn. The proposed amendments in Bill 32 contradict the provincial government's stated objectives for the education of Manitobans. The amendments make no fiscal sense. They reduce the social allowances budget by 0.7 percent next year but will add millions of dollars to the social allowances budget in years to come.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you very much, Mr. Turner.

Mr. Martindale: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to thank Mr. Turner for an excellent submission on behalf of The Manitoba Teachers' Society.

I am grateful that you pointed out the difference between the mission statement of the Department of Education and what they are actually doing by withdrawing the Student Social Allowances

Program, in particular, the fact that they are committed to providing education for all Manitobans but, in this case, withdrawing it from some of the poorest citizens of our province and, therefore, you question their level of determination to provide for the educational opportunities for those most in need.

I have different figures, and I am sure the minister would be quite happy to put the most accurate figures possible on the record on the amount of money spent on social assistance. According to the Estimates book, page 56, the amount of money budgeted for Income Maintenance Programs in '92-93 was \$336,346,000 and, this year, \$371,995,000.

I could stand corrected by the minister because he is much better at reading these figures than I am. However, we have been through Family Services and income support Estimates, and we know that the amount of money that the government has had to budget for social assistance is up considerably as the rate of unemployment increases and as people's unemployment insurance runs out and they are forced onto municipal and provincial social assistance.

However, I think your point about saving a very small amount of money by eliminating this program is well taken. It is really a very small part of this minister's budget.

Could you elaborate on your views, please, or the society's views, on the difference between providing for all Manitobans including those who are quite poor and those families in Manitoba who are lucky enough to be able to afford—well, I do not really believe it is luck, but those who can afford to send their children to private school? Do you have any views on the government's priorities in spending in these areas?

Mr. Turner: The society has policy on private schools. This policy goes something like this: that we recognize the right of the private schools to exist, but we are certainly against any public money going to the support of those private schools.

The reference on page 2 to the discrepancy is a reference to the fact that Bill 32 is taking away from those who are already without very much in the way of supports at all and, of course, in this year's Estimates, as was brought out in a discussion in committee stage on Bill 22, the private schools stand to gain somewhere in excess of \$10 million

this year over last year's increases. So clearly the government's priorities are priorities that the Teachers' Society cannot agree with, since we are conscious of the fact that any educational system that claims to be public should be looking after all the public and not favouring some of the more privileged members in a financial sense.

Mr. Martindale: My final question has to do with investing in the future of this province. I regret that I have to leave. It is not due to lack of interest, but I have to be somewhere else and I will be back here at 7 o'clock tonight.

How do you see education as investing in the future of the province and investing in the future of these individual students?

* (1210)

Mr. Turner: I guess I would draw the attention of the committee to the first three presenters that we heard this morning. I think they did a more than adequate job in expressing, on a very personal level, what The Social Allowances Act, at the moment unamended, means to them.

We have got three people who are hoping to continue with their education. One of them is at the Grade 9 level, one of them is in vocational education, and one of them is attending the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre on parole. All three of them clearly represent many more people in the same circumstances.

You can imagine that if those three individuals are successful, as I hope they will be, in continuing their education, in getting their Grade 12, in getting a job which Grade 12 would require, they would become, I would say—I am quoting from my own brief here—productive taxpaying citizens. In that sense they are an investment.

If however, because of the amendments in Bill 32 passing, they are cut off from financial support and in despair drop out of education, they will simply add three more digits to the welfare rolls and continue there presumably for the rest of their mature life unless something is done to help those people.

That is how I would address that question. I mean, the answers have been presented I think this morning far more eloquently than I could in a more generalized fashion.

Ms. Friesen: One of the earlier presenters suggested that I discuss with the Teachers' Society the issue of part-time work and studies. I hope you

have not touched on that while I was away, but I wondered if you might give us some idea of what studies or what research or what experience teachers are having in Winnipeg schools or Manitoba schools at the moment?

Mr. Turner: I am afraid I cannot answer that question. I do not have the research. I did not come prepared for a question of that nature. If you will pardon a personal comment, I am certainly not speaking for the society in this respect though, and that is simply to I guess corroborate what I heard being discussed across this table earlier on, and that is for some students, up to 10 hours a week seems in many cases to be almost beneficial.

