



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

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**STANDING COMMITTEE**

on

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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42 Elizabeth II

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*Chairperson  
Mr. Jack Penner  
Constituency of Emerson*



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**VOL. XLII No. 10 - 7 p.m., THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 1993**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

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

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**  
**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Thursday, June 17, 1993**

**TIME — 7 p.m.**

**LOCATION — Winnipeg, Manitoba**

**CHAIRPERSON — Jack Penner (Emerson)**

**ATTENDANCE - 11 — QUORUM - 6**

*Members of the Committee present:*

Hon. Messrs. Cummings, Derkach, Enns, Manness

Messrs. Alcock, Ashton, Ms. Friesen, Messrs. McAlpine, Penner, Reid, Sveinson

Substitutions:

Mr. Gaudry for Mr. Alcock at 7 p.m.

Mr. Alcock for Mr. Gaudry at 8:15 p.m.

**APPEARING:**

Gerald Ducharme, MLA for Riel

Linda McIntosh, MLA for Assiniboia

**WITNESSES:**

Len Howell, Private Citizen

Kathy Ducharme, Private Citizen

Nancy Riche, Canadian Labour Congress

Brian Ardern, Thompson Teachers' Association

Laurena Leskiw, President, Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba

John Chalaturnyk, Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba

Evan Casselman, Turtle Mountain Teachers' Association

John Rennie, Portage Teachers' Association

Barbara Kearstephan, Portage Teachers' Association

Judy Bower, Birdtail River Teachers' Association

Peter Dyck, Private Citizen

Darryl Gervais, Pelly Trail Teachers' Association

Alan Schroeder, Private Citizen

Steven Roznowsky, Private Citizen

Bill Vail, Private Citizen

**WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS:**

Ester Fyk, Private Citizen

Dale Yeo, Private Citizen

Hazel Anderson, Private Citizen

Jack Boyko, Private Citizen

Alvin Funk, Chairperson; Diane Stirling, Shelley Tucker, Randy Langstaff, Don Bedford, Linda Ballantyne: Intermountain Teachers' Association Professional Development Committee

Boris Bugera, Private Citizen

Teachers, Goose Lake High

Barb Grexton, Teacher, Grandview School

Staff, Rorketon School

Katherine Bellemare, Teacher, Dauphin Regional Comprehensive Secondary School

Staff, Gilbert Plains Collegiate

Cory L. Nevill, Diane Burke, Jocelyn C. Winkless, B. Kemkaren, Susan Stewart, D. Adams, Jerome Brockman, Philip B. Winkless, A. V. Walker, M. Jane Hunter, Michael Bertram, Dianne McFadzean, Lesia Wilson: Reston Collegiate Institute

Carole Free, Resource Teacher, St. George School

Robert Rondeau, Private Citizen

V. Stephenson, White Horse Plain Teachers' Association

Sharon Woodman, Teacher, Brandon School Division 40

Russ Reid, Private Citizen

Jan Chaboyer, MGEU, Local 2003, Brandon University

Agassiz Teachers' Association, Agassiz School Division No. 13.

**MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:**

Bill 22, The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Amendment Act

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**Clerk of Committees (Ms. Bonnie Greschuk):** Good evening. I have before me the resignation of Mr. Bob Rose as Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Economic Development. I would like to read his resignation at this time:

I would like to resign as Chairperson for the Standing Committee on Economic Development effective at 1 p.m. today, Bob Rose.

The floor is now open for nominations.

**Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek):** I nominate Mr. Penner.

**Madam Clerk:** Mr. Penner has been nominated. Are there any other nominations? Since there are no other nominations, will Mr. Penner please take the Chair?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Will the committee on Economic Development please come to order. This committee will proceed with public presentations for Bill 22, The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Amendment Act.

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** Mr. Chairperson, before we begin with presentations this evening, I have a motion that I would like to present.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Proceed.

**Mr. Derkach:** Thank you.

THAT as a result of the large number of Manitobans wishing to make public representation to this standing committee considering Bill 22, and given that all presenters should be given a fair allocation of time, at a reasonable hour of the day,

I would like to move

THAT all presenters be allotted a maximum of 15 minutes for their presentations, including the time required to ask and answer all questions put by members of this committee.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Mr. Chairperson, this is incredible. We have not even begun the normal process that we do in this committee of looking at some of the courtesies to members of the public in terms of giving some indication of hours. I was going to suggest we sit no later than midnight.

We accommodate out-of-town presenters. Those are normal traditions in this House, but I am quite frankly amazed at this motion. It is a motion

that is essentially unprecedented, certainly in the time that I have been in the Legislature. A 15-minute time limit, including questions and I assume including time taken by members of the committee to ask questions, is not in any way, shape or form designed to give members of the public the opportunity to present. It is designed to limit their ability to present to this committee and that is unacceptable. [applause]

\* (1910)

**Mr. Chairperson:** I am going to ask that the public audience maintain decorum in this room as we normally do. I would ask that order be maintained.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, if I might continue, this is not the only time we have had a significant number of presenters on bills. I note that there are currently 107 people listed. I remember a couple of years ago when we had Bill 70, the public sector wage freeze, we had more presenters at that time.

Of course, during those committee hearings, the government chose to ram through the bill at four o'clock in the morning on a Sunday morning. It chose to run through names twice and twice only. Many people had their name called at one, two and three o'clock in the morning and were unable to present.

So what this is designed to do is to now change tactics but is absolutely not designed to ensure public input. It is designed to muzzle people that do not agree with the government on this particular bill, Mr. Chairperson.

In fact, I find it amazing that we have a number of bills in this session—we just dealt a short while ago in the same committee room with a bill on Sunday shopping. But when it came to the presenters there, private citizens, labour organizations and chambers of commerce, we did not restrict presentations.

When we have had other bills with significant numbers of presenters—I find it ironic that when it comes to a bill impacting on the working people of this province that this is the first time in the 11 years that I have been a member of this House that we have seen an attempt before we have even started in the committee to put an element of closure on these committee hearings. Fifteen minutes for members of the public is not acceptable.

I note, Mr. Chairperson, that if one looks through there are many private citizens who, I am sure, are going to be wanting to present far more than is

entitled by the 15 minutes. I notice many organizations, and I wonder how the government can expect some of the organizations that are here, representing tens of thousands of Manitobans, how they are going to be able to express the concerns of their membership in 15 minutes, and how members of the committee are going to be able to ask questions if someone spends 15 minutes in a presentation. Under these rules, what you are essentially doing is denying members of the committee the ability to ask questions if someone has taken the 15-minute time period.

You know, I really think this is incredible. I think the government should explain why it has decided, without even beginning these committee hearings, to move this unprecedented motion. Are they afraid of listening to 107 Manitobans who do not agree with them?

We have seen already in this session—I remember there was the protest against Bill 22. Not a single member of the government went to speak to members of the public, several thousand of them assembled on the steps of the Legislature—the first time I have seen that happen, Mr. Chairperson.

Is this government so afraid of the people of Manitoba that it has to hide behind this kind of motion? Is it so afraid of the people of Manitoba that it has to, without even beginning these committee hearings, move in a motion knowing that it has the majority of members of the committee able to support this and ram it through?

Is it so afraid of members of the public that it is willing to throw out decades of tradition in this House that we do not—this is reality, to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings). The reality is that you are now putting closure on members of the public. That is unacceptable.

I want to indicate—[interjection] Well, the minister says he sat here until four o'clock in the morning to present to our government. He did not have to face a time limit. The chambers of commerce that presented on the Sunday shopping bill were not faced with a time limit. When it comes to the people of Manitoba, many working people who are concerned about this bill, they are faced with a time limit.

Mr. Chairperson, we have not had in this House that kind of a tradition. In fact, we are a Legislature that prides itself on public input on bills, on all bills.

This makes a mockery out of our traditions. I want to indicate that if the government feels it can use its majority in this House to limit the amount that it has to listen to the people of Manitoba, it is false security for the government, because the people who are here today are amongst the 100,000 people who are impacted by this bill. They can run and hide for only so long before they have to face those 100,000 Manitobans who are impacted by the bill.

I think they owe it to the members of the public not to bring in a motion which has written into it a statement that is absolutely false. This is not designed to ensure all members of the public are able to present at an earlier hour. We can do that by passing a motion that says that no sitting of this committee shall take place after a certain time, eleven o'clock at night or twelve o'clock at night. That would be agreeable to all members of this committee.

We can do the same by ensuring that we have a significant number of hearings set in place. I want to say that our caucus, the NDP caucus, ensured that we spoke to the bill in a way such that now when we are nowhere near the end of the sitting of this Legislature, there is time for members of the public to speak on this. But we did not wait until a day or two before the end of the Legislature. We are now sitting here in the middle of June to make sure that members of the public have the fullest opportunity to present on this bill.

We are prepared to sit here as long as it takes. I know it is uncomfortable for the government to listen to people that do not agree with their policies—[interjection] Well, the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) says, no, it is not. Why then will they not let this committee function in the same way it has always functioned, without time limits which allow the members of the public and members of this committee the fullest opportunity to hear their position on this important bill?

Let us recognize this motion, Mr. Chairperson, for what it is, an unprecedented attempt to muzzle members of the public, to hide from the reality. The New Democratic Party caucus rejects this out of hand. I think this government should do the right thing and withdraw this ridiculous motion and allow the members of the public, who are here tonight and who will be here, I am sure, over the next

several days, the fullest opportunity to participate without being muzzled. [applause]

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order. I will remind the audience that the same decorum that is presented in the House and required in the House is required in these committee rooms. I ask all of you to exercise extreme care in expressing your views. I will not allow disturbances in this committee room. There was a similar type of a situation in a 1983 hearing such as this, and the room was cleared and the doors closed, and only those that were allowed in were the presenters at the time.

I will not hesitate to have the room cleared and order maintained in this room, so I ask you please to maintain order. I will not allow applause or disturbances of any kind. Thank you very much.

Ms. Friesen. [applause] I am sorry. If this outbreak occurs once more, I will clear the room.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, just on a point of order.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Ms. Friesen.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I—

**Mr. Chairperson:** I had recognized Ms. Friesen.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, I am rising on a point of order which takes precedence.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Ashton.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I hope members of the committee will understand the frustration of members of the public. I think your advice is heeded, but we need not belabour the point. I know we have other members of the committee wishing to speak on this matter.

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**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** I want to add my comments and my support to the member for Thompson. I think what we have here is a bill of great significance, where the government is trying to shift the whole system of power in labour relations in Manitoba. It is obviously a bill—given the number of presenters that we have here today, given the numbers that will want to come on future days and evenings, then I think it is obviously one that is of great public interest.

I have not had the experience of the member for Thompson, the length of years in this House, but I certainly did serve on the Constitution committee

which toured the province and heard many, many hundreds of representations, both written and oral, from members of the public.

\* (1920)

I do not recall one instance then when we had to cut somebody off, either in terms of questions or in terms of presentation. Manitobans wanted to speak and they were heard. I think we have a similar situation here today, an issue of great public interest, where there is a major change in the relations within society that are being proposed by this government.

I think there are two reasons for people to be here, and one of them is to offer to the government alternative ideas and alternative solutions and alternative perspectives on this bill and on the nature of society in Manitoba.

The second reason that they are here today is to face every member of this government with the human consequences of what they are doing. It is incumbent upon the members of this government to listen to those consequences. For the minister to walk in here with that prepared resolution before he has even heard one single presenter I think is unconscionable, and I think he should withdraw it.

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** I am on this committee, I believe, and I hope your sheet will show that. I agree with the comments that have been stated before by my colleagues for Wolseley and Thompson. It is unfortunate that the government has chosen, as my colleague for Wolseley has said, to introduce a motion at the start of this committee, even before we have had the opportunity to hear a single presentation. We do not even know how long these presentations are going to be, and yet the government assumes that the presentations are going to be for an extended period of time.

The government has chosen to bring in a time allocation, 15 minutes, including questions by myself. As I take a look at the list of presenters that are here today, I see members of my own community that are on this list that want to come and present on behalf of the residents of my community.

How am I, as a representative of that committee, as a representative of the community and of this committee going to be given ample opportunity to put questions to members of my community coming here to represent the community and their

interests? How am I going to do that in 15 minutes?

What you are attempting to do is muzzle the people that have very serious concerns, the concerns that you, obviously, have not listened to when we have raised them in the Legislature, and now you do not want to hear from members of the public that are coming out here today to represent some of the same concerns and maybe some new concerns that even we have not thought of.

But if we only give them 15 minutes plus questions, how is that a reasonable amount of time to hear their concerns? How can you, in good conscience, even think that this is an appropriate action? As the member of Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has said, this has never happened before in his memory as a member of this Legislature for 11 years.

Some members here, the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), has been here for over 20 years. Can he recall that this has ever happened before in the Manitoba Legislature, where we have muzzled members of the public?

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources):** As a matter of fact, I can.

**Mr. Reid:** You can? I cannot ever recall, and my colleagues sure cannot recall. Why would we want to muzzle members of the public, the opportunity to have some presentation into this? You have taken the opportunity at times in the past, where you have muzzled members of the Legislature by bringing in an attempt to move forward, as you have said; you called the question on a regular basis trying to invoke a form of closure in the Legislature to limit debate by members of the Legislature.

Now you are attempting to do exactly the same thing on the members of the public. I do not understand the logic of the members of the government, even before we have heard the first presentation, muzzling members of the public. It does not make sense to me. Those are my words.

Let us have the opportunity here, as my colleague for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has said. Give us the opportunity to hear the presentations. Let the people put their concerns on the record, and maybe they have some good advice for the government, as I am sure they probably do.

I hope that you would listen to that, something that you will not be able to do in the 15 minutes, because you will not be able to draw out that extra

piece of information that might be applicable to this bill, that would allow you to add some reasoning into it. You cannot do that in the 15-minute time limit that you have tied into this.

So why can we not, as the member for Thompson has said, set a reasonable hour if you are concerned about these committee hearings extending well into the evening? We are only part way through our session here. We could go as far as into the month of August; we have got plenty of time. I do not see what the rush is.

We have lots of sitting days left where we can allow members of the public the opportunity to come forward with ample opportunity to make their presentation and ample opportunity for members of this committee to ask the appropriate questions.

So why do we not set a reasonable hour for the sittings, somewhere around 11 or 12 this evening, give members of the public the opportunity to make their presentations, members of the committee the opportunity to ask those questions, and then schedule other hearing days this week, tomorrow and again next week until we have given members of the public, every member of the public that wishes to make presentation on this bill, the opportunity to be heard and the opportunity for members of this committee to ask those important questions?

I think it is important, Mr. Chairperson, that this motion be withdrawn and that we give members of the public that opportunity, something that you are attempting to take away from them right now by this motion that we have got right here, which, I think, is a desperate act on the part of a desperate government.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Reid.

### Committee Substitution

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Just if I might make a committee substitution, I move, with leave of the committee, that the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) replace the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) as a member of the Standing Committee on Economic Development, effective 7 p.m., with the understanding that the same substitution will also be moved in the House to be properly recorded in the official records of the House.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is it agreed?

**An Honourable Member:** Agreed.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Agreed. Thank you.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Mr. Chairperson, if you are accepting substitutions . . . .

\* \* \*

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Chairperson, I enjoyed the verbal theatrics of my good friend, the member for Thompson. I was expecting it, and I have not been disappointed.

I gave Mr. Ashton notice that the government probably would be bringing in some time restriction in tonight, so his feigned, I will not say indignation, but certainly his feigned surprise really should not have been a surprise.

The member says, essentially unprecedented, and I would like to focus on the word "essentially," because the member, who knows the history better than me, certainly is well aware that there have been other precedents when there has been a time restriction. As a matter of fact, indeed the standing committee that dealt with the Constitution imposed upon itself and the presenters a 20-minute deadline. Now, it always was not religiously adhered to, but nevertheless, it was in place.

So there are plenty of precedents for this. Certainly, it has been tried before as has been pointed out. Certainly when the new assessment act came in, there were a number of presenters and there was an attempt at that time to put into place some restrictions. [interjection] Yes, the Meech Lake presentation had 20 minutes.

Mr. Ashton says that the people who are wishing to present will be impacted. I acknowledge that. That is why, of course, we are trying to look at some element of fairness. Mr. Ashton, and I say this to members of the committee because that is to whom I am addressing the comments, pleaded with me not to take the committee through the dead of night, and I understand that. If he thinks that myself or members of the government enjoy sitting here at three, four or five in the morning, they do not. But the reality is, that is the way we will proceed if we cannot try and have some order to this.

I do not think that is fair. I do not think that is fair to members of the public.

**An Honourable Member:** Very paternalistic.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, fair enough. I want to acknowledge that fairness can be looked at at many different ways. [interjection]

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. I will not allow debates.

**Mr. Manness:** So, Mr. Chairperson, that is why we feel we have no alternative other than to either do one of two things: bring into place some restriction in time, or else continue to work through the wee hours of the night so that everybody can be heard. I wish there was some middle ground, but there is not, because I do not know how it is when this list is at 107, and it will continue to grow, I am sure, that everybody has their opportunity of being heard fairly.

\* (1930)

I know many, many people in the audience want to really tell the government what they think of Bill 22 and the minister that has brought it forward. I know they really want to have an opportunity, so, Mr. Chairperson, I am prepared to move an amendment to the motion and that is that 15 minutes still be the amount allowed for presentation but that five minutes be allowed for questions and answers, so that the total committed time by every presenter be capped at a total of 20 minutes.

**Mr. Ashton:** First of all, Mr. Chairperson, if it comes as any consolation to the Minister of Finance, nothing surprises me with this government and certainly the attempt to muzzle members of the public would not surprise me. As I said before, they tried two years ago on one mechanism and they are now trying in another way.

By the way, I would also comment that I notice the Minister of Finance talked about fairness again. I know in the House, in debating Bill 22, I talked about one of the new oxymorons, those contradictions in terms we often hear about. You have heard of industrial park, military intelligence. I thought the ultimate was Progressive Conservative, but now there is a new one, and it is called Tory fairness.

The Minister of Finance says that he is trying to accommodate members of the public. We are prepared to sit here as long as it takes to listen to members of the public on Bill 22. We will sit here one week. We will sit here two weeks. We will sit here three weeks. On Bill 70, we sat here during evenings, during mornings, during afternoons. We sat here on weekends. We have said on Bill 22, we are willing to go anywhere in the province to listen to people, in fact have suggested that might have been a wise idea. I look at the number of written



submissions from members of the public. Many people concerned about Bill 22 from rural areas I assume are unable to attend tonight because of the distance involved in travelling.

Let us not put a different light on this motion than really should be shed on it. The bottom line here is, this committee is sitting now on June 17th. We have plenty of opportunities to sit here in the upcoming number of weeks and that is the key issue.

Mr. Chairperson, I would say to the Minister of Finance that if he feels that this amendment is going to change the situation, I would suggest he is wrong. In this case now, he has extended another five minutes. I do not know if he wants to engage us in some bargaining back and forth—that is more than he has done on public sector wages in this province—so I do not know if we are getting some progress here.

It is sort of symbolic and ironic that in committee now the Minister of Finance wishes to negotiate time limits on members of the public. The bottom line is, there is still an attempt to cap the presentations and as the minister is well aware, in fact, I would like to note for the record when he talks about what happened in terms of the Constitution, in fact, as members from our side had pointed out, no one was cut off. Are we now going to be cutting people off in midpresentation? Are we now going to be denying members of the committee the opportunity to question members of the public on their presentation, because that is what is going to happen if this motion is passed.

Mr. Chairperson, why is this so necessary? There are 107 presenters. The minister knows from previous experience that the time that is taken on different presentations vary. Some people have short presentations. Some people, particularly those representing organizations, have detailed presentations. I have sat in many committees where we have had detailed presentations that have taken a considerable period of time that have been very useful to the committee.

What you are doing, by moving a limit of 15 minutes in presentation, is avoiding the fact that this bill is a significant bill. It has many clauses to it. It has three different sections, has many ramifications. One of the purposes of this committee is to look at possible amendments over and above the bottom-line principle, so this

hampers the ability of members of this committee to get public feedback.

Mr. Chairperson, I have sat in these committees many times, and I have heard presentations many times that have been impacted upon in terms of changes to the bill. Following the public presentation, we have clause-by-clause discussion, and in addition to a discussion over the principle of the bill—obviously, there will be many who will object to Bill 22—I am sure there will be also suggestions in terms of making a bad bill less bad. That is part of the reason we are here.

What we do, when we end up in this process, to my mind, by particularly limiting in this case, not only the right of members of the public to make the presentations, but also of committee members to answer questions, is what we do is we turn it into a rubber stamp.

I remember in Bill 70 that one Conservative member of the committee said that he had to sit in this committee, but he did not have to listen. Well, that is the right of any government member on this particular bill, but at least allow members of the public to present. If you do not want to listen, that is fine; we want to listen. Our caucus members, our three representatives on this committee want to listen to members of the public, and we are prepared to sit here at whatever reasonable hours it takes to ensure that takes place.

That, by the way, Mr. Chairperson, is more than common courtesy. That, I believe, is the full intent of the democratic spirit of the fact that we are one province where member of the public can make presentations on virtually every bill that comes before the Legislature. What this does, it sets a precedent that starts to cap the ability of members of the public to tell their elected officials exactly what they feel about legislation in Manitoba.

That, by the way, is just as undemocratic as Bill 22. In fact, I suppose it is only ironic that we have here Bill 22, which is fundamentally undemocratic, now being dealt with in a committee and in a fundamentally undemocratic way. So I fully reject the amendment and the original motion brought forward by the government.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The amendment before the House is, I move that the motion before us be amended to allow presenters a maximum of 15 minutes out of 20 minutes for presentation and five minutes for questions.

All those in favour of the motion, as amended, say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Opposed, say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I declare the Yeas have it.

**Mr. Ashton:** I request a counted vote, Mr. Chairperson.

**Mr. Chairperson:** A counted vote has been asked for.

**A COUNTED VOTE** was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas 6, Nays 4.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The motion, as amended, is passed.

**Mr. Ashton:** I also have a motion, Mr. Chairperson, and this, by the way, is in keeping with the traditions of this committee. I want to move it so that the ground rules can be quite clear to members of the public up front.

I move that this committee not sit past midnight at any future sitting in regard to Bill 22 and that out-of-town presenters be accommodated wherever possible at the beginning of committee meetings.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It has been moved that this committee not sit beyond midnight and that all presenters out of town be accommodated wherever possible. [agreed] Thank you, Mr. Ashton.

I have 107 presenters that have indicated they wish to present before the committee. I will not read the whole list of presenters. We also have a number of people and groups that have indicated by written submissions their views on this bill.

\* (1940)

I will read into the record those people and organizations that have submitted written submissions: Esther Fyk, private citizen; Dale Yeo, private citizen; Hazel Anderson, private citizen; Jack Boyko, private citizen; Alvin Funk, Chairperson, Intermountain Teachers' Association, Professional Development Committee; Boris Bugera, private citizen; Teachers, Goose Lake High; Barb Grexton, private citizen; Staff, Rorketon School; Katherine Bellemare, private citizen; Staff, Gilbert Plains Collegiate; Staff, Reston Collegiate Institute; Carole Free, Resource Teacher, St. George School; Robert Rondeau, private citizen; V.

Stephenson, White Horse Plain Teacher's Association; Sharon Woodman, private citizen; Russ Reid, private citizen; Jan Chaboyer, MGEU, Local 2003, Brandon University. Those are the written presentations.

We have one more: Bob Babey, Agassiz Teachers' Association. If there are any of the presenters that are here and have written submissions with their presentations, would you please leave them with the person at the back of the room that we can distribute them. All of the written presentations will be made available to the committee.

Are there any out-of-town presenters? Could you show by show of hands? Would you be agreed that we allow those presenters to be heard first, today? [agreed]

Would you indicate to the Clerk who you are, and we will begin hearing you first.

If there is any presenter here whose name is not on this list, or if you have not registered, would you please indicate to the person at the back of the room that you wish to present at some time, and we will add you to the list.

We have Mr. Len Howell who is from out of town. Would you come forward, please, Mr. Len Howell? He is number 24. Mr. Howell, do you have a written presentation?

**Mr. Len Howell (Private Citizen):** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you. Would you proceed, please?

**Mr. Howell:** I am a little nervous because it is the first time I have done this, but Mr. Chairperson and committee members, basically I came here tonight not to speak for myself or against Bill 22, but for some people who cannot make it here who this bill is affecting.

I work at BMHC in Brandon, which is the Mental Health Centre. We have many patients or clients of the hospital who work with us in learning programs. They make very little money. Basically, they get paid approximately \$1.60 to \$1.90 a day.

When this bill was brought into effect, nobody took these people into consideration. By us being closed down on a Friday, it means all summer those people will lose a day's pay, because they will have no place for them to go and work. They will either have to, the ones that live off the hospital grounds who come up there for additional training,

stay home at their care providers, which puts an additional burden on the care providers because it is another day where they would have been out at work and not at home. It also means they either go downtown and sit in the gallery and bother the people of the public, or they wander around the streets. I think this is very unfair that the government is doing this and not taking into consideration these people.

Now, the amount of money they make goes to buy odds and ends, cigarettes, tobacco for these people, and by taking essentially two days pay away from them every two weeks means that much less money they have to spend. Let us face it, we all know that most of us do not make that much money to begin with, but these people make less than a lot of the rest of us. I think it is unfair that these people were not considered when this bill was brought into effect.

That is basically all.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Howell. It was not that bad at all, was it? We all do this the first time.

**Mr. Howell:** Well, my knees were shaking.

**Mr. Ashton:** I appreciate your coming in from Brandon to outline the concerns. One of the concerns that we have expressed about this particular bill is the fact that it impacts particularly hard on people who are earning—well, let us call it for what it is, low income. I mean, there are many public sector workers who are earning very low incomes.

We have had presentations before in committees of this type from people who are single parents with children, the prime support of the family. We have heard of many circumstances. Of course, this bill impacts on them with the wage rollback regardless of whatever income they make. You made some reference to the fact that you were speaking here on behalf of a lot of people who could not make it in from Brandon. I was wondering if you could give some idea of the kind of circumstance people are in, some of the people you mentioned, with pretty modest incomes who are impacted by this bill.

**Mr. Howell:** Basically, the people I was concerned about are patients of the hospital who are in training programs to try and get them out of the hospital. They learn job skills. They work with our department which does the moving of supplies and stuff. They work with some of the OT groups.

They work with our ventures building which teaches them computer skills and skills that maybe some day, if the right job comes up, some of them can move out and back into the community and live on their own and earn money. Basically, these are the ones that I am concerned about, that you are taking a day away from their work and their learning skills so they cannot move back into the community, or it takes that much longer.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, it is interesting that you focus in on the loss of services, because this is one area that has been pretty well lost in this debate, the fact that what Bill 22 does is reduce the level of services in a lot of areas.

I am just wondering, in the case of BMHC, whether there are going to be other impacts that are going to be felt because of Bill 22 and the compulsory days off without pay provisions of the bill.

\* (1950)

**Mr. Howell:** There will be other impacts. We do not know until it comes into effect exactly how it is going to affect. Being a hospital that is in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the staffing levels are going to be lowered on certain days. Some departments will be closed completely. There will be additional burden on our switchboard operators handling emergency calls and referrals, because there will not be any psychologists or as many staff there or doctors to handle the complaints. There will be services affected. Until it happens, we really do not know exactly the extent of them.

**Mr. Ashton:** I was wondering if you can give us some idea of the dollar impact on people, the workers who are going to be impacted by this bill. How much is this going to mean in the way of difference in salary?

**Mr. Howell:** I do not have the figures. Basically, in our hospital, the average wage earner there would be between \$25,000 and maybe \$30,000 a year at the top end, not counting the doctors, of course. If you take a day's pay out of the average person, it would work out to approximately anywhere from \$75 to \$100 a day, which is quite a drop for somebody who is maybe a single parent or a single-income family.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** There is one minute remaining for a question.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I would just point out on that level that the presenter took three minutes. I would think it would be reasonable to allow some flexibility. It has been exactly six minutes and 35 seconds. We are going to have to have I think a number of stopwatches at the table under the new system.

I just ask that we—

**An Honourable Member:** We have one.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, I have one, too.

Mr. Chairperson, what I want to get through to members of the committee is the impact it is having. If this was a tax, for example, I wonder what the reaction would be to a tax of \$100 a month increase, because that is the way this is impacting in this particular case.

I just want to ask the presenter what the reaction is from the people in the facility who are earning, as you said, \$25,000 to \$30,000, to what is essentially equivalent to, as you said, \$100 a month less in pay. How are they coping with that?

**Mr. Howell:** From the talks I have had with a lot of people in our facility—there are a lot of people, some people who would like to change cars or buy new furniture for their house. A lot of them are putting off buying any major appliances or any major purchases at this time until they see how this bill is going to affect them. They are just not sure, especially, like I say, the single parents. We have a lot of people who work just half time, and it is going to affect them even more.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Howell. The time for questions is up.

### Points of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, on a point of order, the amendment that was moved by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) stated that there would be an allowance for the presenters, not a maximum of 15 minutes but 20 minutes for presentation and questions on Bill 22. So, in fact, the government, as it amended its original motion, has now allowed for a combined total of 20 minutes for questions and answers.

Therefore, by my clock, Mr. Chairperson, the presenter would have the ability now to have another 11 minutes and 22 seconds.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Ashton, first of all, you did not have a point of order, but I would remind you

that it has been moved that the motion before us be amended to allow the presenter not a maximum of 15 minutes, but 20 minutes for presentations and questions on Bill 22.

I think I read into the record before, though, that there would be 15 minutes on presentations and five minutes on questions. That was what I read into the record before, Mr. Ashton, and that is what the committee passed.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, on a point of order. I have before me a motion moved by Mr. Manness, signed by Mr. Manness, and this is the only valid document. If we are going to do this, let us at least do it right.

I will read it again: "I move that the motion before us be amended"—and this was passed—"to allow presenter not a maximum of 15 minutes but 20 minutes for presentation and questions on Bill 22."

**Mr. Chairperson:** That is the written presentation that was put before the committee as I indicated. I had, however, indicated 15 and five. Mr. Ashton, I will abide by the wishes of the presentation for the amendment as written.

So, therefore, we will allow for the 20 minutes to continue.

Continue, Mr. Ashton.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am wondering if the time we just had for procedural points can be added to my time.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It will be added to your time.

**Mr. Ashton:** In fact, Mr. Chairperson, maybe we will have to get like the NHL right now, and have instant replay analysis to check our time.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Ashton:** What I wanted to ask the presenter, now that we can have a little bit more time, is the impact on the community, because I know in my own community of Thompson, one of the concerns that is being expressed is exactly what you are saying, that many people will be cutting back on expenditures.

I know many communities, many northern rural communities in particular, have had a pretty tough time with the recession the last number of years. So basically what you are saying to members of this committee is, the impact is going to be felt not just by those individuals but in the community. Instead of buying they will no longer be able to buy

those kinds of consumer goods and contribute to the economy.

**Mr. Howell:** Basically, yes. By our figures that we sat down, counting all the government people and Crowns that work in the Westman area, you are taking approximately \$8 million of direct payroll out of the Brandon and Westman area. Besides that, it affects how some people do their jobs.

For example, the real estate agents, whose busiest time of the year is June, July and August when people are moving, will now have to do their jobs in a different way because on Fridays the assessor's office and the Land Titles Offices are closed, so they will not be able to access these things. These people are already backlogged. It is going to put them farther back.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I know my colleague has some questions, but I just want to thank the presenter, particularly bringing the perspective of people in communities such as Brandon to this committee. Thank you very much.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Howell, you mentioned in your presentation the impact on the caregivers to the people who come to the Brandon Mental Health Centre. Could you give us a little more information on that? Who are the caregivers? Are they family or are they paid caregivers? In either case, what is the impact on them of this change?

**Mr. Howell:** For the most part, they are paid caregivers. They keep several patients in their home. They look after them, feed them. That is their home. Basically, we have had a problem in the past few years that there is nobody to take over. If they want to go on a holiday or if they want a break, they cannot get it because, unless they have somebody qualified, they have to stay with these people. It is affecting them because it is another day that they would not have been to work for at least eight hours, so it gives them a break from looking after them all day long.

**Ms. Friesen:** So this was the time they used for respite or for shopping or for work outside the house.

**Mr. Howell:** Yes, this is when they got their shopping and their outside work done.

**Ms. Friesen:** Could you tell us if you know of any other programs that are like this across the province, or is this the only one that would be affected in this way?

**Mr. Howell:** I cannot say for sure about the Portage hospital or the Selkirk hospital. I would assume they have similar-type programs, but I am not positive.

**Ms. Friesen:** We are also looking at a training program here in a sense, so that days that are taken away now from a training program are presumably added on to the other end of the training program. So the cost saving, to me, at least at face value, seems to be zero. Is that the case? Am I misunderstanding this program?

\* (2000)

**Mr. Howell:** In some cases, yes. The type of person we are dealing with, it needs quite a bit of repetition to teach them some of these skills. By taking a day away every week during the summer, it means that much longer. They forget quite easily, and now you are giving them three days off instead of two and, in some cases, four in a row.

**Ms. Friesen:** Thank you.

**Mr. Reid:** Thank you, Mr. Howell, for your presentation. I find the information you bring to us here quite interesting, looking at the impact that it is going to have on the employees and the people of your community.

You indicate that there is going to be a significant impact on the average person as a result of this legislation. Those who are making relatively low incomes, obviously, are going to be severely impacted by this bill. Can you tell me how many employees are going to be affected, that you are aware of, as a result of this bill?

**Mr. Howell:** At the facility where I work, approximately 600. In the Brandon-Westman area, approximately 7,000.

**Mr. Reid:** Well, that is a significant number of people then. Would the majority of these people then, that you are aware of, be in that \$20,000 to \$30,000 salary range that you have indicated to us here?

**Mr. Howell:** My rough guess, I would think better than 50, 60 percent of them.

**Mr. Reid:** So then by that about 4,000 people there would be affected by this legislation, and they would be losing that \$100 per day then, which has been indicated here as those that are on the low end of the pay scale are going to take the biggest hit as a result of this. You said there was some \$8 million lost out of the total payroll that you are

aware of. That is for these 7,000 employees that you are aware of?

**Mr. Howell:** Yes, it is.

**Mr. Reid:** That is a significant impact upon your community and the employees, the people that you work with. I know my colleague has asked you questions on the individual impact for these people that are affected. It is unfortunate that the government chooses to take this action that is going to affect the quality of life and the income for people that are on the low end of the pay scale and have not accepted some provision that would afford these people the opportunity to retain that pay, considering some of them are obviously single parents and cannot afford, as most people cannot, to take the hit on their salaries.

I do not think, looking at when we debated this, that the government took that into consideration. Are you aware of many of these people, maybe some of the people that you work with that you are familiar with? Are you aware of them being single parents, and have any of them indicated the impact that this legislation is going to have on them personally?

**Mr. Howell:** Yes, through my work at the hospital, quite a few of them have indicated that it is going to affect them. Like I say, until it happens, we do not know exactly how much and how it is going to affect them.

**Mr. Reid:** Have any of your colleagues then given you an indication where they are going to have to cut back, if they can indeed cut back anywhere? The government has often said that members of the public are going to have to expect to tighten their belts again. Are there any notches left on the belt out there that people can tighten, or do they figure they are going to have to cut back on some of the services or the quality of life that they have become accustomed to? Are there any areas that they can cut back on? Maybe the government members would like to hear the answer to that one.

**Mr. Howell:** Most of the ones that I know of are, like I say, cutting back on any major purchases, replacing faulty appliances, anything that they can get away without replacing, they are doing it.

**Mr. Reid:** I am sorry, Mr. Howell, my colleagues here across the table were attempting to distract me from your answer. Maybe you could repeat it for me?

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Order, please.

**Mr. Reid:** I have asked Mr. Howell if he would not mind repeating that?

**Mr. Howell:** To repeat it?

**Mr. Reid:** Repeat, yes.

**Mr. Howell:** They are looking at cutting back on any major purchases, sticking strictly to essentials that they need to get by over the summer or until this bill either is defeated or it is put in operation.

**Mr. Reid:** So then if they are going to stick strictly to the essentials and are not going to make any of the major purchases, then there are far-reaching consequences as a result. If they will not be taking their incomes and whatever little disposable income is left, they are just going to pay for the basic bills that most people have, that the economy then will be impacted as a result of those decisions that are forced on them by this legislation.

**Mr. Howell:** Yes, I would say it would affect the economy very well. There will be a lot of storekeepers or restaurants that will not get money spent any more than they normally would have.

**Mr. Reid:** I thank Mr. Howell for his presentation, for coming out here today to address his comments to the committee.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Howell, were you the person who had to explain this government policy to the patients of the Brandon Mental Health Centre?

**Mr. Howell:** No, I was not. Some of the patients do work in the department I work, but they are put there by the Ventures program, which is the training program that assigns them to different things and it was them that had to explain it to them.

**Ms. Friesen:** Do you have any idea of what their response has been or how it has affected their mental health? This is, after all, a hospital setting.

**Mr. Howell:** I would imagine that in most cases a lot of them will not even realize what has happened until they get that first paycheque and two days pay is not on it, or however it is deducted off their cheques, and then they will realize what has happened.

**Ms. Friesen:** We have talked about the caregivers and the fact that they have to have the time to at least do the shopping and look after the housing of these particular patients. What you were suggesting was that there might not be people to look after them on those particular Fridays or whatever day it is. The picture you presented of essentially homeless and mentally disabled people

wandering the shopping malls of Brandon was one which did not strike me as a Brandon picture, it was more like New York. I wondered if you could give us a sense of where you get that picture from. Is that what is going to happen to these people?

**Mr. Howell:** This is what we anticipate. In some cases now, on a Saturday or in the evening, if they have nothing to do, it depends on their care provider. Some of them are very good, and they do supply an extra TV or room they can sit in. Some they have to go out, so they go to the coffee shops or the mall or wander the streets. Maybe not in the extent that they do in New York or some of the other places, but it is showing up more and more in our town, in Brandon.

**Mr. Ashton:** Yes, I just want to follow up on the question here, and one of the things the government has talked about, Bill 22, as they say, it is a way of avoiding staff position eliminations, layoffs, et cetera, and, of course, that has been happening as well.

I am just wondering, in the case of BMHC, what the situation is in terms of staff and whether there is any indication of further cutbacks that might take place?