It presumably develops a certain amount of self-discipline; it prepares them for the workforce; it gets them used to an attitude of "produce or leave," which I think is a realistic attitude and something which many young people probably should be aware of before they complete high school.

So in that sense I think—and I am speaking personally on this respect—it is probably beneficial. I am also conscious of some research which indicates that in rural areas those students who have part-time work tend to do better in school than those who do not have part-time work at the high school level.

Ms. Friesen: That is an interesting aspect of the research, and I am wondering why that would be. Is that in comparison to urban students or is it just simply a defined field of research that says in rural areas this happens?

Mr. Turner: It was a defined field of research that I am aware of.

Ms. Friesen: I am just speculating here now too, and it is very personal. My guess is that some of them would be working in family businesses, whether it is farming or whether it is in the rural business community, that that may make a difference as well.

Mr. Turner: I cannot corroborate that.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, okay.

Mr. Chalperson: Thank you. Are there any other questions or comments for the presenter? Hearing none, I would like to thank you very much, Mr. Turner, for your presentation this morning.

What is the will of the committee, the hour being 12:15? Shall we call then No. 14, the as yet unannounced—I have no record for the

Manitobans Against Cutbacks in Education. Is there a representative from that organization here? No?

Number 15, Dusty Britton, private citizen. Ryan Craig, private citizen.

Mr. Craig, your presentation is being distributed. You may begin when you are ready.

Mr. Ryan Craig (Private Citizen): I am speaking here today because I believe a grave injustice is being served. I have been reading in newspapers articles which depict what Bill 32 will do to our children, our educational system and to our future, and I cannot stand by and watch this travesty.

The Winnipeg Free Press headlined an article on April 3, 1993: Forced to choose between school or food on the table. Once again we are surrounded by politicians concerned with snappy photos and misleading cliches. This is not a "Class Struggle" as suggested by the Winnipeg Sun on Thursday, June 10, 1993, but rather an economic responsibility.

I have read a great many articles pertaining to this particular piece of legislation. In each article the people and reporters accuse the government of being harsh, irresponsible and saying, they leave no option but welfare. I disagree, which is why I am in support of this bill.

The government was hardly irresponsible in introducing this piece of legislation. I believe Bill 32 is one of the most fiscally responsible bills the government has introduced during this legislative session. Given our present economic predicament, I believe that we must target our resources on those who are most in need of assistance: sole-support parents, disabled persons, the elderly and those in crisis centres—people who are not able to support themselves. This bill will save the government \$4 million which will help to reduce the province's deficit and, in turn, reduce public debt.

There are options for these young people other than welfare. They may choose to split the year in half, working and saving for the first half while they return to school for the second half. They may also choose to work during the day while taking educational courses during the evening. Both of these options are commonly practised by many, as is evident by the number of people enrolled in day- and evening-school programs at university,

community colleges and community upgrading programs.

At the outset, it may appear difficult for a student to find a job. There are, however, 44 youth employment centres located throughout the province currently being operated by the provincial government which assist students in gaining employment. These centres located summer jobs for 2,700 students during the previous year. This year these centres estimated that they will aid more than 3,500 students to find summer employment at an average hourly wage of \$6.45.

The Green Team is yet another program also being run by the provincial government which employed 200 high school students during the previous summer. It was announced earlier this year that \$1.4 million in video lottery terminal revenue will be used to expand this program. Three hundred and fifty students, up to the ages of 24, will be employed through this program for 13 weeks during this summer. The opportunities are there for those who are willing.

The choice is not between destroying the lower class or spending a few extra dollars. The choice is not between denying welfare recipients their right to an education or doing the right thing. The choice is between fiscal responsibility or economic ruin. The choice is yours. I urge you to support Bill 32.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Craig. As you probably observed, the committee members sometimes like to engage in longer discussions. Are you prepared to do that?

Mr. Craig: Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you. Are there any committee members with any questions or comments for Mr. Craig?