**Mr. Howell:** Right now BMHC is in the process of completely closing down within the next three to four years. They have not hired any permanent staff for almost a year and a half now; any staff that they have hired have been part-time or term. We do not know what is going to happen so that is also standing over our heads in there besides Bill 22.

\* (2010)

**Mr. Ashton:** So in the case of the Brandon Mental Health Centre, you are getting rolled back and you have no job security, and you do not really know what is going to be happening. It is a combination of factors.

I would appreciate it if you could perhaps relay that to members of the government who were trying to suggest that Bill 22 was going to avoid this kind of situation. So you have the worst of both possible worlds at the BMHC, basically?

**Mr. Howell:** Yes, I think we do. I sit on a committee at the hospital about the closure. Of the 600 people who currently work at BMHC, within four years Brandon stands to lose approximately 300 full-time jobs to different areas. There will be approximately 220 jobs left actually in Brandon.

The rest will all be moved to other communities or other areas.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Howell, for your presentation. The next—

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** Just on a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I would just like to note for the record that a number of us had additional questions, and this shows the problem with time limitations. I think particularly, given what is happening—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Ashton, you have no point of order.

**Mr. Ashton:** But I have a point, Mr. Chairperson.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** The next presenter on the list is Ms. Kathy Ducharme, private citizen. Kathy Ducharme, will you come forward, please?

Have you a written presentation, Ms. Ducharme?

**Ms. Kathy Ducharme (Private Citizen):** I do, but it is my own personal—I did not have anything prepared.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much. Would you proceed, please?

**Ms. Ducharme:** First of all, I would like to say I found it very hard coming here and facing you people. I am very angry, and I can barely bring myself to come face to face with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) because of what they have done to me and my family personally.

I cannot even bring myself to address them as Mr. whatever-their-name-is because I just refuse to acknowledge the fact that they are even a mister, but that is beside the point.

My name is Kathy Ducharme and I am from The Pas. I have worked for the government for 10 years in an Admin Secretary 2 position which is the lowest classification on the Civil Service pay scale as far as secretaries go. My husband works for Gardewine and he is a truck driver. I have been married for 21 years and I have two children.

My husband and I struggled for 14 years to make a comfortable life for our family. Finally, after 14 years, we were able to buy a modest bungalow for \$68,000, which is not a fancy home at all. We lived in a trailer before that for the first part of our married years. My husband at that time worked for CN.

Because of the CN employees being affected by layoffs as well, he was laid off after working there for 14 years.

We lived in our house for two years before he got laid off, and then when he got laid off we could not afford to make our mortgage payments any more. My parents helped us for three months. After that we had a family meeting, and we decided that we had to sell the house because we could not afford to keep it any more, not on the salary that I make.

So we moved back into a trailer. It took my husband six months to find a job, because in The Pas jobs are not plentiful. Now he is driving a truck, as I said, for a living. He has an education. He is qualified to do better, but because there are no jobs, he had to drive a truck. There are not even any jobs for my two boys there right now. Times are tough as far as jobs go, so my problem is that I feel that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) have played with my life personally as well as my family's life.

We are upstanding citizens. We pay our taxes. We live within our means, and we always have. Contrary to what the Minister of Finance has been reported saying on the news and in the paper, I do not think that he cares, and he does not know what he is doing to people's lives. All he cares about is fixing the deficit and the debt of the country, and as far as I am concerned, that is not my problem. That is his problem because I do pay my taxes, and I do my share.

Just when we seemed to be getting ahead, he comes up with this Bill 22. I hope that both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Labour can sleep at night, because my husband and I toss and turn many times trying to figure out how we are going to pay our bills. Because of this Bill 22, we are now in a financial situation, and we are finding ourselves in a bind trying to figure out how we are going to get out of it. The 10-day plan to us, to my family, is a big deal because we do not earn much money.

We do not live in great big comfortable homes like the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Labour do, and I am sure, even though they are, or they say—I will never know because I will not be able to monitor whether they in fact are taking the 10 days off or having the money taken off their cheques or whatever they are going to be doing. I will not know because I will not be able to monitor it,

and I do not trust them when they say that they will be, because they have not shown me any reason to trust them. That is all I have to say about it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Ms. Ducharme.

**Mr. Manness:** Thank you very much, Ms. Ducharme. I am not going to try and make you angrier at me than you already are, but I want to indicate to you that I too do not sleep very well at night.

Mr. Olfert, who is in the audience, will probably tell us later that 1,800 positions have been removed from the government payroll over a period of several years since I brought down budgets, and as I have indicated, and as Mr. Praznik has said on several occasions, 500-plus would have needed to be removed to make up for the same dollar value as what we are trying to accomplish through Bill 22.

We sought not to in anyway remove significantly additional positions from government, because we can only go so far in that area. Do you not feel there is some element of fairness and sharing across the whole spectrum of the public service?

**Ms. Ducharme:** I am already doing my part by—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. Ms. Ducharme, I will allow you response time when Mr. Manness has finished his question.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairperson, my question is complete.

**Ms. Ducharme:** Okay, what was his question?

**Mr. Manness:** Faced with the decision of removing 500 jobs from the public sector, particularly the Civil Service, or bringing in Bill 22 trying to see a reduction of costs—all of us who draw our salary, the 16,000, 18,000 of us that draw our salary from the public purse—do you not think it is fairer to all of us to take a slight reduction, rather than seeing 500 people put out of work?

**Ms. Ducharme:** I have already done my share by paying my taxes and suffering one layoff already with my husband having to be laid off. We are in a lower standard of living. We have done our share, and I am sure every other civil servant out there who has been affected by this Bill 22 has also done their share in one way or another. We are not responsible for mismanagement of the government.



### Committee Substitution

**Mr. Ashton:** I would like to move a motion here first. I move, with the leave of the committee, that the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) replace the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) as a member of the Standing Committee on Economic Development effective 8:15 p.m. with the understanding the same substitution will also be moved in the House to be properly recorded in the official records of the House.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

\* (2020)

**Mr. Ashton:** I have a question, Mr. Chairperson. I must admit, at first, I was going to object somewhat to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) after limiting the time for questions and answers, then getting into debate with a presenter, but I think she did rather well in answering the question. So I am quite pleased to let that one go by.

I just want to deal, Mr. Chairperson, with a theme that has been brought forward by the Minister of Finance, and I know what the situation is in The Pas. I know what it is like in a lot of northern communities right now. In fact, I was just in The Pas a couple of weeks ago, and, of course, times are pretty tough, but I am just wondering—the minister talks about sharing the pain—I guess one problem I always have with that is that it always seems that certain people end up getting the pain, and certain people seem to end up being exempt, certain friends of this government in particular.

I am wondering if the presenter feels it is fair that her wages are being rolled back by Bill 22, but when we are seeing some of the kind of corporate training money—our critic for Education has said, for example, today, pointed out that the government is funding training for seminars for cashiers at private golf courses, that was one of them. There was a seminar for corporate executives, business people, on Clear Lake on marketing. This, by the way, was paid for by the government.

I am wondering, do you think it is fair to have those types of expenditures, while at the same time you are being asked to have your salary rolled back?

**Ms. Ducharme:** No, I do not.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am wondering if you also feel it is fair as well—since the Minister of Finance talks about sharing the pain, and you mentioned about paying your taxes, for example—this government has been rolling back in terms of property tax credits by \$75 across the board.

That means that the people that you mentioned who live in those bigger houses, the net impact on their property taxes might be 1 or 2 percent. Someone such as yourself, living in far more modest accommodation, the impact could be as high as 10 percent or more, particularly when you are looking at a situation in northern Manitoba in terms of taxes. Is that fair to treat people in that way while you are having your salary rolled back by 3.8 percent?

**Ms. Ducharme:** I do not think anything that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has done is fair.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, as a northerner you are quite aware too of the Northern Patient Transportation fee, where if you live in the North they put in a \$50 fee on northern patient transportation.

I am just wondering if in the context of Bill 22 when you also have to be faced with those additional costs of living in the North, and perhaps the Minister of Finance is not aware of what additional costs you run up living in a community such as The Pas or Thompson or any of the northern communities, is it fair when you already face a higher cost of living to begin with plus things like the \$50 fee, that you also have to take a rollback on your salary?

**Ms. Ducharme:** Well, I pray to God that my kids do not get sick or we get sick, because I do not know where we will get the money from to pay that user fee if we should have to come to the city to see a doctor.

**Mr. Ashton:** I thank you for telling this to the members of this committee, because we have been trying to tell them for quite some time the impact it is having on people. I know people in my own constituency who are paying that \$50 fee as much as twice a month. I know one family with two children that have to come to Winnipeg regularly and have to pay that fee. That is indeed talking about fairness.

I want to go further again. You mentioned about your salary position within the civil service. I was

wondering if you could give the members of the committee exactly an idea of the impact it is having, the kind of annual salary you receive. I hate to pry like this, but I am hoping they can understand, because perhaps they do not understand. The government likes sometimes to play up this image of highly paid, they would say overpaid civil servants.

I am just wondering what salary you receive.

**Ms. Ducharme:** First of all, I would appreciate it if the Minister of Finance would listen to what is going on here. This is what we are here for, instead of visiting and talking with his fellow members, and also I do not appreciate the smirk he has on his face all the time either when it comes to issues like this that are very important to us.

What was the question again?

**Mr. Ashton:** In regard to exactly what your salary is so people can get some idea of the impact.

**Ms. Ducharme:** I bring home \$700 every two weeks and my husband brings home \$800 every two weeks.

**Mr. Ashton:** The government is now rolling back your salary. I just want to get very clear on the record what Tory fairness is all about—I do not like to mix those two terms together.

The Minister of Finance is suggesting that it was only fair that when you are earning \$700 biweekly that you should have to have, through Bill 22, your salary reduced in effect by 3.8 percent. Do you think that is fair?

**Ms. Ducharme:** No, I do not. I have another concern. At Christmastime, when I am losing those three days pay because we are being forced to be off at Christmastime, that is less money I have to spend on my family at Christmas. I wonder how many gifts he is going to have under his tree for his family.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I wonder too if you can give some idea of how many people in The Pas are affected by this, how many civil servants are going to be affected.

**Ms. Ducharme:** There are approximately 700 civil servants in The Pas and surrounding area.

**Mr. Ashton:** The current population of The Pas would be?

**Ms. Ducharme:** Approximately 8,000 to 9,000 people.

**Mr. Ashton:** So basically, one in 10 residents of The Pas, and that is including children as well, are directly impacted by this. If you were to take adults, you are looking at as many as one in five adults in The Pas being impacted by Bill 22.

**Ms. Ducharme:** Yes.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am just trying to get some picture then when you are dealing with one in five adults, and that is not even including the unemployed, so the number of actual employed people is probably higher.

What impact is that going to have on the town of The Pas, The Pas band, the various businesses in that community? What is going to happen with that major withdrawal of money from the economy in The Pas?

**Ms. Ducharme:** There are already four empty buildings downtown on the main street of The Pas because of businesses having to close down because the spending power is just not there any more.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am wondering if you can give members of the committee some idea of what has been happening in The Pas. I know, in talking to people, one of the major concerns is the ongoing uncertainty with Repap and the tough times that have happened in terms of the Repap complex. I am just wondering if you can give people some idea of what has been happening in The Pas generally, above and beyond what this is going to do to The Pas?

**Ms. Ducharme:** I am not quite sure. I know Repap is the largest employer in The Pas. They have been experiencing some difficulties as far being able to bargain their contracts. They were almost on strike. I cannot say too much about Repap, I am not too—I do not know. I am more concerned about what is happening to the civil servants.

**Mr. Ashton:** I think it is important to note that it is tough in The Pas, and as you said, it is tough for people right now. It is tough getting jobs as it is, and this is going to make it worse for people. You mentioned the impact on kids growing up in The Pas, too. I know in talking to people how tough it is at the time.

I think you have been very effective in getting the message across to anybody who is really listening, who has any kind of open mind on this. I know that some of the Conservative ministers are excluding

themselves from that category, and I think that has been fairly obvious. You told us at the beginning how angry you are. I have talked to a lot of people in northern Manitoba who are just as frustrated, particularly people earning pretty modest salaries who are saying this is not the first time, it is the second time they have been hit, because of the Bill 70 impact.

What is the reaction of the people you work with in The Pas? What is their reaction to Bill 22?

**Ms. Ducharme:** They pretty well feel the same way I do. They cannot afford the 10 days either. It does not matter whether they are Natural Resources officers and earning more money than I am, or whether they are correctional officers. It does not matter what position they are working in, Bill 22 is affecting them and their families, and that is the basic line of it all.

\* (2030)

**Mr. Ashton:** I know my colleague from Transcona (Mr. Reid) has a number of questions. I just want to ask one more question. I have a number of others but this one in particular, because the Minister of Finance introduced this right at the beginning of the questions. He talked about fairness. I just want to ask you, just for those 700 people in the Pas that work for the government, do they feel it is fair that this government has brought in Bill 22 that rolls back their wages by 3.8 percent after Bill 70? I am hoping the Minister of Finance can listen, because I have heard in the Legislature the government suggest that some people in the public sector want Bill 22, and I just want, you know—you are here tonight. You know a lot of people in The Pas, a lot of people impacted. What do they think? Is this fair or not?

**Ms. Ducharme:** Well, civil servants work darn hard for their money, and they earn every penny. Because of the amount of work that they are being forced to do, they would really appreciate extra time off but definitely not without pay. They want it with pay.

**Mr. Reid:** Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Ducharme. I want to ask you a few questions relating to your family situation. You had mentioned during your comments that your husband had been laid off from CN Rail and that he is now currently working as a truck driver. I believe you had indicated that he had been unable to find any employment after he was laid off from the

railway for some six months, if I understood you correctly. How long had you husband been employed at the railway prior to his layoff, and how long ago did the layoff occur?

**Ms. Ducharme:** He worked for CN for 14 years before he was laid off. He had 14 years seniority.

**Mr. Reid:** Was it just recently that he was laid off, in the last year or two?

**Ms. Ducharme:** No, it was about four years ago.

**Mr. Reid:** The reason I ask those questions is that in addition to Bill 22 here where it is having, you said, some significant impact upon your family situation, and looking at the information that you have provided us here you are living very modestly and that you are struggling, like a lot of families in the province are, to make ends meet. The government has said that they have made some changes, and they like to boast that they have brought in programs and given tax breaks to the large corporations. They gave another tax break to the transportation companies just recently by their budget.

Has your husband received any kind of a recall notice from the railway since his layoff started? Are you aware of other employees in the community that were also laid off at the same time?

**Ms. Ducharme:** No, my husband has not received any notice of call back. No, he has not, and all the employees on CN who have been laid off have never been called back. They are finished with CN.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Ms. Ducharme. The time is up. The next presenter on the list is—[applause] Order, please. I will ask this room to be cleared if there will not be order in this room. So I ask for order.

The next presenter on the list is Nancy Riche, Canadian Labour Congress.

### Point of Order

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairperson, I just want to ask on a point of order if I could put on the record that I had some questions left to ask Ms. Ducharme on the impact on teachers, the impact on day care and particularly the impact—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Ms. Friesen. You do not have a point of order.

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**Mr. Chalrperson:** Ms. Riche, would you make your presentation, please. Do you have a written presentation?

**Ms. Nancy Riche (Canadian Labour Congress):** Yes, I do. I think you have received a copy.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Thank you very much. Will you proceed, please.

**Ms. Riche:** My name is Nancy Riche, and I am executive vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress. I will read my presentation into the record, hopefully leaving some time for questions.

On behalf of the executive officers and members of the Canadian Labour Congress, I wish to thank the committee for the opportunity to address Bill 22. The CLC is by far Canada's largest central labour body representing about 2.2 million workers, roughly 58 percent of all organized workers in the country.

Included in this total, of course, are the 85,000 working women and men in this province who are affiliated to the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

My purpose here tonight is not to dissect Bill 22 clause by clause. I presume, in fact I am quite confident, that others will do that, and besides the title of the bill, The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act, comes fairly close to describing what it contains. I say fairly close because the government would have been more forthright and more accurate had it replaced the word "management" with the word "reduction."

My intention instead is to deal with the two dimensions of Bill 22 that render it fundamentally wrong. The first of these is its underlying flawed economic rationale; the second is its assault on a basic tenet of a democratic society, free and fair collective bargaining.

The provincial context within which Bill 22 falls is the April 6, 1993, budget that promises to fully eliminate Manitoba's deficit within four years. Inspired by their Conservative cousins in Ottawa and joined by virtually every other jurisdiction across Canada, the government of Manitoba has been captured by deficit-debt hysteria. In the spring of 1993 the headlong race to reduce and eliminate federal and provincial deficits has been focused particularly on attacking public sector jobs

and wages. One is tempted to say, monkey see, monkey do.

The CLC has long held that austerity is incompatible with economic revival, that reducing aggregate demand in the name of reducing the public sector deficit is guaranteed to prolong not only high unemployment but also the problem of public indebtedness, the very problem that measures such as Bill 22 are supposed to solve. Further, that this wrongheaded preoccupation with the deficit as a cause rather than as a symptom will only continue and deepen the downward spiral of rising unemployment, income loss, smaller tax revenues, depressed confidence, business bankruptcy and bigger deficit.

We have said repeatedly that what this approach ignores is the urgent need for higher rates of economic growth, which in turn will help cure the deficit-debt problem. Growth is essential to reducing unemployment and related social costs, as well as to generating greater government tax revenue through more people working—amazingly simple concept.

Though our pleas have generally fallen on deaf ears. It is interesting to note that as the deficit hysteria intensifies, more doubts about its alleged benefits have surfaced. It is worth highlighting some of these here. For example, just this month a statement signed by over 60 prominent Canadian economists, a number of whom are from Manitoba, said in part: "The huge gap between our actual and our potential level of unemployment and production is the true deficit facing Canadians. If we closed this deficit and put Canadians back to work, we would be able to halt the growth of public debt . . . . The highly restrictive policies of the Bank of Canada drove up the cost of servicing that the accumulated public debt while throwing the economy into a severe recession. It was this approach, not so called 'excessive' spending on social programs and public services, which was to blame for the increase in deficits and debts of governments. Attempts to control deficits by cutting public services and public sector jobs have been counterproductive, and have inflicted even greater hardship upon the victims of failed policies."

The preceding speaker, I think, indicated that quite clearly.

Writing in the March-April '93 issue of *Challenge*, Nobel Laureate and Professor of Economics at Yale University, James Tobin commented:

"Deficit reduction is not an end in itself. Its rationale is to improve the productivity, real wages and living standards of our children and their children. If the measures taken to cut deficits actually diminish G.D.P., raise unemployment, and reduce future-oriented activities of governments, businesses, and households, they do not advance the goals that are their *raison d'être*; rather, they retard them.

"This perverse result is likely if deficit reduction measures are introduced while the economy is as weak and as constrained by effective demand as it is now and will be in 1993, and quite possible in 1994 as well. Moreover, if public sector future-oriented expenditures are the victims of such mistimed and misplaced fiscal austerity, the contradiction between rationale and actual consequence is compounded."

The WEFA Group's Canadian Economic Outlook in March of this year included this caution:

"A significant risk to the forecast is that governments may overreact to the debt and deficit problem, and attempt to reduce their deficits too quickly. In the current forecast, the deficits are reduced to zero by the end of the decade. The impact of this reduction on economic growth is about 0.5 per cent per year. If governments attempt a very rapid reduction in deficits this could cause the recovery to slow sharply. This is not a very cost-effective way to reduce the deficit as slower growth implies slower growing revenues and continued high social assistance payments"—and on and on.

\* (2040)

I am not going to read all the quotes. I would like to assume that you know them. I do want to mention the Conference Board of Canada clearly stated that the continuing attack on the deficit, without any stimulation, without any plans for employment was going to mean that we stayed in a downsizing way.

Just this week after Canadians had been battered for years with the suggestion that the only way we could move anywhere was to reduce the debt and the deficit, finally Moody's comes out. I have to read this one because it is just this week and it just confirms everything that certainly the

Canadian Labour Congress, the labour movement, has been saying

"Several recently published reports have greatly exaggerated Canada's fiscal debt position. Some of them have double counted numbers"—well, when I listened to the debate on 15 plus 5 equals 20, I can understand the counting problem—"while others have made inappropriate international comparisons, eg. comparing Canada's gross debt to other countries' net debt. These inaccurate measurements may have played a role in exaggerated evaluations of the severity of Canada's debt problems."

They go on to say that, in fact, they will not reduce Canada's credit rating and it will stay at triple-A.

These misguided approaches such as that embodied in Bill 22 multiply across Canada; so too does the skepticism about and opposition to them. Indiscriminate slashing of public spending and cuts to public sector wages will further deflate an already stagnant economy.

We believe that the provincial government should be working together to change the federal policies, those policies of high interest rates, cutbacks in federal spending, reduced transfer payments to the provinces for health care and education, and free trade that bear much of the blame for current provincial crises.

Buying into the federal agenda not only camouflages the real source of our national and provincial social and economic devastation, it is also ultimately self-defeating as was borne out by the quotes.

There is little quarrel that federal and provincial deficits must be controlled. The debate is over how and how fast. The Manitoba government's objective in this regard would be better served if it were to join the chorus calling for stimulation and job creation, and if it were to abandon its restrictive chorus by, among other things, scrapping Bill 22.

Its application of faulty economic theory is reason enough to oppose the bill. However, as I stated earlier, it is not the only reason. Regrettably, not for the first time in recent history, government fiat is being used to override free and fair collective bargaining.

This province is one of the provinces that was reprimanded by the ILO most recently. The ILO said very clearly that governments could reduce

wages, they could freeze wages, but they must do it in consultation with their workers.

Immediately there is no discussion with the workers. The government has given up the basic tenet of a democracy. I am sure there is nobody in the Manitoba government who would believe that Manitoba is other than a democratic society. However, when it comes to its own workers, public sector workers, they believe they have absolute authority. There are other names for that other than democracy.

I have the quotes from the ILO within the document. I do not intend to read them, but I should point out that when an international organization uses the word "regrets", it has a far stronger meaning in diplomatic circles.

The suggestion that Manitoba just ignores the ILO is actually unthinkable. Yet we stand up in all kinds of international forums, condemn the abuse of human rights. I am sure the people sitting around this table were supporting Solidarnosc when it was an underground movement. It is all right if it is in Poland, but when you do the very same thing to your own workers, it is another story.

Finally, the ILO said that: "The committee trusts that the Government will refrain from taking such measures in the future." I am afraid that assumption was based on the fact that we are a democracy, and that has not happened.

Bill 22, like Bill 70, is a flagrant violation of both international labour standards and public employees' rights in this country. If it passed, and if the affiliated unions affected requested, I can assure you that the Canadian Labour Congress will take another complaint to the ILO on behalf of the 100,000 Manitobans who may be hurt.

There is no reason to believe that the ILO would conclude anything but that the government's actions are another, yet again, blatant violation of international law.

For all of these reasons, both major reasons that the economic underpinnings of Bill 22 are rooted in quicksand, that the bill will exacerbate, not improve, the very problem, the deficit debt it is intended to fight. Moreover, it is unfair and antidemocratic.

We would recommend and hope that the committee urge the government to stop proceeding with the bill, and instead, in conjunction with other governments in this country, begin the process of attacking the deficit debt in the only manner that will

yield results, via economic expansion and job creation.

I hope I did not take all my time.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Thank you very much, Ms. Riche.

**Mr. Ashton:** I appreciate your bringing the national and international perspective. In fact, just yesterday, when we completed debate, I made reference in my comments to the fact that Manitoba had been cited by the ILO. I was wondering if you could put it in context, because you may not be aware of this, but this government, despite this kind of legislation, puts out documents saying that it wants a co-operative working relationship between labour and management. I do not have a copy here, but I could probably track one down.

**Ms. Riche:** It is in the act. I mean, I think they are legally bound to have—

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Ms. Riche.

**Ms. Riche:** Oh, I am sorry. I do not understand why you say the names all the time out here. We just speak to each other in Ottawa.

**Mr. Ashton:** And what I wish is we had the document here, not only the act, but they put out these fancy economic plans. I do not have a copy here. I am sure we could get it out of the library. Someone suggested it should be filed under fiction because it talks about co-operation between labour and management.

I just want to ask you, in the context of what the Conservatives here like to talk about the global economy, is this consistent with co-operation between labour and management, Bill 22?

**Ms. Riche:** This is not consistent with labour and management co-operation, but it is very consistent with conservative governments all over the world. I mean, the great example is Margaret Thatcher and her straightforward plan to decimate unions as quickly and as possibly as she could. So where it is consistent is with conservative governments.

It is also consistent that before they attempt to roll back the wages and do the blatant attack on public sector workers, is to spend a number of years basically lying to the public in terms of the debt and deficit. So what they do is create the atmosphere so that when they do then attack public sector workers, that they assume and hope they will get the co-operation and support of the public.

This is not just a thing that happens overnight. This is a long-planned agenda by conservative governments wherever they exist. That is conservative, small "c," whether they be Liberal or Conservative, they are conservative, and some others.

**Mr. Ashton:** The concern that many people have been expressing of Bill 22 in Manitoba, and I think it was made very clear by the previous presenter, is that basically it is a scapegoat bill. The whole philosophy on which this is based is, first of all, the argument there is a major problem with the deficit. I think you have put forward some interesting points on it. But second of all, that the way you deal with it is by attacking the public sector. In this case, it is the second time it has happened in Manitoba in two years.

The bill you referenced before brought in a legislated wage freeze that wiped out a number of collective agreements. I am wondering if you can give me some sense of what is happening nationally, what the response is amongst, not just public sector workers, but since CLC represents many private sector workers, what the reaction is to that fundamental premise that seems to be saying that the problem with the deficit is because of public sector workers.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Ms. Riche? By the way, this is exactly the same kind of procedure that is used in all committees across the country. Thank you.

**Ms. Riche:** Pardon? Excuse me, I did not hear what you said.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I said this is the same procedure that is used in all committees across the country.

**Ms. Riche:** Provincial.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Provincially and federally.

**Ms. Riche:** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** In answers and questions.

**Ms. Riche:** No, it is not, but we can talk about that later. I spent half my life before parliamentary committees in Ottawa.

**Mr. Chairperson:** So did I. Proceed, please.

**Ms. Riche:** The reaction is exactly the same as you are getting from the public sector and the general public here in Ottawa, in Manitoba, but it is happening all over.

In the private sector, thanks be to God, we are still bargaining collectively, people actually do go in and sit across the table and they negotiate. Certainly the wage increases are not as high, and the stats prove that, as they have been in a number of years but what is decided at the end of the day, whatever the wage increase, it is reached collectively and that is exactly what should be happening here.

\* (2050)

Obviously, this government has no faith in its own ability to negotiate so it is a lot easier to legislate, and I think that indicates some incompetence and lack of faith in their own employees. The other thing that I think is very, very interesting, and I am sure the federation will address it, is that the government is using this based on the fact that they are going to save \$114 million. I would ask you to ask the president of the Federation of Labour to indicate the figures that show that, rather than saving \$114 million, this government will save somewhere between \$11.4 million to \$22.1 million, so I think it is also terribly dishonest and misleading in terms of the motivation for the bill.

I mean, what it really wants to do is stop collective bargaining with its own workers. That is clearly the only motivation. I can find no other reason.

**Mr. Ashton:** I want to get some focus in on collective bargaining because I guess one of the concerns that I have is the fact that a lot of people are seeming to assume that collective bargaining is just a process, just a way of getting agreements; if it does not work, you throw it out. I personally feel that it has been fundamental to progress in Canadian society, and many of the social benefits we have were predated by improvements in collective agreements.

I am wondering if you can give the committee members and particularly the government members here some sense of how important collective bargaining is, not just in the case of Bill 22 and the 100,000 Manitobans whose contracts, collective agreements are now being negated. But in the Canadian context, how important is collective bargaining?

**Ms. Riche:** It is clearly acceptable as one of the major pieces of a democratic society. It came about because people came together to get some

protection. If they are not together as a union, it is clear that the employers will just do whatever they want to do. The other piece is that it brought labour peace. There was no labour peace when there were unions. It brought some equality to a table, it brought some respect from one side and the other, it allowed for people to treat each other with dignity. When that is taken away, what this government—I mean, I do not want to use the word “fascist” but I guess I just did, it is now in the record. But it is the suggestion that workers have no intelligence, that they are unable to speak for themselves.

What eventually will happen if the collective bargaining process breaks down is what has happened all over the world. The government will then make strikes illegal obviously, but the people will strike anyway. I mean, I am not trying to be overreactionary, but it does lead to violence and a breakdown in society. That is the reason why collective bargaining, well, was legislated in the first place. That is why it has become a major piece of freedom of association in the ILO.

It is just acceptable norms of society, what we have seen across this country is governments, not the private sector, but governments trying to destroy the process of collective bargaining with their own employees, I would suspect, to set the atmosphere so that it can be destroyed in the private sector, which means of course it does not even come from the government. It does not even come from them, it comes from the private sector, the multinationals, who in fact want to get rid of unions anyway just as they have practically done in the United States. This is part of the long-term plan. It might sound off-the-wall at this point, read the history books 20 years from now if we do not stop it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Ms. Riche. The next presenter on the list is Brian Ardern, Thompson Teachers' Association. Brian Ardern, are you in the audience?

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** Yes, and I know that the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) missed the first part of the meeting where the time was put on, but I think it is only fair in this particular item, I have a number of questions but the member for Osborne being here is the only representative from the Liberal Party, I think it would only be fair—well—

**Mr. Chairperson:** There is no point of order. Mr. Brian Ardern, would you please make your presentation?

\* \* \*

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I would like to ask leave from this committee to be a little bit more reasonable here in dealing with presentations. We just had a presenter that spoke—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Ashton. Order, please. Mr. Ardern.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am asking for leave of the committee to continue.

**Mr. Chairperson:** There is no leave, sorry. Mr. Ardern, will you come forward, please.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson, you are the Chair of the committee but you do not decide if there is leave, the committee decides. I would ask, as a courtesy to the presenter and particularly to myself and to the Liberal member who have questions, if we can have leave to allow additional questions above and beyond the 20-minute limit. This was exactly the procedure that has been followed in the case of the constitutional committee. I am asking for leave from members of the committee—

**Mr. Chairperson:** The question, I believe, has been put. Is there leave?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** There is no leave.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Mr. Ardern, would you come forward, please?

**Mr. Ashton:** We will see if the chamber of commerce gets limited to 20 minutes.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. Mr. Ardern.

**Mr. Brian Ardern (Thompson Teachers' Association):** My name is Brian Ardern—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Have you a written presentation, please?

**Mr. Ardern:** I do and you have it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Ardern:** My name is Brian Ardern, I am here tonight to represent the Thompson Teachers' Association. My being here involved a round-trip



journey of about 1,500 kilometres, so I am really glad you could spare 20 minutes. It seems kind of tough here tonight, you know, first you cannot work and then you cannot talk.

Bill 22 will have a major impact not just on the collective bargaining rights of teachers in this province, but on the quality of education that our students enjoy. As such, the teachers of Thompson are pleased to have the opportunity present their views today.

We believe that democracy only works when people have input into decisions. We believe it is invaluable to discuss ideas and concerns before decisions are made.

Unfortunately, what is happening here today seems to us to be more of a public relations exercise than an honest attempt to consult. It appears to us that this decision is already made. School boards have already told teachers that they will use this legislation to violate what Manitobans had assumed were legally binding contracts. We find this process of consultation, after decisions have already been unilaterally reached, abhorrent and antidemocratic. Nevertheless, the teachers of Thompson decided to incur the considerable expense of sending somebody here today because we view this issue as one of such great importance.

It was not difficult to decide the focus of this brief, despite the numerous options that were available. We could have chosen to discuss the process whereby government makes up the rules as they go along. We teach our children that contracts come with certain moral and legal obligations. We will now have to explain to them that such ethics do not apply to government. While our students will be expected to honour the agreements that they make, their government will be free to change legal agreements in any manner and at any time that it sees fit. Having two sets of rules is always difficult for students to understand. How will we explain the term "negotiating in good faith," for example, when in reality those negotiations are binding only on one party and not the other? How do we help students understand that their government is above the law?

Another focus for this brief might have been the budget cuts that supposedly made this legislation necessary. Education funding was chopped by \$16 million this year, but what about the decision to increase private school funding by 150 percent over the last five years? What about the decision

to put \$15 million into the Vision Capital Fund and \$10 million into the economic innovations fund while deciding that there is really nothing innovative about education, so teachers do not need professional development? What about the decision to give an American consultant \$4 million plus \$800,000 in expenses to study our health care system? What about giving \$4 million to Wang computer to build a Centre for Excellence that was never built. For a government that trumpets its commitment to education, these seem like questionable choices.

Still, the focus of this brief is not the hard financial choices this government has made. It is not about government being above the law. It is about kids, Mr. Manness. Schools exist to teach kids. We believe that we provide them with trained, highly professional teachers because we recognize how crucial their education is to themselves and to the future of our country. For the teachers of Thompson the most important question in regard to Bill 22 is its effect on students, and we believe these effects will be substantial.

\* (2100)

Anyone involved in education understands the nonstop changes that we face. In a world changing constantly, with new technologies developing every few months and information systems evolving daily, we recognize the need to continually upgrade skills and knowledge. Paired with the integration of special needs students, changing demographics and the increasing need for co-operative strategies to work with students, it is clear that our public schools represent a changing environment from year to year and even day to day.

Nothing changes more frequently than curricula. Take, for example, the planned change to the math curriculum. Changes in the kindergarten to Grade 4 curriculum are currently being piloted, with the Grade 5 to Grade 8 curriculum set to be piloted next year. These changes in curriculum involve substantial changes in the teaching process. The new materials that are being produced are aimed almost exclusively at teachers and are designed to help teachers teach math in a very different way. Everyone recognizes how central math skills are to the success of our students, but the burden to implement these changes will fall almost exclusively on teachers.

The Department of Education is providing little or no financial support to implement curriculum changes, and now in some districts teachers will receive no curriculum training or assistance because the allocated time has been cut. It is ludicrous to assert that this will not have an impact on students, and what we are talking about is only one curriculum area.

Consider that science curricula 5 to 8 and Senior 1 are under review. Consider that curriculum revisions are ongoing in the business education areas of keyboarding, word processing, accounting, software applications and seminars in business. Consider that health units, such as Family Life and drug education, are either being implemented or will be shortly. Consider that sustainable development, mandated, despite teacher opposition, by the Department of Education and due to be introduced at every grade level, will be implemented this fall. Consider that a curriculum called Skills for Independent Living is in the middle of being implemented.

Software applications, drug education, sustainable development, Skills for Independent Living—these things were certainly not part of the schools most of us attended, yet they show how much our schools are continuing to change. We have not even mentioned Race Relations, technology education, and Violence Prevention in Daily Life and in Relationships.

As a society, we expect that our schools will take into account the rapidly changing world and provide our children with the skills and knowledge they need to live in it. That is why new curricula are constantly being added and old curricula continually upgraded and improved. These changes do not come without a cost, however. We must provide teachers with the time and training to make these changes, which are designed to meet the needs of our children—time to think, to plan, to organize, to revise, to meet.

It seems ironic that, as business and industry provide more and more resources to train and upgrade their workforces, we in education are providing less. Just as business begins to recognize the absolute necessity of constantly increasing the skills of their people, we in education decide we cannot afford it. Can you imagine our schools operating with the same materials they did in the 1960s or the 1970s? Will the 1980s materials and approach that we use now be

adequate when we enter a new millennium? Only the foolish think so.

Our failure to adequately upgrade teaching skills will cost students in ways beyond curriculum and methodology. Just this week the Free Press pointed out what it referred to as the computer illiteracy of teachers. It stated that this was a result of teachers never being adequately trained in computers, and predicted that, if we do not make changes, in 10 years Canada will be a Third World country. The article points out that computer technology thrives where teachers are encouraged to learn and experiment. If teachers are deficient in this area, how will we address the problem?

Clearly, removing the time that teachers use to upgrade their skills, learn new methodologies and work with new technologies can have nothing but a negative impact. Ultimately, it is students who will pay the price. They are the ones who will have an inadequately trained instructor standing in front of them each day. Removing the time that teachers use to improve their professional skills may be the ultimate in penny-wise and pound-foolish thinking.

In conclusion, Bill 22 is unethical. It violates legal contracts and represents an immoral intrusion into the collective bargaining process. In addition, the fiscal choices that supposedly make it necessary are highly questionable. Still, these considerations are far less important than the impact such legislation will have on the students of this province. Our society demands a constant innovation and technical upgrading necessary to compete in the modern world. The evolving face of education demands more such upgrading, not less. We ignore such necessities only at our own peril.

Our pursuit of excellence, our commitment to quality education is mocked when we decide that the people who teach our children do not need to do anything different, do not need to be any better prepared or trained and do not have to have their technical skills improved. We will find all this out in the end when we pay the price for such decisions, or rather when our children pay the price.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Ardern.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I certainly can testify to the distance you have travelled and the inconvenience of that, but I am glad to see you here. It is nice to get the perspective from Thompson and perspective of teachers in Thompson, as someone who came through the

Thompson education system. I find it interesting that you focus so much on the changing world. I just look at what has happened, say, in the years since I was in high school in Thompson, and what kind of world kids face today.

I am just reading through another presentation from Gilbert Plains Collegiate which quoted the throne speech which says, and I quote—this is the government by the way, it is not me: “My government realizes that education and training are the keys that unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity. To this end, my government will chart a course to equip Manitobans with the knowledge and skills they require to meet the challenges of a new century.”

Let us put it directly. Is Bill 22 even remotely connected with this statement? I mean, is there anything in Bill 22 that will contribute to the achievement of this? I do not know if it is even a goal, it is certainly a well-crafted PR phrase. Is it even in the same planet as this particular statement from the government only a few months ago?

**Mr. Ardern:** No, but it is consistent. Funding for education for the last decade, for the last 12 years, has been going down. When I first went into teaching about 12 years ago, the percentage of funding that was provided by the province to each district was something very close to 80 percent, I think, just over 80 percent; it is now about 67 percent. The inequities that is creating, of course, are making things worse.

Just in 1991, the Minister of Education, I believe it was Mr. Derkach, froze education funding and told us we had to do more with less. So it certainly continues. This is not new. There has been an underfunding of education for certainly the last five years that this particular government has been in power.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am wondering, too, as well, if you can outline to the committee the kind of relationships that developed in terms of collective bargaining. I mentioned to the previous presenter in my question—I am trying to get some sense of collective bargaining because I know, in the case of the School District of Mystery Lake, collective bargaining has still been continuing in the context of some of the proposals in Bill 22, et cetera.