Ms. Gray: Thank you for your presentation.

Could you give us a bit of a background as to what your background is? Are you employed? Are you a student?

Mr. Craig: I am currently employed. I am a night-school instructor with the St. James-Assiniboia School Division. That is a part-time job. I use that job to pay for my university. I am currently going into first-year university at the University of Manitoba.

Ms. Gray: Are you familiar with any individuals who have been on the student allowance program?

Mr. Craig: Yes, I am.

Ms. Gray: In your comments in this brief, what is your sense of their individual circumstances and the either positiveness of the program or perhaps the negative of the Student Social Allowances? Have you felt that the program has benefited them? Do you think they would have been able to continue their education without the benefit of the Student Social Allowances?

* (1220)

Mr. Craig: Well, I have talked to those individuals. They have said that they appreciated the program, and it helped them to get back on track, but they also say that they are willing to work and they are willing to work for an education. They all have part-time jobs, and they feel that although the program aided them, it will be a little bit more difficult, but they are willing to continue with their part-time jobs to further their education.

Ms. Gray: You in your brief talk about the importance of fiscal responsibility. I am wondering, do you see—and in some of the former presentations, and I do not know if you were here throughout the morning, but there was a correlation made between the fact that with this program and this bill repealing the Student Social Allowances portion, in fact, individuals will remain on social assistance rolls longer. In fact, the cost to society and to governments will be more than if in fact we invested this amount of money now. Do you have any comment on that?

Mr. Craig: Well, I disagree, and those whom I have talked to on this program disagree as well. They have used the program to further their education, but as I said before, they are willing to work for it. They do not like the idea of having to rely on the government for assistance. They have taken it, but they also supplement their income with part-time jobs. They are continuing presently to do so.

Ms. Gray: So those individuals you have talked to disagree then with some of the presenters this morning, obviously, who are on social assistance.

Mr. Craig: Yes. Those are people who are directly involved and affected.

Ms. Gray: Thank you.

Ms. Friesen: I wonder if you have worked out a budget for somebody who is working at the minimum wage and doing as you suggest and as the minister suggested, working part time supporting themselves, that is, paying their own

rent and food and transport and whatever else is necessary to actually get to the job and trying to save for the other half of the year so that they can go to school as you suggest. We did discuss this with one of the employment counsellors from CEIC, and she felt essentially that this was close to impossible except for, I think, about 1 percent of the people whom she saw.

So I wondered if you had looked at the budget, you know, at a 40-hour week, \$5 an hour, the cost of rent of either a room or of a shared apartment, plus the cost of food, plus the cost of transport and then how much surplus is left for the saving for the subsequent time.

Mr. Craig: Although I have not drawn up or looked at a budget, I feel compelled to look at those individuals who do maintain enrollment in university and community colleges and community upgrading programs as I had said, and those individuals do manage, which makes me wonder why others cannot manage as well.

Ms. Friesen: One of the differences, of course, is that university and college students have access to loans, to the Canada Student Loan Program and formerly to a Manitoba bursary program and in the future to a Manitoba loan program. That is something that these people who do not yet have a completed high school do not have access to.

Mr. Craig: I also mentioned in my speech community upgrading programs. Those do not fall under the category of Canada loans.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, that is true. There are some community upgrading programs. These, however, do not lead to a Grade 12 certificate. They do in fact lead largely to short-term work and to very narrowly defined work.

The difference in this program is it enables students to get a Grade 12 education, which is something which is portable, which has credibility across the country, which enables one to have access to the student loans that enables one to get post-secondary education. That is why this program was particularly special.

Mr. Craig: At the high school which I graduated from, we had adults integrated into our regular school system. A lot of the adults worked evening jobs to support themselves and attended school in the mornings. Some of them also, through the flexibility of the school calendar, were able to work

in the afternoons as well. There were also a lot of students which also fit into that category.

Ms. Friesen: I understand that there may be some people who have work experience and hence are able to get a job or to keep a job and then be integrated into the high school in the way you are suggesting. It is possible there is a proportion of people.