One of the things that is developing in the province is a patchwork quilt because of Bill 22, where some school districts are standing up to the

government and saying it is wrong to implement the provisions of the bill and others are not. I am wondering if you could give some perspective to the committee of what is happening in Thompson.

**Mr. Ardern:** I am really proud to say that our board is not going to use this legislation, and they have made it quite clear that they think the legislation is wrong. In fact, they have written to every other division in the province saying that.

But there is no doubt that if you have one division which is taking no days, another which is taking eight, another which is taking two, that is going to create inequities. When you consider that provincial funding for education is now down to 67 percent, those divisions that have a good tax base and can raise a lot of money are obviously going to be better off than the poorer ones.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am just wondering why the school district of Thompson would do that. I mean, the government brings in the bill which allows school districts, with a stroke of a pen, virtually to wipe out professional days, basically to bring in unpaid leave, to cut salaries, whatever term you want to use.

Why did that happen in Thompson in comparison to some other school divisions?

**Mr. Ardern:** Probably a combination of maybe different fiscal circumstances. Sometimes among the general public, there is a perception that these days basically do not serve a purpose.

I am kind of disappointed sometimes that the Department of Education does not do more to tell people how valuable those days are. Certainly, our board recognizes that and has made very sure that we are not going to be losing our professional development time next year.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am just wondering if you could perhaps elaborate on that, because another of the scapegoat tactics that I hear—I mentioned earlier in terms of the board context of public sector workers—but one thing that I have heard from people in the context of Bill 22 is to suggest that these professional development days are really not productive, that something could be done some other time on teachers' days off, et cetera.

I wonder if you could give some sense of what the reality is of being a teacher in the 1990s, given the changing world, et cetera. You mentioned some of the topics that are dealt with, but what are professional development days for those people

that seem to feel that is something of a paid day off, because I have heard that terminology from people. I wonder how you feel when people say that.

\* (2110)

**Mr. Ardern:** Well, those days are used for so many different things. For example, one of the things that we do with those days is we meet with parents; another one of the things, if you look at some school divisions where you might have a school and a Grade 4 teacher who does not work with any other Grade 4 teachers, that is a chance for a teacher to go meet with teachers at the same grade level, discuss curriculum, those kinds of things.

We have a student in our school who sees a resource teacher, who sees a teacher aide, who sees a regular teacher. We have a meeting once a week with four or five people to discuss that single student's progress.

So the kinds of students that we deal with in school now are far different than 20 years ago. The curriculum has certainly changed. The needs have certainly changed. If we do not continually upgrade the skills of our people, a few years down the road I imagine we are going to have some problems.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am wondering how we are on time, Mr. Chairperson. On time?

**Mr. Chairperson:** We have four minutes left.

**Mr. Ashton:** Four minutes left, there is no overtime?

**Mr. Chairperson:** You keep wasting it, it dwindles.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am not wasting it, Mr. Chairperson, I am asking questions to a constituent of my mine. I am asking questions of someone who represents the Thompson Teachers' Association.

I have a number of additional questions, but since there are other members of the committee that have questions, I just want to indicate, I really appreciate Brian's effort coming down here.

I think it is important that people outside of the Perimeter be heard on these kinds of issues. If it takes sometimes travelling the 755 kilometres from Thompson to Winnipeg, it has to be done. So thank you for coming.

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne):** Thank you, Mr. Ardern. I just was interested in your remark that your board has not taken advantage of Bill 22 or

has indicated that they will not. How are they are solving the fiscal problem that they face?

**Mr. Ardern:** Well, we have had a number of cuts over the past few years. They have spent their surplus. There are a lot of boards out there with a lot of money sitting in surplus they have decided they do not want to spend.

The fear in my division, I think, is that the board has made this decision this year. The way funding is going, I wonder if they are going to have a choice next year. That is our greatest concern, is not that the board will say, hey, here is chance to put it to you guys, but that they really will not have any choice.

**Mr. Alcock:** Mr. Chairperson, so you and the teachers in your division are not suffering the cuts in this year, but you are very concerned about the impact that such cuts have generally in education. You are advocating, really, for other divisions.

**Mr. Ardern:** Exactly.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, I understand that one of the informal suggestions from this government is that parent-teacher conferences be conducted in the evening. This, I assume, is after the play rehearsals and after the basketball practice.

I wonder if you could—I realize your board has not taken advantage of that, but you are a representative of a particular type of community, I think, where there is a great deal of shift work. I wonder if you could give us some idea how that would have affected your particular teachers in your schools.

**Mr. Ardern:** Well, I think one of the biggest problems is it just adds one more thing to the workload. Basically, I am not sure how much you can continue to add to people's workload without it coming from somewhere else. One of the things that we are hearing now is, if I have to do this additionally, what am I not going to do?

I think the thing that has us—and maybe if I could take a minute and read a little bit of this—one of the things that has us really angry is that we keep hearing about all of these tough choices, you know? Gee, we had these tough choices, we did not have a choice.

I guess what really makes me angry is that this government, since 1988, has cut \$300 million of its own revenue. Alongside that, a \$16 million cut in education really seems puny. They have cut the

payroll tax. They have cut the corporate tax. They have cut the land transfer tax.

This government has chopped its own revenue, cut its own revenue, stood up one day in the House and boasted about it and said, hey, see what we have done? The next day stood up and said, you know, times are really tough. We are going to have to cut money to foster parents. We are going to have to cut money to health care. We are going to have to cut money to education.

I find that really, really difficult to deal with.

**Ms. Friesen:** Well, I do not want to dishearten you, but I think if you read one of the recent issues of the chamber of commerce bulletin, you will find that the president of the chamber of commerce is saying that we should not be asking how we can do more with less in education, we should be asking how we can do much more with 25 percent less. That is a chilling thought.

It certainly comes not from our side of the House.

**Mr. Ardern:** I was reading a statistic today, 20 years ago the amount of money that was raised through personal income tax was 34 percent—I believe this is the federal government's revenue—was raised through personal income tax, 17 percent was raised through corporate tax.

Twenty years later, today, 49 percent of the government's revenue is raised through personal tax and 8 percent through corporate tax.

I think that that philosophy is one that this government has picked up on very clearly. I think that this government has decided they are going to cut. They are going to take less of their total budget from the corporate sector. Then, when that creates a problem, they will cut education and social spending to cover it.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Ardern. The next item on the agenda is John Chalaturnyk, Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba. Is Mr. Chalaturnyk and Laurena Leskiw, I understand? Ms. Leskiw, are you the only presenter?

**Ms. Laurena Leskiw (President, Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba):** I am the president of the Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much. We have you—

**Ms. Leskiw:** You have my copy there, I believe. It has been circulated.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much. Would you proceed, please?

**Ms. Leskiw:** I would like to say good evening to you, Mr. Penner, and members of the committee who are still here. First of all, a personal thanks for changing your order to accommodate me. I am from Brandon and I appreciate that very much.

We are pleased to have you allow us come and present our concerns on this important bill. The Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba is an organization incorporated under The Corporations Act as a private nonprofit organization to represent the interests of former Manitoba educators who are now in retirement.

You may find our perspective rather different to the other presenters here this evening because we are no longer engaged in education. Our presentation is broken into three major concerns, followed by a summary. Then John Chalaturnyk, who is a past president of the Retired Teachers' Association, will present his additional concerns as a retired school inspector.

With your permission, I would like to present mine first and then John will present his. Let me begin.

We, the Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba, would like to discuss our concerns about the implications of Bill 22. We are knowledgeable about the history of professional development days, the collective bargaining process, teachers' retirement pensions and the development of the big divisions from the smaller school districts. Thus, we know that Bill 22 will have far-reaching implications on the education of children in Manitoba.

Our first concern: Inequalities of Educational Opportunity, reduced PD days. We are concerned about the quality of professional development. Professional development is a continuation of the teacher training experience which allows education to adapt to a rapidly changing world. By allowing each school division to determine the number of in-service days they can afford, Bill 22 may mean that some teachers will lose all 10 days, while those teachers in more affluent divisions will lose none. This is where the equality in Manitoba education begins to disintegrate.

\* (2120)

Historically, 11 teaching days were sacrificed from the school year for the administration of provincial examinations and the inspectors' conventions. With the cancellation of these exams and conventions, these same 11 days were allotted to our present system of professional development, administration and parent-teacher conference days.

Our constant concern is for the inequalities created for students in these less affluent school divisions throughout Manitoba. Our particular concern is that Bill 22 will increase these inequalities in these divisions by reducing the time allotted for teacher in-service on new subject content, new teaching strategies and the learning process, thereby creating further disparities and disadvantages for these students.

An immediate example is the implementation of the two new Manitoba mathematics curricula in the next two years, and these are of great concern to me because I am the writer of the mass curricula for the K-4 and I am also the liaison person on the Grades 5 to 8.

The new curricula is designed to increase student proficiency necessary to cope and succeed in subsequent studies and in adult life in an intensely technical and competitive society. This will require substantial retraining of every teacher in the early and the middle years grades. In-service days for the next two years will be fundamental to the successful implementation of the two new curricula across Manitoba. Budget restraint in Curriculum Services does not permit a repeat of these implementation workshops.

If all teachers in a particular division are affected by a cut in PD days, when will the students be exposed to the new math content? When will their students be exposed to the new teaching methodology and the new philosophy? Will they receive it later? Will it be too late to allow them to catch up? How will this affect their later programs?

Earlier, one of the speakers alluded to the value of PD. I had a chapter president phone me last night and she said, please tell them the importance of PD days. She is a retired teacher and knows exactly what it was like to be back in the classroom with the PD in-service that we had. She said, the impact of professional development days is very uplifting. You become very excited and enthusiastic about rushing back to your classroom

to try out these new ideas, the content or materials you have learned at this in-service.

Education becomes exciting for teachers and for kids with these new creative ideas gleaned from in-service. Analogy would be as if your battery has been recharged or perhaps you have just had a new motor installed. Now is that not what we want in education? Is that not the kind of creative teaching, the enthusiasm that you want in your classrooms? Do you not want your children turned on by these teachers that have just been in-serviced and come back with all these new ideas?

With the mainstreaming of special needs students, teachers are constantly being in-serviced on new medical knowledge, new learning styles and new program modifications that facilitate the successful integration of these special needs students into the regular classroom. A reduction of PD days for these teachers, coupled with a cut to their support staff, gives a further concern about Bill 22's effect on the future lives of these children and on the teachers' ability to plan suitable education programs to meet the diverse needs of these high-risk children. Current in-service is essential for these teachers.

The move to reporting on a child's progress through parent-teacher conference days has been a giant step forward in establishing parental involvement in their children's education. In this period of declining job security, unemployment and recession, it is even more crucial that these conferences be maintained to allow ample discussion and consultation in the selection of the proper courses to allow students a successful entry into this new global economy. Home and school working together has never been so important.

Teachers are committed to providing the best educational opportunities for all students, but when all teachers are not permitted the same ongoing teacher training, we fear that this will not occur.

Our second concern is the effect on pensions—not uniform across the province. Our second concern is the implication Bill 22 will have on pensions of future retirees. Because all teachers are not being affected by the same across-the-province reduction in PD days, there will be many inequalities on teacher salaries and pensions.

The Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund board, or TRAF, as we call it, calculates pensions

based on the average of the best five years or seven years of salary received in the last 12 years plus the years of pensionable service.

Thus, those teachers affected by PD cuts will receive double punishment. Not only will their yearly income be reduced in comparison with the other teachers not experiencing the PD cuts, but those retiring in the next 5 to 7 years will also be penalized for life by a reduction in their pension.

Thus, Bill 22 has far-reaching implications for some teachers but at the same time having no implications for other teachers. This is not acceptable.

Historically, a teaching year, for pensionable purposes, was not affected by the number of days a school was open. In the past, many schools were closed for various reasons and varying times due to the polio epidemic, the harvesting of crops and even the availability of train service to remote areas.

Individual pensions were not affected by these closures. This precedent has been set. An amendment in The TRAF Act would be necessary to change the definition of a school year for pensionable service and a grossed-up salary before the reduction of PD days.

Our third concern is the effect on school board-teacher relations—board autonomy threatened. Our third concern is the effect Bill 22 legislation will have on the relationship between school boards and their teachers. The Public Schools Act grants teachers and trustees the right to negotiate salaries and working conditions.

These mandatory cuts proposed by the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) infringe on that right to negotiate in good faith with teachers and to raise funds for those services which are uniquely suited to the educational needs of that community.

Teachers and trustees have established a good relationship. This proposed legislation interferes with this right to negotiate and to raise funds by taxation. Both of these limitations are damaging to the rapport built up over time by trustees and teachers.

In summary, our three concerns involve the inequalities of educational opportunities for Manitoba students by the cut of PD days in some divisions; No. 2, the loss of salary, pensionable service and the resulting combined loss of pension for life for some teachers; No. 3, the removal of the

local autonomy of school boards to negotiate with their staff, to plan and to raise funds for their educational programs.

We thank you for allowing us to present the concerns of the Retired Teachers' Association of Manitoba, all 1,200 of us. We ask that you give full consideration to each of our concerns. I will now ask John to present his special.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** Yes, just since we effectively have two people presenting, I just want to make sure that the presenter is not going to be cut off after sort of 20 minutes before. I would suggest, in terms of the time limit, we apply, perhaps, 40 minutes, since it is really two separate presentations, just to be fair to the presenter, Mr. Chairperson.

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**Mr. Chairperson:** I have really one item on the agenda here. I will allow for two presenters, and they will both be given equal time. I will ask, however, Ms. Leskiw to come back to the mike, then, and answer the questions.

**Ms. Leskiw:** Right now?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Yes, for your time, and I will ask Mr. Chalaturnyk to make his presentation after. May we ask the questions of Ms. Leskiw, if that is agreeable?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairperson, thank you, Ms. Leskiw. You make a strong presentation in support of the value of professional development days. Can you tell me whether anything prevents, anything in this bill or any other legislation prevents teachers from availing themselves of professional development days without pay?

\* (2130)

**Ms. Leskiw:** Teachers do that all the time. They are doing it constantly, doing their own professional development at their own cost and in their own time, in addition to the other. With the vast changes that you have in curricula, you need to be constantly updating.

They are still doing that, but that would not be sufficient in itself, in my estimation. We do not have the mandate to speak on those things as the Retired Teachers' Association, and that is a personal comment.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, again, I do not want to debate with you, Ms. Leskiw, that is not my purpose, yet

you make a strong presentation. I guess, I would have to ask the question, are you aware of teachers within any school division who are as concerned as you are with respect to the professional development day removal as far as paid leave and support in some school divisions? Why, in your view, have no local teachers' associations decided to voluntarily take a withdrawal or a rollback in their wages so that they then can continue to have paid professional development days?

**Ms. Lesklw:** I am not able to comment on that, because I do not attend any of the Manitoba Teachers' Society meetings in even our own local division. But I know that they are very concerned about the lack of professional development days. I think I have given you just cause to really re-examine the cutting of in-service days, particularly because it is not being cut all across the province.

You recognize that many of your urban cities are not cutting any days at all, and because we have many inequalities in education already in the rural areas outside of the Perimeter, then, I think it is very damaging to those children out there. Our prime concern, as retired teachers, is the inequalities that are existing with the bill as we presently see it.

**Ms. Friesen:** Thank you very much for your presentation. I wanted to follow up on some of the questions that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was making, and to ask you if you knew anything about the program, the one educational innovation of this government which is called Workforce 2000, whose purpose is, whose entire purpose, really, is to persuade the private sector to develop professional development days, that is, in-house training for the improvement of their professional and technical qualifications.

**Ms. Lesklw:** I am not knowledgeable about that program.

**Ms. Friesen:** It seems to me that what is happening here is that the government's economic or educational innovation in one area has been given in the one hand and taken away from the public sector only with the other.

**Ms. Lesklw:** I certainly know that my son, who is in management with a private company, certainly in-services his staff throughout the western provinces that he is in charge of.

**Ms. Friesen:** I gather from some of the informal comments you have made that you have spent time in rural Manitoba school divisions as well. Can you give us an idea of where you have taught over the years?

**Ms. Lesklw:** I taught 27 years in Brandon and I taught one year on permit in Grandview.

**Ms. Friesen:** I wonder if you could give us a sense of the changes in education in Manitoba since the 1960s, because one of the things that seems to me to have happened, looking from the outside, is that since the 1960s, we have seen an effort by every government to equalize the opportunities in education across Manitoba, and what we are seeing in the proposals of this government is a dramatic change in direction.

**Ms. Lesklw:** I think there have been some wonderful things occurring in education over the years, the amount of contact that we have with students, the involvement that we have with parents. There have been so many marvelous things occurring in education. I am really concerned about the amount of work that is put onto this school. If you recognize that we have many, many social problems that are coming in, you cannot deal with the teaching of children until those social problems have been handled first. We have many, many one-parent families that are struggling to live, and how can you expect them to come home and help the children to do homework when they are exhausted when they get home at seven or eight o'clock at night when the children should be in bed?

**Ms. Friesen:** Yes, I was particularly struck by the section of your presentation which talked about the relationship with home and parents. It struck me that one of the suggestions I have heard from this government is that parent-teacher interviews be conducted on the teacher's own time after school. We have actually looked at the way in which this would work out in practice. If you were, for example, a high school teacher and you had three classes of 30 students, then you are looking at approximately eight hours to review the parents of one class. You are doing that over four nights, two to three hours a night, you must continue that for two to three weeks in order to cover presumably about two-thirds of the parents that you are going to be involved with. I wonder if you would care to comment on that. Am I exaggerating that experience?



**Ms. Leskiw:** I do not know where people get the idea that parent-teacher conferences are just a nine-to-four task, because in the schools that I have been in, we deal with working parents in the evening in addition to our daily programs. You are reporting in an entirely different manner.

If you think of your old report cards that had a check mark, have you seen the new report cards? It is all anecdotal. If I want to be a bit facetious, I might say that the teachers comment on down to the way the hair is parted and the colour of pen that they use. Everything is down in detail there. At one time we did that in interviews. Now that report card goes home, the parents have an opportunity to look at the report card to come up with answers, because it is not easy sitting before a teacher who is telling you that Johnny has some problems and you are trying to read the report card at the same time.

**Mr. Alcock:** You have introduced another item here that has not been mentioned by other presenters, and that is the effect on pensions. You mention that you think it would take a small amendment to The TRAF Act that would deal with that.

**Ms. Leskiw:** Yes, I think probably. I do have George Strang here who is very, very knowledgeable about pensions, and he is going to become my—I think it is called executive director now that he is in retirement, so he will really be doing a lot of this for us as retired teachers. Would you care to direct it to George, or is it a question that perhaps I can answer? You can ask, and if I cannot answer it, then he will.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We are almost out of time.

**Ms. Leskiw:** Okay.

**Mr. Alcock:** Let me just leave it as a recommendation. Perhaps you could ask him to recommend a suggested amendment and bring it forward to us.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much. We are out of time, and I am now going to ask Mr. John Chalaturnyk. Is that the right pronunciation?

**Mr. John Chalaturnyk (Retired Teachers' Association):** That is right.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Would you proceed with your presentation, please, Mr. Chalaturnyk?

**Mr. Chalaturnyk:** Mr. Chairperson and members of the committee, I am going to begin by introducing

myself briefly. I spent over 40 years in the field of education. I was an inspector of schools for 11 years, the provincial inspector of schools, and I served seven years as superintendent of education. In my report, in the report of the Department of Education for the year ending June 30, 1957, this is what I had to say: It may be said without reservation that the majority of teachers, certified and qualified, have the welfare of the children entrusted to their care uppermost in their minds and efforts.

I say that because teaching is not telling. It is a lot more. The greatest asset of any society is its people, and it is up to the school to develop the youngsters to their potential. The only way that they can do that is by creating an atmosphere conducive to effective learning, which means that the teacher has to be aware of the fact that, whether it be 10, 20 or 40 children in the classroom, they are all different, and that the material that is there for them to absorb is going to be different for everyone.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

\* (2140)

The teacher has to be able to draw out, in other words, to make that material meaningful to the child at the level that that child is. Now, when I started teaching, I had 73 youngsters in one classroom, all grades from 1 to 9, with a youngster that had physical and learning ability shortcomings, so it was a handful. That is why the professional development days are so important.

There was a question of Mrs. Leskiw: Are the teachers doing any professional development on their own? When you go back to the years that I spent, most of us entered the teaching profession either from Grade 11, so called, or Grade 12. Many of us have on our own, through summer school and evening classes, raised our standing to degrees in order to be able to provide that service to the youngsters, to the young Canadians that are developing.

That is why I would like the committee and the government to take this idea into consideration in as far as the professional development days are concerned.

As was mentioned, at one time, and having been an inspector of schools, I know of the two-day conventions that the teachers had to come to, and

they always enjoyed—not enjoyed, but benefited from—them, even though the time was limited. Then, of course, there was the Manitoba educational association conferences at Easter time.

There, again, the teachers did that on their own. They came to Winnipeg in order to hear about the different things that were being done in different parts of the country and, for that matter, different parts of the world.

So, again, I say—and I wanted to have a few minutes to bring this to the attention of the committee—that the learning process is a very important process. It is a process that the teacher has to be able to cope with. The only way that they can do it is that they are given the opportunity to grow professionally. They do grow professionally, and I speak from experience, from dealing with hundreds of teachers and thousands of youngsters over the years.

As an inspector of schools, I took it upon myself for a number of years to administer the learning capacity tests to thousands of young people at various grade levels, in order that we could try and extract the potential of each individual and try to cater to the potential of each one, recognizing that they are all different. This is the thing that I want to stress, that all children are different. They learn differently and the teachers have to be able to identify that and take it into account in their presentations.

I would suggest that maybe there are other ways of, shall we say, reducing the cost of education by possibly in as far as some equipment is concerned, but not taking away from giving the teachers an opportunity to develop professionally so that they can handle their responsibilities to the best of ability and in the best interests of all the young Canadians or all the young Manitobans. This is the area that I wanted to emphasize.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

Thank you for giving me this opportunity. I am a little impassioned because of the time that I spent in the field. I have been retired for 13 years, but I managed to put in a few days every year in the classrooms until about two years ago. So I have been in contact with the learning process, with the educational process in Manitoba, and I would strongly recommend that the matter of the professional days, something that we earned,

something that we gained over the years, be maintained as has been until now.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you, Mr. Chalaturnyk. Thank you for your presentation.

**Ms. Frlesen:** Thank you for the presentation.

I wondered, as a former inspector of schools, if you could give us a sense of what you think the impact of the loss of professional development days will be in rural Manitoba, say, as compared to the inner city of Winnipeg. Do you have a sense of what kinds of inequities might be created in that?

**Mr. Chalaturnyk:** The inequities will come in the area of the fact that, if they do not have an opportunity for professional development, then they certainly cannot develop themselves to the extent that they otherwise would. Definitely, knowing Manitoba as I do and as many of you people do too, there are inequalities in as far as ability to provide a type of learning opportunity that you have in the more well-to-do areas.

**Ms. Frlesen:** I know that one of the SAG days, or one of the special interest areas, in fact, has been to provide for small schools. I think it is often held in Brandon, the small schools professional development days, and I wondered if you were familiar with that and perhaps could give us a sense of the loss for small schools, particularly of the loss of professional development days.

**Mr. Chalaturnyk:** Well, we learn through association. If you are not given an opportunity to meet with other teachers who have similar responsibilities to discuss matters, then you are going to lose out in as far as getting it through that type of association.

That was one way that the former two days of inspectorial conventions, the teachers looked to that time so that they could meet with each other, because, again—pardon me for going back 30, 40 years when the meetings that we had, we did not drive with cars, we walked. We walked 10, 15 miles in order to go to an opportunity to meet with some of the other teachers.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Chalaturnyk. The next presenter is Evan Casselman. Mr. Casselman, have you got a written presentation?

**Mr. Evan Casselman (Turtle Mountain Teachers' Association):** Yes, I do.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We have it before us, I believe. Would you proceed, please?

**Mr. Casselman:** My name is Evan Casselman. I am here on behalf on the teachers in Turtle Mountain Teachers' Association, which is in the western part of the province. On behalf of them, I would like to thank the chairperson and the committee for giving us this time.

\* (2150)

Bill 22 is only one example of a number of initiatives being taken by the government of Manitoba that will starve education of funds and deprive the children of Manitoba of the education they are entitled to. Considering recent initiatives in education, particularly Bill 22, by the government of Manitoba, the Turtle Mountain Teachers' Association wishes to draw your attention to the impact that these initiatives will have on education and teachers within our division and association.

Our division presently utilizes a psychologist, speech/language pathologist and hearing impaired consultant. With the loss of these positions, school boards will be forced to find extra monies beyond the grant allowances in order to retain these services. Because of your government's decision, inequities will be created in the delivery of these services throughout the province. Because the size of our division dictates that we share the above services with another division, we would, in fact, be facing not just a cut in these programs, but the risk of losing them completely.

Our school division will have difficulty acquiring the funds necessary for these programs, particularly in light of the fact that we have negligible surplus, approximately \$16,000, and the fact that your government has placed a cap on the local levy.

This will affect 80 students in the division who are presently on speech/language programs, 65 students who presently receive psychological services, four students who work with the consultant for the hearing impaired and three different students each year who attend the Diagnostic Support Centre for educational assessment that cannot be performed in the division.

Local divisions will have to find the necessary monies elsewhere. Limiting government funding and restricting the ability of local school boards to raise the necessary funds raises the question, from

where will these funds be obtained? Do we get these funds from taking it away from teachers?

The 2 percent cap on the local levy, as proposed by the government, restricts our board's ability to maintain present programming, which already puts our students at a disadvantage relative to students within larger jurisdictions with more monies available through local taxes and provincial funding. There is a great disparity between school divisions as to the monies generated through a one mill increase.

Our school board and municipalities have historically shown financial responsibility but are now being penalized for having done so. Without the ability to generate tax revenue, our board may be forced to reduce programming such as computer programming, typing, accounting and agriculture along with these PD days that we are going to lose as well. Large divisions benefiting from an economy of scale have the ability to fund programs such as nursery school, funded lunch programs, numerous consultants and co-ordinators. Our division has no such extra programs to reduce.

Since the election of your government, the provincial contribution to the education of children in this province has been reduced, while local boards have been forced to make up the difference. This puts our local boards in an impossible situation. They are expected to make up the shortfall, but the government proposal to cap the special levy at 2 percent prevents them from doing so. This will force cuts in programming in our division.

**Professional Development Days:** Abolition of professional development days will have adverse effects on teachers and students. Teachers need professional development days to keep pace with new programs, changing methodologies and changes in curricula. To deny teachers professional development will also deny students of the benefit of well-informed and trained instructors.

Professional development days allow teachers across the province, especially those from rural areas, to share ideas and expertise with their colleagues.

Eliminating professional development days will reduce contact with parents, parent-teacher days. When the education system asks parents to

become more involved, the government attempts to reduce the amount of parent-teacher contact.

Eliminating professional development days reduces the required time for teaching staff to plan and co-ordinate school programs and extracurricular activities. The Department of Education has introduced de-streaming and mainstreaming. Eliminating professional development days will eliminate the time and ability of teachers to get this necessary training to properly and effectively administer these programs.

**Employer-Employee Relations:** Telling employers, employees, school boards and teachers' associations in Manitoba that contracts arrived at through an accepted process established by law between local autonomous boards and certified bargaining units will be unilaterally altered ignores the integrity of the process and the underlying democratic principles of collective bargaining, as government may simply pass legislation such as Bill 22 to override and disregard those principles in process.

What then is the purpose of democratically elected school boards and certified labour groups? The government's actions with respect to education funding do not support the government's claim that education continues to be a priority of this government. In fact, it appears that exactly the opposite seems to be the case.

Respectfully submitted by the Turtle Mountain Teachers' Association.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Casselman.

**Mr. Manness:** The nurses within the province of Manitoba agreed to a voluntary reduction of 2 percent. Why, or maybe they did, did the teachers of your association, school division Turtle Mountain, not contemplate or consider that type of reduction so that the school board would have had more money then to maintain professional development days? I am not aware of what decision your school board made specifically with respect.

**Mr. Casselman:** Mr. Manness, our teachers' association has agreed to cuts in our salaries since 1980. We have taken less than, for the last 10 years, the cost-of-living increases in this province.

**Mr. Manness:** Let me understand. You have actually taken less one year in a nominal sense than the year before, or have you just had less of an

increase than other school divisions, because there is a big difference, of course.

**Mr. Casselman:** What I am saying is, we are making less now as teachers than we were in 1980. So I am suggesting to you that we have taken a cut in salaries since 1980 in real dollars.

**Mr. Manness:** Oh, I see. You are talking about inflation. You are actually nominally higher, but you are talking about in real terms.

**Mr. Casselman:** Yes.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Casselman, our government has been accused in the past, almost on a daily basis, from members across the other side of the floor saying that we are not in sympathy with the process of free collective bargaining. I think I have heard that a few times.

I would ask Mr. Casselman if he would care to comment, seeing there has been a far-ranging discussion on a whole host of issues associated with Bill 22, why it would be that the government of Ontario is bringing in Bill 92, which is even more onerous, to use the word of some, than Bill 22?

**Mr. Casselman:** I have no idea, sir, what is in the back of the minds of the government of Ontario. I am simply concerned about what is happening to teachers in Manitoba.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Casselman, would you care to expound on where you think all the money has gone that I collect as the terrible taxman for the province, what I do with it, and why lesser amounts of the total has gone to education over the last number of years?

**Mr. Casselman:** Well, it certainly has not gone into education.

**Mr. Manness:** I admit that.

**Mr. Casselman:** I think Mr. Ardern gave you some examples earlier in the evening about where your monies are going, Wang Computers being an example, \$4 million doing a research on health care in Manitoba, but as I say, certainly not into education.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairperson, I was the one that said that lesser is going into education in percentage terms. I acknowledge that. Would you be aware, Mr. Casselman, that today the quickest growing department of government is Finance, my own department, and all that money is going into interest payments to pay the interest on the debt

and that is where the money is going? Would that surprise you if I told you that?

\* (2200)

**Mr. Casselman:** Maybe the government should be increasing the taxes that it has decided to not increase in the last few years. You decided as a government not to raise taxes or not to raise the necessary monies. So if you have a shortfall, maybe it is your fault.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Casselman, are you prepared to pay 50 percent more on your income tax to pay, as all of us? I mean, your 50 percent is my 50 percent, because that is how much it would take.

**Mr. Casselman:** I would suggest that probably most teachers in the province would be prepared to pay an increase in their income taxes, as long as it was equitable across the province, if everybody was paying their fair share, including corporations, et cetera.

**Mr. Manness:** No further questions, Mr. Chairperson.

**Mr. Ashton:** Once again we have limited time, and we have the Minister of Finance attempting to debate with presenters. What the government is doing—

**Mr. Manness:** We were not.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, Mr. Chairperson, the government has had all the opportunity in the world to consult with people in the public sector. They chose not to do so. That is why we have Bill 22.

This is our one opportunity as opposition members to raise publicly the kind of concerns, either through debate in the House or with members of the public. I really think, Mr. Chairperson, this is an abuse on behalf of the government to set a time limit and eat up a lot of time itself for questions.

I want to ask the presenter here, and I think the minister might have wanted to ask this too, whether perhaps he is aware that one of the biggest growth items in government, in terms of expenditures, if not the biggest, is in welfare, and perhaps if he feels that is an appropriate thing to be happening now in terms of economic policy. We have the welfare rolls increased dramatically because of unemployment, and at the same time we are now cutting back in terms of education, an area which can get people back to work through the training it provides.

**Mr. Casselman:** Could I have the question again, please? Sorry.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I am asking if the presenter is aware of the fact that there has been a huge increase in welfare under this government. That is probably one of the biggest expenditure increases, and that is because of the kinds of policies the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was talking before. That is one of the factors that are leading to the supposed rationale for Bill 22. Because of the economy performing poorly and because of the increase in the welfare rolls, they are now cutting back in education.

**Mr. Casselman:** Yes, I am aware of that. Perhaps, if we spent more money in training people and educating people, we would not have them on welfare.

**Mr. Ashton:** I would just like to focus in on the impact, and I chose the example of welfare as a very clear example of that, because sometimes we tend to treat education in an abstract, even such issues as the PD days in an abstract as well.

I mentioned some of the perceptions of people out there, and perceptions that are fostered by members of the government, Mr. Chairperson, about what is involved with it. I am just wondering from your experience, and the experience of people in your area, the kind of situations you are dealing with in the communities where you teach, in trying to get young people into the economy, get them through the school system, get them in a position where they have any chance of competing in what is, obviously, a pretty tough job economy. What kinds of situations are you faced with in dealing with the needs of young people in our school system today?

**Mr. Casselman:** Certainly, in rural Manitoba, the many, many students today are at a point of despair, because they feel, No. 1, as rural Manitobans, they are becoming less and less able to compete in the job market because their ability to get the same kind of equality education that is being offered in larger centres and so on. They are feeling that they are being left behind. Rural boards have less to spend on programs like computer programs; we have less money to spend on any options, period.

In fact, I was at a board meeting the other night where three students have opted to leave the division because we are facing cuts, we are facing

loss of programs. Certainly, in rural Manitoba, there is a feeling that the education system is not what it is supposed to be, and that is primarily because it is underfunded. I think parents have that same kind of feeling.

**Ms. Friesen:** I want to thank you for your presentation and particularly for the way in which you put this particular bill in context. From the perspective of education, we are looking, as well, at Bill 16, which has made changes to the nature of funding and the role of school boards, as well as to the changes that are being made in the provision of clinical specialists.

I wanted to pick up on one of the things you mentioned, and that was that 65 students presently receive psychological services in Turtle Mountain. I must admit that came as a shock to me. I had no idea that was the scale of students, and I suppose, perhaps, I had a romantic idea in rural areas that it would be even less the case. Could you tell me whether those 65 students—is that unusual? Has it been increasing? What is the cause of that? That seems to me to also have implications for the classroom and the nature of teaching in this particular division.

**Mr. Casselman:** Certainly, the number has been increasing over the past few years. We expect that it is going to increase. I was at a board meeting the other night, and the board was trying to figure out where they are going to get funding to hire another, actually two counsellors, one for each of the main schools in our division. Funding just is not there.

To put this maybe in perspective, the possibility or the choice that our board may have to make is they may end up taking teachers' PD days away to provide the funding for those clinicians. As of yet, we have not lost those days because our board and the teachers' association of Turtle Mountain have a very good working relationship. They see the importance of PD days. They have opted not to take them away.

**Ms. Friesen:** I assume that there are a number of small schools in the Turtle Mountain Division. I wonder if you could give me a sense, from a small school perspective, of the impact of the loss of professional development days, not particularly in your division, but from other divisions that are going to be forced into this position.

**Mr. Casselman:** To start with, the board has closed two small schools, which is one area where

they have been able to get funding to keep it at its present level or services at its present level, so we are losing some of our small schools. So that does present that problem.

Could you repeat your question again for me, please?

**Ms. Friesen:** I am concerned about the inequities that this introduces into education. I think one of the difficulties that small schools particularly face is the fact that they do not have two or three colleagues in one particular discipline, or two or three colleagues across town in the same discipline that they can at least meet with informally in the absence of professional development days, or large libraries, or access to databases that are there for the teachers in the large urban centres. I am wondering if that is your experience, and if you wanted to comment on the impact of that over the next few years in small schools in rural Manitoba.

**Mr. Casselman:** That is not only a problem in the small schools. It is a problem in our large schools, because there are staff members in our large schools that teach one subject area, and there is no one else in the school that teaches that. So they have to go outside the school to get professional development, because there is not anyone in the school to talk to.

I, myself, am teaching an extra course, which is an advanced placement course, which we offered to challenge the students at the upper end, or our better students. I have to come all the way to Winnipeg to find anybody who knows anything about those courses. So it is a real problem, not just in the small schools, it is a worse problem in the small schools, but it is certainly a problem in all the schools.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Thank you, Mr. Casselman. We move on to the next. We had missed one person on the list till now that also was out of rural Manitoba. His name is John Rennie, Portage Teachers' Association. Is John Rennie here? Would you come forward, please?

John, have you a written presentation to distribute?

**Mr. John Rennie, Portage Teachers' Association:** Yes, we do.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Thank you, we have them. Would you proceed, please.

**Mr. Rennie:** My name is John Rennie, and I am president of the Portage Teachers' Association. With me tonight as well is Barbara Kearstephan, who has been elected to our association's executive for next year.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Welcome, Barbara.

**Mr. Rennie:** We represent a division association that is very fortunate. We are fortunate in that the members of our association work for a school board that is truly committed to quality education for students. Our board recognizes the importance of professional development days for teachers and how that translates into better educational opportunities for students. Our board recognizes the importance of parent-teacher interview days and how these days translate into improved communication between home and school and consequently into increased parental support for the schools.

Our board recognizes the importance of administration days for planning school policies, for documenting pertinent student information, and for completing the myriad tasks necessary for the efficient and effective functioning of the schools. Our board also has the honour, honesty, and integrity to state that they have negotiated a collective agreement in good faith and will abide by it. They will not break the conditions of the agreement by locking teachers out for two, four, eight or any other number of days. The Portage teachers are indeed fortunate to be employed by such a board that is not implementing the conditions contained in Bill 22.

\* (2210)

It is appalling that in this day and age a bill such as Bill 22 has been presented to the Legislative Assembly. Bill 22 takes a giant step backward to pre-1948 years. At that time, the school boards had one consideration in dealing with teachers—the less money spent the better. This government obviously subscribes to that viewpoint, making a mockery of its words that education is important in preparing the children of this province for the year 2000.

If passed, Bill 22 will have a detrimental effect on education in two areas: collective bargaining, PD administration and parent-teacher interview days.

At the present time, teacher associations are able to sit down with their employers and negotiate salaries and working conditions that, generally

speaking, are fair and reasonable according to local conditions. Bill 22 negates this process and allows the employers to unilaterally decide working conditions relating to PD, administration, parent-teacher interview days.

Bill 22 negates this process by allowing school boards to unilaterally cut fairly negotiated salaries. Bill 22 negates this process by allowing school boards to hold teacher associations for ransom, i.e., take a pay cut of 2 percent, or we will cut your salary by 4 percent.