I think if you had heard some of the other presenters, you would know that the average age of people in this program is—no, I should not say that. It was from the Winnipeg Education Centre. The average age of students in adult education I think was around about 28.

Many of those people will have lived now through the last decade where there has been strong and rising unemployment rates and statistically will have had less opportunity to develop that work record, which will give them the opportunity, as you are suggesting, to maintain a low-level job and to upgrade. Increasingly, jobs are not available to people without a high school graduation, even though we may, in all abstract ways, say that it is not necessary for a particular job. Certainly, the competitive aspect of our job market means that those who have the higher levels of formal education will be the ones who have first access at those jobs.

Whereas what you are suggesting may be possible for a small percentage of people right now, it certainly seems to me, both statistically and from our own anecdotal knowledge of what is there in the Winnipeg labour market, it is not going to be the case in the future.

Mr. Craig: I would have to disagree. From my first-hand knowledge, I have observed people, many people, in my previous school who had taken that route and took great pride in funding themselves through their high school. Just recently, a lot of them graduated with a high school diploma and will be going on to university or post-secondary education.

With my own personal experience and through the research I have done, there are opportunities out there. As I said, there is not a great deal of opportunity, but there are many options which the government provides, which people, whom I have asked, feel are adequate.

Ms. Friesen: Were the people that you are making a reference to, the people whom you were

in high school with, supporting themselves while they had these part-time jobs and going to school? How many of them were there and over which years are we looking at?

Mr. Craig: They were between the ages of 18, and the oldest person I knew was 26. They found ways to support themselves. One solution was to share the rent with other people. They found that to be one of the greatest advantages.

Ms. Frlesen: How many of these people were there between the ages of 18 and 26 in the school that you were in, presumably for three years, a high school program?

Mr. Craig: People that I talked to?

Ms. Frlesen: The people that you said you went to school with.

Mr. Craig: In this situation?

Ms. Frlesen: Yes.

Mr. Craig: Twelve to 15.

Ms. Frlesen: Could I ask which school this is?

Mr. Craig: Sturgeon Creek Regional Secondary School.

Ms. Frlesen: I wanted to ask about your final sentence where you say the choice is not between denying welfare recipients their right to education. Do you not feel that is in fact what does happen, that people who are on welfare are not allowed to take more than two courses? They have to be ready for work. I mean, welfare is meant to be a program where people are looking for work not for education. I sense that you would support a situation where people in fact would put education first. Is that correct? I am not quite sure what you mean by that last sentence.

Mr. Craig: Well, I think that if people go on welfare, then they have agreed to the terms of the welfare contract being that your first responsibility is to find work for yourself, and secondary to that is providing yourself with an education, which is why I believe they limit it to two courses. I currently support the government on that. I feel that while it is important to provide yourself with an education, it is also at the same time important to have a job.

Ms. Frlesen: Is it your belief that people choose to go on welfare?

Mr. Craig: I do not think people purposely choose to go on welfare. I think it is a result of their

environment that they are forced to resort to welfare.

Ms. Frlesen: And as a result of their environment then, you are content as a citizen of Manitoba to accept a system which says that these people are going to have very unequal access to high school education, the basic element of our free education system which is a high school system.

Mr. Craig: I am not sure I understand the question.

Ms. Frlesen: Well, you agree that people do not choose to go on welfare, that it is a result of circumstances and of their environment. You argued an environmental and I presume a social and economic environment, and so you are arguing that it is not the fault of those individuals.

Mr. Craig: I never said that it was—well, actually yes, I did say and I should take that back. I believe in some cases, yes, it is the direct result of people's actions leaving high school in pursuit of their own goals. That is their own choice, they made that choice, but I think they should also have to realize that they made that decision and that is the reason why they are in this present predicament.

Ms. Frlesen: You did hear, and I do not know how long you have been here, so I assume that you have heard some of—

* (1230)

Mr. Craig: Nine o'clock.

Ms. Frlesen: Since nine o'clock, well, my commiserations and apologies, but I guess there will be other people who will be coming later, too.