Collective bargaining is important. By sitting down with the teachers and negotiating working conditions and salaries, school trustees can establish the conditions under which the local schools will operate, at the same time ensuring that there is not a great deal of disparity between the local division and other divisions province-wide. This process helps to maintain provincial standards of education. Without this, regional and divisional disparities would become greater than they already are, and this could quickly lead to a multiple-tier educational system.

Divisions that choose to pay higher salaries and that choose to offer PD days, et cetera, would obviously attract the best teachers. Ultimately, it is the children in the other divisions who would suffer the most.

Salaries and working conditions aside, regional disparities in teacher training and skill upgrading will result from the implementation of Bill 22. In those divisions that have already seen fit to implement the conditions of Bill 22, those teachers will be missing out on opportunities to improve their teaching skills. This will have a detrimental effect on children in those classrooms, because their teachers will not have the same knowledge and skills to implement new curricula and strategies that other teachers in the province will have gained through their professional development days.

This disparity from division to divisions affects the children of our province, and makes a mockery of the present government's stated commitment to education.

Finally, teaching is not just a matter of teaching the three Rs anymore, nor should it be. Teaching involves teaching the whole child, which means that teachers need to learn how to teach 25 to 30 individual students each year. This is expected. However, there is a point when enough is enough.

Society continually downloads responsibility for dealing with societal problems onto the schools. For example, teachers are expected to teach children about the dangers of AIDS through the AIDS education program. Teachers are expected to teach multiculturalism. Not only are new curricula introduced, but teachers are also now expected to do lice checks, teach dental hygiene, and act as social workers within the school. To do all of these things without the benefit of PD days and administration days and parent-teacher interview days is unrealistic.

However, this downloading will continue to happen because of society's expectation that education is the answer to many of our social ills. The expectations on teachers are increasing, but with the passage of Bill 22, the ability of teachers to meet these expectations will be severely reduced. Bill 22 is unrealistic.

**Ms. Barbara Kearstephan (Portage Teachers' Association):** I would like to address the issue of professional development. Educators in Manitoba are facing challenging times, new courses, new curricula, new methodologies and ever-increasing expectations that teachers function as social and medical workers.

Indeed, many teachers feel the burden to become "superteacher," perhaps not able to leap tall buildings, but certainly expected to cope with issues such as mainstreaming, increasing violence in schools, adapting teaching styles to a myriad of learning styles, and information and technology explosion that has called into question traditional teaching methods of the past.

Society is changing at an alarming rate and teachers are expected to prepare students to face that changing world, a heavy and important responsibility that seriously challenges the logic of Bill 22. By way of illustration, consider please the new curricula facing teachers today. There is a new curriculum mathematics, Grade 1, moving into the early middle years; science at the junior high; French, Grade 7; AIDS education, junior high; health, Senior 2; Skills for Independent Living, Senior 2; accounting, Senior 3 and 4, keyboarding, Senior 1 right through to Senior 4; computer applications, Senior 2; word processing, Seniors 3 and 4; software applications, Senior 3; automated office, Senior 4; seminar in business, Senior 4; business, Senior 1 and 2.

As well as the new curricula and courses, the changes resulting from implementing the strategies of Answering the Challenge have resulted in new delivery approaches that require in-servicing and time, for example, the decision to offer language arts, social studies and so on through nonstreamed classes. Nonstreaming, coupled with the ongoing integration of special needs students, means that teachers require support and further training in the area of special education. The loss of professional development days will inhibit this process.

Schools in Manitoba have become increasingly concerned about student violence. The Portage la Prairie School Division has adopted the WEVAS model which means working effectively with violent and aggressive students. This requires extensive training for all staff. How would this be accomplished without in-service days?

Bill 22 sends a clear message to the teaching profession and to the public that the government considers teachers' professional development to be unnecessary. It sends a clear message that the government is shifting the blame of the deficit onto public sector workers. The real losers are the children of Manitoba who are not going to be able to benefit from teachers upgrading their skills. The real losers are the people of Manitoba who are investing in education but who are not going to be able to get the proper return for their investment.

It has been noted that many divisions have chosen SAG in October as an unpaid leave day. The consequences of this will be far reaching. In effect, the whole concept of special area groups will be eroded. There will no longer be co-ordination of services and the sharing of costs. Local divisions will not be able to afford to bring in major speakers, and teachers will have lost a valuable vehicle for the sharing of ideas, concerns and new techniques. What we are left with is a contradiction. On the one hand, the movers and shakers in the field of education point out the importance of peer support and collegiality, while on the other hand, the government of our province brings out legislation that will result in the opposite.

We need to also consider administration days in this discussion. Administration days provide an opportunity for staffs to get together and plan for future directions, to design a mission statement, to co-ordinate activities to run schools effectively. As well, they provide time for teachers to meet about individual students and to establish school plans



that are long term and that involve the parents as well as outside agencies and personnel. Administration days also provide teachers with the opportunity to ensure that the necessary documentation on students is kept.

To say that Bill 22 is a step backward is too much of an understatement. This bill is a travesty and, if passed, will have tragic consequences for the students of this province, for the educators of this province and certainly for the future of this province.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairperson, one question. I would ask either of the presenters if there is any aspect of Bill 22 or any other government legislation that prohibits teachers from voluntarily attending a professional development day.

\* (2220)

**Mr. Rennie:** From voluntarily attending any professional development sessions, no, there is nothing that prohibits teachers from doing that. However, there are professional development days that are organized within divisions that allow individual schools to meet to plan their own professional development to meet the needs of the school or for division-wide professional development committees to plan professional development days to meet the needs of the division and the individual groups of teachers within the division, such as grade group teachers, science teachers, guidance counsellors, resource teachers or whatever. Without those opportunities for teachers within a division to meet on professional development days, a great deal is lost in program delivery to classrooms and supports to students.

**Mr. Manness:** Again, does anything in this bill prohibit or prevent those types of discussions or meetings or organization on a voluntary basis?

**Mr. Rennie:** No, it does not prohibit them on a voluntary basis.

**Mr. Manness:** Thank you.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, I find the line of questioning from the minister quite interesting, because what he neglects to mention in the impact of this bill is, it takes out one of the most important aspects of ability to have any degree of freedom of choice, which is through the collective bargaining process with its balances on both sides.

I want to focus in on a comment that appears in the brief on the first page, because I think it is a very

interesting analogy, the analogy of the fact that what Bill 22 does is set up legalized lockouts. It essentially allows school boards to lock teachers out without pay in contravention of collective agreements for certain periods of time.

I am wondering if you would perhaps like to respond on how serious teachers in Portage la Prairie view the ability under this legislation for school boards to basically be able to lock out teachers for whatever number of days up to the maximum as prescribed in the act.

**Mr. Rennie:** The teachers in Portage view that aspect of the bill very seriously. We work hard to negotiate with our board. We do have a good working relationship with our school board. In negotiating our current collective agreement, we feel and the board felt that it is fair, and that is actually why the board has decided not to implement the conditions. Our viewpoint on the lockout is that, no, it goes against the principles of collective bargaining, which we wholeheartedly support.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, in fact, I do not know if you had an opportunity to go through the details of the act, but there is one particular section in here that says, and I will just read it. It is a very brief section, but it is very indicative of how powerful this bill is. In fact, I know it has been described as the war measures act of labour relations. I know the president of MGU described it as such. I just want to read this—

**An Honourable Member:** Described as what?

**Mr. Ashton:** The war measures act of labour relations. If you will listen to this particular section, I think you will understand why.

It says: This part prevails over every other act and every regulation, collective agreement, employment contract arrangement, arbitral or other award or decision and every obligation, right, claim, agreement or arrangement of any kind.

I realize that not everybody gets an opportunity to read the legal text. I am wondering, what would be the reaction if the teachers in Portage were to—and I realize the concerns about Bill 22 to begin with, but if they realized that this bill has this kind of section. This bill says the government can do whatever the heck it wants within the prescription of Bill 22.

What would the reaction of teachers in Portage be to a clause that says that?

**Mr. Rennie:** I can tell you what their reaction is. We did not read out that section, and I have been through the bill. However, I have told the members of our association who have come out to our general meetings that in effect that is what the bill is able to do, and they are very upset about that kind of power.

They obviously do not agree with it and are very, very concerned about it.

**Mr. Ashton:** I want to just focus in on professional development days again, because we have heard a number of presentations tonight, I think, which are indicative of the increasingly rapid changes that are taking place in the education system and increasing demands on teachers.

One of the concerns that has been focused in on tonight in particular that really concerns me is the fact that we are going to see a checkerboard system of education whereby some school divisions will maintain professional development days, some will not. That is going to impact on, not only the professional development of existing teachers but presumably on the ability of school districts to attract teachers too.

And I am wondering—and I want to ask this specific question—in your opinion, on the professional development days, in the degree to which you are continually able to upgrade yourself professionally, is that a factor that teachers will be looking at when they look at employment?

In other words, if you have a choice between a school district which has eliminated professional development days or restricted it substantively and areas where that has not taken place, is that going to have an impact on the ability of those school districts to attract the best qualified teachers for the schools in the area?

**Mr. Rennie:** Yes, I would say very definitely. Speaking for myself personally, it would make a big difference to me. In conversations I have had with other teachers in our association, they have indicated the same thing, that professional development is very important and that certainly, if they were out looking for a job and had a choice between two divisions, one that is retaining the days and one that is not, they would go with the division that is retaining the days for several reasons, one, for the professional development and, two, because, as people have told me, a division that is not locking teachers out for those

days obviously has a commitment to quality education and realizes the importance of professional development days.

I have had, admittedly secondhand, reports of a teacher who was in that situation and did opt for a division that is taking away the eight days.

**Ms. Friesen:** This government often makes the claim that it has not raised personal taxes, and I wonder if the implications of this bill, as a form of taxation on people on the basis of only where they work, have been discussed by the Portage teachers?

**Mr. Rennie:** Yes, it has been discussed, and the comments I do not think are surprising that teachers, who have discussed it, have said that, yes, it is an unfair tax on teachers. It is an unfair tax on government workers who are in the same position.

Other people I have talked to, generally speaking, and I have talked to some parents who have indicated to me that they would rather see a slight increase in taxes across the board as opposed to this type of selective taxation on different working groups.

I also indicated that to our local MLA in a telephone conversation about two months ago.

**Ms. Friesen:** Did you get a response from your local MLA on that?

**Mr. Rennie:** Mr. Pallister, our local MLA, in his response said that he supported education but that was not the message he was getting.

**Ms. Friesen:** I was interested by your reference to violence in the classroom, and I think that is something which is only now really beginning to penetrate to the public, the changed conditions which teachers have to face across Manitoba.

What you are talking about here I think is the way in which a particular program, which is presented and developed and taught at professional development days, is assisting teachers in Portage and in other parts of the province to deal with that growing violence.

I wonder if from your personal experience you could tell those of us who are not in the classroom exactly what is happening, and how this particular program and the professional development days have helped you to cope with what is happening.

\* (2230)

**Mr. Rennie:** Okay, I will deal with that and then I would like to let Ms. Kearstephan, who is the guidance counsellor, deal with part of it.

In my own experience, what is happening in the classrooms is that there is increasing violence towards teachers and towards other students as well. Increasingly, the violence is not only physical but verbal and emotional.

It is not uncommon, and pardon the language, for students to tell a teacher to f--- off. It is not uncommon for students to tell teachers that they are a bitch. Again, pardon the language, but that—

**Mr. Chairperson:** I would ask that we refrain from using those words at this committee. We do not allow that sort of language at this—

**Mr. Rennie:** Okay, I respect that, but I think the point has been made that that is the type of language that teachers are facing within the schools on a daily basis. They are also facing having students who are assaulting teachers. In the school I am at this year, we have had two teachers physically assaulted. Currently we have a student within our school—[interjection]

**Mr. Chairperson:** I am going to let Ms. Kearstephan wind it up. We are over time limit already. I would ask you to wind it up if you could.

**Ms. Kearstephan:** With regard to violence in the schools, is that what you are asking me to wind up?

**Mr. Chairperson:** That is what Ms. Friesen is asking.

**Ms. Kearstephan:** I think the whole point behind the whole WEVAS is that we are trying to provide teachers with a strategy for coping with the frustrations that students have. We find we have students who are now sentenced to school by the court system, and we have to deal with those students in a very different way than we have students previously. Unless we are able to provide that in-servicing to all teachers basically at the same time, how effective can we be in the system in dealing with those students?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Rennie and Ms. Kearstephan.

The next presenter is Judy Bewer, Birdtail River Teachers' Association. Ms. Bewer, would you come forward, please. Am I pronouncing that name correctly?

**Ms. Judy Bewer (Birdtail River Teachers' Association):** It is Bewer.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Bewer? Thank you very much.

Have you a written presentation to distribute?

**Ms. Bewer:** Yes, I do believe you have it. At the top it says, Re: Bill 22.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Would you proceed, please.

**Ms. Bewer:** I want to talk to you about the impact of professional development for me and my students. I work in a rural division and I teach a multigraded class. Like most of the other rural teachers, I am a generalist needing expertise in a range of subjects at several grade levels. My teaching load varies from year to year. I never teach the same thing twice.

Because my students and their parents deserve a well-informed, skilled teacher, I have made continuous professional development a priority, and my employer did too. I followed a three-strand PD plan.

The first strand was to enroll in a Bachelor of Education and a Master of Education course at Brandon university. These courses were taken on my own time and at my own expense, and that was fine with me.

Strand b was to participate as a learner and a presenter in the annual small schools in-services. From other rural teachers I learned strategies for facilitating multigrade learning. During the year I reflected upon and honed my own skills so that I could share with others at the next small schools in-services. The in-services were expensive because of mileage and hotel costs, but they were part of the duties for which I was being paid, so that was fine with me too. My employer and I saw PD as important and we shared the responsibility.

I attended professional development days in Winnipeg, in Brandon and in my own division to study new content and new ideas. This was strand three. Again, the transportation and accommodation costs were often high, but I was being paid and the salary equalled the expenses, so that was sort of fine with me. Again, my employer and I saw the importance of professional development and we shared the responsibility.

This three-strand approach ensured that my students were taught by a teacher whose skills and knowledge were current. The approach assured parents that their children would be sufficiently prepared to compete in a rural or in an urban high school upon leaving junior high.

Two years ago the funding for strand b, the small schools in-service, was cut and I have missed those. This year the salary for PD days, strand c, is in danger of being cut. I feel that my employers are withdrawing support for continuous professional development and the three-strand plan which I and many other rural teachers followed is becoming unravelled.

I will continue to accept the responsibility for my part and I hope my employers will continue to accept theirs.

**Mr. Ashton:** I appreciate your presentation, and particularly your perspective of the type of school and school division you are coming from.

I am just wondering if you could perhaps give members of the committee some idea of the Birdtail River School Division. How many schools are part of the division? How many students are enrolled?

**Ms. Bewer:** We have about 1,000, and most of them are in small schools with teachers whose teaching loads shift from year to year. Several of them have multigrades, some two grades, some three grades.

**Mr. Ashton:** How many schools are there approximately?

**Ms. Bewer:** I am not sure.

**Mr. Ashton:** But there are a fair number, as you said, of small—

**Ms. Bewer:** About 11 schools.

**Mr. Ashton:** I find it hard to imagine coming from a relatively large school division, the kind of challenges you must face. I went to a high school with probably about 1,200 students in Thompson, far bigger than the size of the Birdtail School Division combined, all the various schools.

You have alluded to some of the challenges that you face, but I am wondering if you can give members of the committee some idea of the particular challenge of teaching in a small school, and particularly dealing with multigrades, and particularly dealing with multigrades where you are dealing with three different grades.

**Ms. Bewer:** I too went through a large system. When I found myself in my present school with 69 students and multigrades, my first reaction was that this was an anachronism, and why did they not close down the school and send the students to a larger one.

After I had been there for a year, I became aware of the advantages for many students of attending a small school, and I was very pleased with the quality of education. Sufficiently pleased to put both of my sons into the school. It is a lot of work teaching a multigraded situation. If you have three sets of students learning social studies at the same time, and the focus of the curriculum is on discussion, it is hard to discuss with students at the same time when you have three groups.

Sometimes one group takes French, and another group has math. At other times, you try to combine some of the subjects, but sometimes you have students who need special attention themselves which creates a fourth group or a fifth group in the room.

I spend a lot of time at weekends and a lot of time in the evenings preparing classes and researching subjects with which I am not current. One teacher that I know of who teaches Grade 8 social studies prepares one social studies class, and teaches twice during the morning. During that same time in the morning, I can prepare six different classes, six different lessons for the same time slot.

**Mr. Ashton:** I really thank you for that perspective, because quite frankly I do not know how you can do it. It must be mentally and physically exhausting, although I can see the rewards of seeing the impact on the children.

I just want to focus in, going from that, to what you are talking about here in terms of professional development days, because what concerns me from hearing of the situation in the small schools is that the impact of eliminating such things as the personal development days is going to impact on the viability of the small schools themselves.

I am wondering—you mentioned before about the degree to which you are on an ongoing basis going through professional development and how even that has been cut back—how you feel any kind of cut in terms of personal development days is going to have in terms of the viability of those small schools.

**Ms. Bewer:** The experience of losing the small schools in-servicing was quite hard. That seemed to be the only time when I could get together with teachers who also taught multigrades and we could exchange ideas. We presented our ideas to each other and had a lot of in-servicing at that time. It was the small schools in-services that helped me

be able to cope with that situation in my own school.

\* (2240)

**Mr. Ashton:** The other concern that was raised earlier was from another rural school division where two small schools had been shut down because of budget pressures. One of the concerns that has been expressed is a combination of overall funding and some of the tradeoffs that might be made in terms of Bill 22 that might lead to closure of small schools.

What do you think the impact would be in your school and in schools in your school division if that kind of pressure developed and some of the small schools closed down? What kind of impact would that have on the students and communities that might be affected?

**Ms. Bewer:** At the moment, the Birdtail River board is committed to keeping small schools open, and the parents of the community of Foxwarren where I teach also very much want to keep the school open, because they feel that should the school close, then it will be detrimental to the town as a community.

**Mr. Ashton:** In fact, I know from my own experience in terms of many northern communities, the viability of the school is fundamental to the viability of the community. I know the concern you are expressing and I really want to commend you for the work you are doing. I hope that your message will be listened to. Thanks very much for your presentation.

**Ms. Friesen:** In your division, do you have access to clinicians, and have you been affected at all by the changes in the clinician services in Manitoba?

**Ms. Bewer:** We have had a speech pathologist and a clinical psychologist, and I think, as of the moment, we are losing the clinical psychologist and her duties are going to be taken over by anyone who has had a course here or there in psychology. The speech pathologist is going to be retained at 80 percent of her former time.

**Ms. Friesen:** Can you tell me how that will affect the classroom work, not just yours, but of your own colleagues? How many students, for example, were requiring those psychological services?

**Ms. Bewer:** We had no students at the school where I teach requiring psychological services, but we had five students out of 69 who were seen by

the speech pathologist. She is not going to have the same amount of time to spend with those students.

**Ms. Friesen:** From your experience, you may not have students who need speech pathology now, but have you had in the past and do you know what the impact is of the loss of those specialists or the amount of time of those specialists?