I understand that what you are saying is that people make a decision around the age, perhaps, 14 or 15, some of them coming from quite brutal homes, some of them coming from very poor economic environments and you would accept that those people—some of whom spoke today—are making a conscious legitimate choice at that stage for which they must suffer the consequences, not necessarily of their own doing, but of their family's doing, of their family's economic circumstances and which they are going to be faced with the consequences for the next 10, 15, 20 years.

Mr. Craig: I never directly referred to those people. I referred to more people who are tired of the educational system, who want to move out of the house even when there is no apparent reason, to just have their freedom. I know a lot of people

who have dropped out of school at the ages of 16, 17, because they were tired of their parents, tired of going to school. They wanted to get out, have a job, make a lot of money and then afterwards realizing that they need an education and going back into the program. I think a lot of them had learned the lesson that was their decision and in a way they have to suffer the consequences, but a lot of them are prepared to work and they are very proud that they are supporting themselves through their education.

Ms. Friesen: So you would draw a distinction then between those who came from particular kinds of environments and those whom you believe are making a choice based upon full information.

Mr. Craig: Yes.

Ms. Friesen: Would you make a distinction for immigrants? The presenters from the Winnipeg Education Centre and people I know who have been in the social allowances program have talked in glowing terms about immigrant families who were on this program and who came with tremendous hope to Canada and who saw this as their means of social mobility.

Mr. Craig: I know a lot of immigrants who are going to school right now and are making great strides at learning the English language. A lot of them fortunately have families which they can rely on to help support them through their educational process.

Ms. Friesen: For those who do not, would you draw a distinction there?

Mr. Craig: Yes, I suppose I would have to draw a distinction, but I have noticed that a lot of immigrants who come into this country do take great pains at finding work. I do not know the statistics, but I would imagine that a lot of them opt for the work first and then for the education.

Ms. Friesen: So it seems to me what you are saying is the people you are concerned about and the people whom you are directing the government to be concerned about are those who are at the age of 16 or 17 make essentially a flight of fancy, a misjudgment about their economic potential and leave, that those people should not be considered.

Mr. Craig: Well, I never said that.

Ms. Friesen: No, I agree. Tell me where I am making the errors, go ahead.

Mr. Craig: I think what the government should stress is in fact what they have been doing is the Stay-in-School program, encourage those students as much as possible with the school boards and the schools to stay in school so as to prevent this problem.

Ms. Friesen: I think that is an important issue to raise, and it is one where one might anticipate if that program works, that is a good program, and if both governments, federal and provincial, were both involved in this, do put the effort and the interest into this, that it should work, and hence there should be a narrowing of the people who are involved in this social allowance program. So presumably there would be less and less of a, as you would perhaps call it, burden on the state.

So would it have been worthwhile perhaps, from your perspective, to phase out this program rather than to cancel it?

Mr. Craig: I think one thing that is being forgotten is the rest of the factors that are in this equation. This government is faced with a very large deficit and a burdening debt, and in some cases it is not possible to just simply phase out a program.

I think money has to come right away, and I think we are taking it from the people who at least can support themselves, while the other people I referred to, sole-support parents, the elderly, people in crisis centres, cannot afford any cutbacks. I commend the government for making across-the-board cuts rather than just directing it at one specific department.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you. Are there any other questions or comments?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Chairperson, I would just like to thank the presenter for coming forward and representing, I think, young people who have taken that option to work and support themselves in studies and present a rather balanced approach to this.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I would like to add to what the Minister of Family Services has said. I think your approach and your courage is even more commendable considering the cross-examination and the badgering you have been put through today.

Point of Order

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairperson, I resent that very strongly. I do not think that I was badgering. I think I was trying to get at what this particular presenter was arguing, and I believe that I treated him with respect.

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable member does not have a point of order, but I would ask all committee members to try and treat each other with respect and courtesy. We are trying to get through a very difficult process and listening to a number of public presenters.

From time to time I have had to call you to order on various choices, so I would ask you to treat one another with respect.

* * *

Mrs. Vodrey: I would just also like to take a moment to thank the presenter for the information and also for his willingness to enter into a discussion. He has presented ideas which he has thought out and, in the process of questioning, certainly expanded on those ideas and others. I would have to say I am impressed with how really well-informed a young person he is and how well able he is to really think on the spot and integrate information and answer questions, and I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

*(1240)

Mr. Chairperson: Hearing no other questions or comments, I thank you very much, Mr. Craig, for your presentation this morning.

The hour being 12:40, what is the will of the committee?

An Honourable Member: Committee rise.

Mr. Chairperson: Before we adjourn, the Clerk has been presented with one more written presentation from Lynne Swabuk and that is being distributed to you now.

The hour being 12:41, committee adjourn until seven o'clock this evening.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 12:41 p.m.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS PRESENTED BUT NOT READ

To whom it may concern:

I am vehemently opposed to Bill 32. For many people, the elimination of the student allowance program would end their academic careers.

Finishing high school and perhaps even going on to university is the only hope many of these people have of getting off welfare for good. Particularly now, as there is talk of cutting back student bursaries. I strongly support continuing social assistance payments to students.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Moore

* * *

Honourable Members of the Committee,

My name is Lori Balharry. I am 21 years of age and a full-time student studying Political Science at the University of Manitoba. I am writing to you on behalf of The Social Allowances Amendment Act of Bill 32. The deletion of the student category in The Social Allowances Amendment Act is a positive move made by the Conservatives in order to cut back government spending.

In these harsh economic times, changes are necessary to build a stable, secure economic environment. Granted, changes will always bring about minor repercussions. This is one change which would have the least possible effect on individuals within our society. As I understand it, individuals who are the most vulnerable of Manitobans, such as sole-support parents, disabled persons, elderly and persons in crises shelters, will not be affected by the amendment. The amendment is directed towards able-bodied individuals who do not fall under the categories of "most vulnerable." These able-bodied persons are primarily students between the ages of 18 to 24 in which the large majority are attending high schools.

In my opinion, students in this age category should not be dependent on the government for this assistance. Rather, it should be a last resort intended for those in dire need of it.

Being in this age group, I do not understand why these able-bodied individuals, like myself, are not capable of providing their own means of support. If they made the decision to leave home and live on their own, the thought must have crossed their minds that you need an income to support yourself. Obviously, these individuals have been out of school for a certain time period and just recently decided to go back and work towards their diploma. This would have given them plenty of time to work and save their money, so when the time came in which they would begin attending classes, they could afford to cut their hours of employment.

Those who claim there are "no jobs out there" are using this as a flimsy excuse to the reality of the situation. Employment opportunities are listed in the newspaper every day. According to Employment and Immigration Canada, jobs advertised in the newspapers only amount to 20 percent of the available jobs in total. Just recently in the June 16 edition of the Winnipeg Free Press was an entire page of "Career and Job Opportunities 1993" advertising feature. This feature educated Manitobans on how to seek employment.

In one article, the Winnipeg student-youth employment centre stated they still have available positions and new opportunities are continually opening up daily. This centre is set up to assist university and high school students between the ages of 16 and 24 and also youths who are not in school. There are 44 of these Youth Employment Centres operating in the province this summer. Employment and Immigration Canada produced a booklet called the Job Search Planner which they make available at no charge to aid Manitobans seeking employment.

It is necessary to approach various sources, such as local businesses, friends, relatives, acquaintances, yellow pages, school or college placement offices, teachers, professors, instructors, classmates, private employment agencies, church and community members and local organizations. If you take the time and approach various sources, you are guaranteed to find a job. If an individual cannot find a full-time job, then he/she should take alternative means to make ends meet. An example of this would be myself. I am unable to work full time, so I work four part-time jobs throughout the summer and school to make up for the full-time job I am unable to work. You make the system work for you.

An article called "Working to stay in school" was recently published in the June 17 edition of the Winnipeg Free Press. It explained that part-time jobs cut drop-out risks. The article stated that Statistics Canada surveyed 18- to 20-year-olds and found, "Students who worked at part-time jobs while attending high school were less likely to drop out of school than those who did not work." Therefore, I highly doubt that employment would hinder these youths' education.

I conducted a random survey at the University of Manitoba where I interviewed 30 people. I

explained Bill 32 and the amendment, and then asked these individuals whether they thought students should have the right or eligibility to continue receiving special assistance. Out of the 30 individuals, 26 stated the program should be cut, three felt it should stay as is, and one person was undecided. Nineteen of these individuals were between the ages of 18 and 24. The 26 individuals who stated the program should be cut felt that the students are taking advantage of the government and are therefore ultimately abusing the system. In their opinion, students on this assistance were taking the "easy way out" and were getting a free ride. The consensus was that the government can no longer afford these extras who are in the perfect age range to find a job and bring an income of their own. Although the job may not be a professional position, it is a job in which money can be made.

One person explained that she had a friend who worked at a fast-food restaurant, but was unhappy working there. Instead of looking for another job, she opted for social allowances. It was the attitude and actions of her friend that led this person to firmly believe that the program should be cut and force people to work whether they "feel like it or not."

On April 6, the Winnipeg Sun published an article "Killing Program Shatters Dreams." In this article, a statement was made: "Without it (social allowances) students must work to put themselves through school or go on provincial welfare, which only allows for part-time studies." Why does this pose such a problem? The majority of students in university work to support themselves and attend school full time. If it is only possible for them to attend part time, why is this such a big deal? It may take a little longer, but they should have thought about that in the first place. At least this way, they would not pilfer off the government and taxpayers.

When I conducted my survey, I came across a case in which the subject felt absolutely no sympathy towards students on assistance because he has been in similar circumstances while he was entering his first year of university. His parents kicked him out of his home. Instead of receiving a social allowance, he found a full-time job and attended university full time. After two years of going to school and working full time, he decided he needed a break. He then took a year off of school and worked full time. He saved his money that year, and in September, he will again be

attending school and will only work part time. Throughout the entire time, he maintained above-average grades.

It may take him a little longer to get his degree, but he has the desire and ambition that will lead him to succeed. What this subject did not understand is the fact that if he could do it, why could not others, especially since the majority of these "others" are in high school where there are no extra \$3,000 tuition fee and book costs, and where the school work is considerably less intense. The subject stated, it is a question of setting priorities and taking the initiative. I agree with him.

Also in the article, "Killing Program Shatters Dreams," a 24-year-old girl named Sandra Bergen, who is receiving social allowances stated, "if I work, my school work is going to hurt. I am not going to get the marks I need to go to university." If you cannot handle working and going to high school now, how does she expect to work and go to university where the homework is twice the load than in high school? Or does she expect to be on special assistance throughout university too? Will she ever get off? I worked part time throughout high school and university and my marks never suffered. Neither did all my friends' marks who also had to work throughout high school and university.

In all the articles I have read in the paper, they state, "the government is shattering dreams of the youth," "government forcing youth to go on city welfare," and "Filmon, the Premier who kicked people out of high school." Why is the government the culprit? On March 18, the Winnipeg Free Press published an article in which Jason Hansen, a student who last fall began receiving social assistance, was upset because he would no longer receive this income. He stated that before he went on the social assistance program, "he'd been out of school for three years, spending his days watching television and partying with his friends at night." Why are the government and taxpayers responsible for this?

All these individuals say they cannot go back to school if the government takes the money away. This should act as a powerful incentive to motivate these youths to go out and get a job so they can support themselves and go back to school. Do they not want to prove to others and themselves that they are capable of doing it on their own without the financial aid of others? Again, I do not

understand why I, a taxpayer, have had to work since I was 16 years old to support myself and others who claim they are not capable of working. These people are the same age as me and are able-bodied like myself, but unlike myself, they claim they are vulnerable and cannot work. This seems to be an unfair and unjust situation.

The individuals need to find alternative means of support. Due to the financial situation of the government, cuts need to be made. Otherwise, the economy as a whole could suffer. The government will not be leaving these people high and dry. These are able-bodied individuals who are capable of supporting themselves, like the thousands of individuals their age already do. Nobody said life was easy, but why should some people get a free ride when the rest of us have to work for it?

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Balharry

* * *

I graduated from the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre in January of 1992. Student Social Allowances financed three of the four terms I completed there. I have just completed my first year of prejournalism studies at the University of Winnipeg. I hope to be accepted in the Journalism and Communications School in Regina, and I aspire to be a communications and publicity officer for a public service organization either in the private or government sectors.

I will continue writing and marketing material as I do now. My studies at Adult Education helped develop my writing ability that has been recognized outside of school as well. In 1991, I was fortunate to win a contest sponsored by an adult literacy organization in the category for adult high school students. I published a weekly publicity column in a community newspaper. That was a volunteer effort for the Portage and District Arts Council. I am presently negotiating the sale of a short story to a market in Saskatchewan.

In choosing to address this committee, I decided to speak, not only as a former recipient of Student Social Allowances, but also as a former consumer of mental health services in Manitoba. I feel, of all the government services I have been the recipient of, the Student Social Allowances Program was the most beneficial and the most community-oriented. In the early 1980s, I was either hospitalized or in a hospital program for approximately 10 months over

a three-year period. I believe that is called a revolving door in mental health circles.

After my second-last hospitalization, I returned to my family home in Portage la Prairie where my family gave me the time and care I needed to recover. I had another thankfully brief hospitalization in 1983. I returned to the workforce in 1985, but was only able to find part-time work at minimum wage.

There is not much you can do with a Grade 9 education and only one employment skill that I believe is now obsolete. I was a telephone operator for answering services and have only been trained on the old cord boards which have been replaced by computerized systems. I could not afford to live independently, despite the strong concerns of the mental health professionals I worked with that independence was an important issue for me.

However, despite 10 years of working with system professionals, I was totally unaware of job training or upgrading programs through vocational rehab. I only later learned of different options from another former patient. I assume the oversight was partly ignorance and apathy on the part of the system professionals I worked with, and also an assumption that I could not accomplish terribly much.

This assumption was revitalized recently when I wanted to go to university. I would like to point out that many of these people earn in an hour what it cost the government to send me to school for a day or even a week.

But I was aware of the Adult Education Centre and the Student Social Allowances Program, having attended for a very brief period in 1980 between hospitalizations. I decided to return again at the age of 32. With my savings, I was able to pay my own expenses for approximately two months. SSA funded me until my last term when a family member was in a position to help me financially.

It was the first time I had lived independently since before my illness and my experiences with many of the staff and students at the centre built my confidence and taught me life skills as I interacted with people who shared a variety of life experiences.

I excelled in most classes and won individual achievement awards in three university entrance subjects. I also won a small financial award when I graduated in 1992 and was awarded a scholarship by the University of Winnipeg. I finished my first year of university with a 3.5 grade average for three and a half courses. I finished near the top of both my English and logical reasoning classes.

Being a high school graduate has already increased my earning potential. Before starting university in September 1993, I worked as a receptionist for a temporary office agency as I was also able to improve my typing skills at the centre. I think being an adult high school graduate impresses potential employers, which is especially important for people like myself who have a spotty employment history.

I wish my entire presentation could be positive and uplifting, but as I mentioned earlier my experiences in the mental health care system strongly influenced my decision to write this committee. I would like to remind the committee that the government pays for mental health services as well. During my 10 months in hospital, I received three totally different diagnoses and was fed a total of nine different chemicals at various times—that was before we had the right to refuse treatment.

Since becoming a student, I have had the one chemical I still take reduced to less than a third of my original dosage. By choice, I do not work with any system professionals, I now attend support groups and receive specialized counselling outside of the mental health care system while my general practitioner supervises my medication.

Going to school made my life meaningful and purposeful and gave me dignity and hope for a future. This became possible for me not through therapy or drug treatment or expensive demeaning psychiatric treatment programs that ghettoize former patients, but through an opportunity to learn and do and grow with members of the community at large.

I would like to conclude by suggesting the government is making a far better investment giving people like me a fresh start and a second or even third chance than it is pouring millions of dollars into the inept, inadequate and even abusive mental health system that exists today.

Lynne Swabuk