**Ms. Bewer:** Students who have speech problems suffer poor self-esteem and it affects their school work and it affects interaction with their peers and sometimes career choices. I do know of students who have really benefited from our speech pathologist, and she would be a real loss.

**Ms. Friesen:** I wanted to ask you about the role of professional development days for beginning teachers, those who are coming out of the universities now.

Could you give us an idea of the particular significance to those teachers of professional development days, say, those who are in their first five to seven years?

**Ms. Bewer:** When students come to our school, they may have been trained to teach two or three subjects at a certain age group, but the teaching load will certainly include teaching subjects with which they are not familiar. Professional development days are invaluable for those young teachers. They are also invaluable for us older teachers who teach subjects that we have not looked at for several years. In the past eight years, I have been asked to teach French and family life and art, physical education, music, none of which I was trained for. So it is not just the new teachers, it is all of us. None of us stays the same.

**Ms. Friesen:** I wondered if you had heard outside of Winnipeg of the government's program, one part of which is called Workforce 2000, incentives to private businesses. One of the ones that strikes me particularly, in contrast to the situation you are speaking of, is a grant of \$5,000 to train better cashiers for a private golf course, one that I think requires an entrance fee of in the region of \$5,000 to \$6,000.

**Mr. Bewer:** I have not heard of that.

**Ms. Friesen:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Ms. Bewer, for your presentation. The next presenter on the list is Mr. Peter Dyck, private citizen. Is Mr.

Peter Dyck here? There are, by the way while we are waiting for Mr. Dyck, four more presenters from out of town including Mr. Dyck. The hour is now quarter to eleven. Most of the people in the room will in all likelihood not be able to present in light of the fact that we passed a motion and an agreement to adjourn by twelve o'clock. So I would indicate to those who are further down the list that you might want to consider coming back tomorrow at one o'clock in the afternoon when this committee will reconvene.

**Mr. Ashton:** On a matter of procedure, I think that is good advice. Perhaps what I would suggest is we have four presentations, it might go slightly over twelve o'clock. They are all from out of town. What I would suggest is we hear those four presentations and perhaps advise everybody else that they should come back tomorrow and perhaps only hear the next four, but if necessary, sit a few minutes after midnight.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** What is the wish of the committee? Is that the wish of the committee? Thank you. I can read the names off the list that are here from out of town and the others might want to stay till the presentations are made or might want to come back tomorrow at one.

Mr. Peter Dyck, Mr. Darryl Gervais, Mr. Alan Schroeder and Mr. Bill Vail are here from out of town, unless there are any others that I have missed. Are there any others from out of town who would want to present? There is a hand back there. Could you check that? That would make it five. So it is agreed that we would hear those five then and we would adjourn after that.

Would you continue then, Mr. Dyck?

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Private Citizen):** Let me start by just introducing myself and the position I come from. I have been a teacher with 28 years of experience and have taught mostly science and math and majoring in chemistry, physics and have piloted many programs including chem study, PSSC, new physics programs, IB physics—I was the first in Manitoba to introduce it—science Grade 10. I have also supported new programs brought in by the Department of Education.

I come to you as an educator who strongly believes that there needs to be a visionary forward-looking approach to education which emphasizes rebirth, constant renewal, re-evaluating of existing programs, regularly

looking for ways to make educational programs better and relevant to the needs of our society. In my classroom, for example, I try to make the educational experience better each year. Even when I teach the same course year after year, I reorganize and do things differently. There are many reasons for this and I have put down three of them here.

First of all, reorganize, because then one rethinks the program and you actively look for ways to improve both personally and professionally. Each time you revise, it improves the program and provides our young people a better education. Reworking a program every year gives me added incentive and gives me new interest in the program. When I am excited and interested in the topic then my students will become interested as well.

So why the presentation tonight? I do not think I really need this, nor do you. I think I could be doing much more fruitful things than debating something like this. That is my honest impression, but let me explain.

When I was in school many years ago, and that was in the '50s, our teachers knew very little about in-service and professional development compared to today. I do remember though as a youngster when teachers would get together. I still remember the teacher coming back and telling us what she or he had learned and the renewed excitement the teacher displayed because of the new things that would be done now. As a student, I felt excited about these new possibilities. It affected all of us as students. Similarly today, teachers are exposed to new and innovative ideas when they participate in professional development days. These ideas affect each student in the classroom and professional development days have a direct influence on the children of our society.

\* (2250)

Bill 22 strikes at the very basis of what education is all about. Bill 22 targets teachers who are trying to improve professionally by taking away valuable learning opportunities. Bill 22, in effect, is saying to teachers that it is not important to improve professionally. Bill 22 is denying that there are tremendous changes occurring in the world today including education, and I say foremost education. Bill 22 is denying teachers the opportunity to keep abreast of these changes and as a result affects the future prospects for the next generation.

One of the major reports put out in the last couple of years is Prosperity In Canada steering committee, which most of you have possibly read, Inventing our Future. I base most of what I am saying here on these two reports which I think have a tremendous amount to say about education.

A steering group on prosperity has recently released several publications entitled Action Plan for Canada's Future Prosperity. A strong emphasis has been placed on building a learning culture in Canada. Of the 53 recommendations of the group, 27 relate to education. These recommendations focus on the need to increase our efforts in education, not decrease them as Bill 22 proposes.

Currently, Canadians are competing successfully internationally for a piece of the economic action. Today, Canada is recognized as a leading nation in many technological areas, including telecommunications, hydro power, computers, medical research, pharmacology, agriculture, business management and the list goes on. These are all modernized, highly technological industries, which are constantly changing and require high levels of expertise and educational background.

How are we going to continue to be leaders if our educators are no longer encouraged to develop professionally? Our very survival as a nation depends on our ability to be in the forefront in these advanced technological fields if we as a country are to maintain any competitive edge.

Recommendation 30 of the Prosperity of Canada report states that we must, and I quote here: We must make the well-being of our children our highest priority and ensure that children get the right start in school, unquote.

We are living in a time when our young people are no longer valued as much as they used to be. Bill 22 re-enforces that attitude. Cutbacks against our children would be a better way to label the bill, because the attitude delivered by this bill is clearly to decrease the priority of education to our children.

Recommendation 34 of the report recommends, and I quote again: To encourage employers to increase workforce training, especially to provide up-to-date information on latest management practices and innovative ways of helping employees develop necessary skills, unquote.

The recommendation further states that employees should receive a minimum of one week

of training in a year. In contrast, Bill 22 would decrease teacher training to a few days and, in some divisions, to zero training.

Recommendation 38 states, and I quote again: To ensure teachers and other learning professionals are properly prepared at all times for continuous change in Canadian learning environment, unquote.

Bill 22 goes counter to this recommendation. This recommendation is especially significant in light of the fact that the average age of the teaching force is increasing and more of our teachers need updating in teaching skills. With the increased use of technology and especially computers in our society and industries, students are expected to have a greater training in these areas. Teachers also need development training and need to act as leaders in the educational process for their students. Bill 22 fails to recognize this need.

Recommendation 42 states, and I quote again: To increase commitment to learning throughout life by making Canadians more aware of the value of learning, the need to learn and the different learning options available, unquote.

In Canada, we have always believed that a person will become successful by adapting and constantly changing to meet the demands around them. Farming, for example, has changed drastically since the inception of this country. Virtually every sector in our society has changed drastically in the past 125 years whether we are talking about agriculture, fishing, mining, transportation, construction, and the list goes on. Education has reflected these changes and has also changed drastically. We need to provide every incentive possible to increase teacher awareness and especially address the need to learn new methods of teaching.

I plead to you as a committee. I did not know who all I was addressing here, so I am putting it inclusive here. I plead with the government to recognize the implications of Bill 22, especially for the future of this province and the future of our children. Are we going to be a society that opens the doors for our young people, or are we going to take the easy road and shut the gates and deny them the opportunities of future success? Bill 22 will shut the door of opportunity for our educators and ultimately our children.

The government often reminds us of the importance of science and mathematics education for the children. I agree, these are very important. However, talk is cheap. We need to put some feet to our talk and put our words into action. The time has come to walk the talk, not just do the talking.

In closing, I would like to appeal to the government to withdraw Bill 22 as it applies to education. The basic philosophy of the bill is restrictive and regressive. The bill takes us back to teaching the way it was done in the '50s when there was little professional development.

Bill 22 does not recognize the tremendous changes that are taking place in our society today. Bill 22 does not present a vision. Bill 22 fails to provide delivery of the best education for our children preparing for the next century. Bill 22 does not help the education situation in our province. I suggest Bill 22 is restrictive and fails to recognize the educational needs of our society and especially the needs of our future generations, our children.

Our educational system and our society and especially our children will be shortchanged if Bill 22 is implemented. Mr. Chairperson, 1993 is definitely not the time to introduce such restrictive legislation, and I thank you.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Dyck, I will ask you, where do you teach?

**Mr. Dyck:** Where do I teach? I am presently at Birds Hill at Robert Andrews School.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Dyck, I certainly do not want to be held accountable for driving education back to the 1950s. I would not sleep at all if I felt that were the case.

Mr. Dyck, I cannot help but notice that, when you talked about the '50s, you indicated when there was no professional development, the fact that teachers, more or less—and I guess you would say less—came together and exchanged views, and I would have to think probably on a voluntary basis.

I do not want to drive all of our communication back to purely a voluntary basis. Can you tell me anything in this bill that prohibits teachers from coming together and sharing ideas that are going to improve their ability and ultimately the quality of education that is going to be imparted in our classrooms?

**Mr. Dyck:** I would respond, Mr. Chairperson, that I think the biggest problem with this bill is the attitude

it portrays. It portrays an attitude of: too bad, teachers. Go ahead, do your thing. We do not care, because we are not going to give you any extra time.

I have been on enough committees to try to organize teachers to try to do new programs. The most successful results we have had is when we could give teachers time or they could sit down, and sit down for a lengthy period of time, to do some work. That is when we found the most—informal, yes, but what I call that is survival.

When teachers are in tough times and they have to get together and they say, listen, I do not know what to do with my class, give me something fast, you hand them a sheet of paper and they run into the classroom and say, here I will do it. That, to me, is not professional training. That informal method, to me, I am sorry, is not a way to do it. I would like to see it much more organized where we can do something organized with vision to it rather than just this survival treatment we have done in the past.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Dyck, why are teachers not prepared to voluntarily roll back their salaries as the nurses have and many other groups in society have—many other unions, by the way, have—recognizing that the saving then could be directed towards the approach that you talked about, a better orchestrated, better organized system, something similar to what we have today, towards professional development?

**Mr. Dyck:** Mr. Minister, I would like to suggest to you that the nurses are not happy. I will tell you right now that I live with one, and they are not happy. The quality of service has gone down. Since the last strike, the attitude among the nurses is not a pleasant one, and I will tell you they are not pleased with what is going on, and many of the nurses are very upset.

\* (2300)

So if that is what you are suggesting, we should take a rollback so we can have the same attitude among educators, then I say, well, okay, then we will have to face that when we get there. If that is what the government wants to do, impose this kind of thing upon us, to say we want to have this negative attitude out there of teaching our children, the government has every right to do it. That is why they have been elected to govern.



But hopefully you would listen to what the people are saying. They are not pleased with what is going to happen and their prospects. If you read this *Inventing our Future*—a lot of fears about our health care, our educational, and our social services. Yet we are hearing a lot that where we are going to develop in the future—because we are losing jobs in manufacturing—where we are going to gain them is in the service sectors, and it is about time that our government needs to listen to these things.

I will tell you, I do not vote by lines. I am not a Conservative, Liberal, I listen to what the policies are. I am waiting right now for vision. We do not have it right now. We have vision for one thing only, the almighty buck, the materialistic solve-the-deficit problem. Unfortunately, that is not where it is at. People do not live on deficit reduction. They need money to keep them alive. They need vision, they need hope, they need something in the future. Right now, this government is not providing that. I am sorry, that is my position on this one.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Dyck, you appear to be obviously educated and well-read. Can you tell me why there has not been a nation in the world that has been able to run away from its debt?

**Mr. Dyck:** From this stand?

**Mr. Manness:** From its debt.

**Mr. Dyck:** That would take us a long time. I do not want to go into that detail right at this point, but there are many theories about what is causing this, and I am not so sure that we locally can control what is going on globally. That would be my response.

**Mr. Ashton:** I appreciated your responses, I found them very interesting. I just want to focus in on the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) who keeps harping back on various points. He talked about the nurses voluntarily taking a 2 percent rollback. By the way, they have also suggested that, for example, some Crown corporations—and I know there are people here from Manitoba Hydro where agreements were reached after Bill 22 became a reality, have negotiated agreements—[interjection] Well, the minister says that he did not say anybody was happy. Boy, is that an understatement.

I would like to ask the presenter on that, because I think one of the significant points that you raised was in terms of the underlying philosophy of this

particular bill, and I really commend you for going through the Prosperity in Canada steering committee. Am I correct in understanding that you are essentially saying to the government, to this committee, that it has to start treating education not as a cost or a burden or a contribution to the debt or the deficit, but as an investment in our young people and in—[interjection] Well, the minister has put it on the Capital line. We are developing human capital, Mr. Chairperson, through education, and I would wonder if essentially that is not what you are saying a lot of the brief is. It is an investment not only in people but also in our economy.

**Mr. Dyck:** Not only that, but if you read through this, it is the culture that we are creating here, and that is what bothers me the most. We are now creating a culture in our society which says there is only one thing that matters. Every day you read it in the paper, cut the budget, cut the budget, cut the budget. It has become a god. You may as well go and worship at the shrine of cutting the budget. There is nothing else. I am sorry, but that is not the only thing that is around. There are other factors that have to be done as well. I guess I came from a family that came across as immigrants. My father strongly said, the most important thing—

**Floor Comment:** I think we all did.

**Mr. Dyck:** Well, we probably did. My father said, education is the doorway to success. There are a lot of kids now saying, hey, that is not the way to go. The millionaire conference that was held in Vancouver a couple of years ago had one thing in common; of all the millionaires, only one of them had graduated from high school. Maybe that is the route we need to go. Education is not it. Well, then, let us throw it out the door. Let us start the other way. If money is the almighty thing, then maybe what we need to hear from the government is how to make more money. Do not teach kids how to get past Grade 12 because they will make money. I am sorry.

**Floor Comment:** That is a bunch of garbage.

**Mr. Dyck:** Well, that is maybe. [interjection]

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please.

**Mr. Ashton:** I know it is late, Mr. Chairperson, but I do not think it is appropriate for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) to be yelling from his seat, that is a bunch of garbage. I think we should show—and I realize in the House, in the

Legislature, sometimes we do not always show the respect to each other that we should, but we should certainly show it to members of the public.

Quite frankly, I would like to ask the presenter, because I understand the government's sensitivity, but I want to get some perspective from yourself as someone who has considerable experience in the teaching profession and knows what is going on out there in the real world, outside of the—well, this is not exactly the real world of education. I mean, you sit in rooms like this. It is very easy to talk— [interjection]

The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) is more than welcome to join this committee if she wishes, but I am saying, in terms of the real world, in terms of what is happening with kids and in the school system, I am wondering if you can give me some, because you mentioned, and I think it is a very important point, that a lot of kids are starting to get very frustrated. You are talking about teachers getting very frustrated. I mean, how does that compare over time? Do you see it becoming an increasing problem? Is it something that has always existed? I mean, what are the pressures out there in the classroom?

**Mr. Dyck:** Well, years ago, if a student would ask me, why should I bother studying hard? I would say, listen, when you study hard, you have got a good job, the future will open up to you. Kids laugh at you now. They say, forget it, but we are talking an elitist group. Most of us here are educated, and we have made our role that way by doing it now. I have lots of friends who do not have an education who are doing very well financially in the business world. When I look at the homes that are around and I look at what they have done, they have not needed education to get materially where they are now.

If you are talking about quality of life, that is a different thing, but as far as materialistic, you do not have to go to education nowadays to make the big bucks, and you know that as well as I do. The government knows that, and Manness knows as well as I do where they are getting their revenues from if they were taxed properly, because a lot of these guys do not pay taxes. I know a lot of guys in the five, six—

**Floor Comment:** Give me their names.

**Mr. Dyck:** I do not have to. You do not have to. I know them, and their taxes are a quarter of my

taxes, income taxes I am talking about. They do not pay the taxes.

Mr. Clayton Manness, I can also talk to you in other ways if you want to do it privately, I will tell you some other things as well, but not publicly.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairperson, this can be very instructive to the Minister of Finance because he has said, name them. I mean, what the Minister of Finance does not understand is we have a tax system where people earning over \$100,000 pay a smaller percentage of their income on tax on average than people earning between \$40,000 and \$100,000.

Mr. Chairperson, there was an article, for example, in the Toronto Star reporting in terms of taxes, two months ago. I can provide to the minister—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. I would remind Mr. Ashton that if he wants to ask questions, he has 40 seconds left.

**Mr. Ashton:** If the Minister of Finance was not yelling from his seat all the time, we might be able to ask some specific questions—

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** He has 20 seconds left. Let him talk.

**Mr. Ashton:** And the same thing from the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs who is now sitting in the back of the room heckling. It was easier when she was sitting up front.

I wanted to just to finish off on that point. Are you suggesting there are fairer ways of dealing with the challenges government faced, debts, deficit—and we can talk in relative terms about whatever the problem is—than essentially calling for a tax on teachers and public sector workers, which is what a lot of people describe Bill 22 as, a 3.8 percent tax on the income of teachers and public sector workers?

**Mr. Dyck:** Mr. Chairperson, Bill 22 taxes teachers from both ends. First of all, it reduces their salaries and No. 2, my taxes at home have gone up. So I am getting it from both ends.

After the last budget, we were told that the average family was going to get something like, I forget what it was, \$500, \$600, \$700 more taxes on the same amount of revenue. I am getting less money next year, so I am getting taxed from both ends. So I am now—in some divisions, we are

getting, let us say, up to eight days difference. That is a tremendous amount. We are not talking hundreds of dollars anymore. At \$200 a day, we are talking more like a couple of thousand. That is what we are talking. All right?

And Mr. Manness, I know that you have been a farmer, and I come from a farming community. We know what farmers are doing, how much taxes they pay. I fill out income tax for them. They can hide them very nicely. So we do not have to talk about that group. All right?

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Dyck, for your presentation. The next presenter is Mr. Darryl Gervais, Pelly Trail Teachers' Association. Mr. Gervais, would you come forward, please. Would you present your presentation, please.

**Mr. Darryl Gervais (Pelly Trail Teachers' Association):** Yes, and I believe you already have a copy of the presentation as well.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Yes, we do.

**Mr. Gervais:** Hello, I am Darryl Gervais, and I teach students in Russell, Manitoba.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Order, order. I would like to hear the presentation. Order. Ms. Friesen, I asked for order and Mr. Cummings. Thank you.

**Mr. Gervais:** I teach students in Russell, Manitoba, and I am here to represent the concerns of the teachers of Pelly Trail Teachers' Association as well as to share some personal thoughts on the question of allowing school divisions to remove paid professional development days.

\* (2310)

As other presenters have and will point out, teachers do have many concerns about Bill 22. Some of those are: the removal of paid professional development days; salary cuts; the loss of administrative days; the fact that this law overrules contracts that have been negotiated in good faith, and that, I believe, is an important part of the Canadian legal system; as well as the mistrust that this bill may create between the government and the teachers if it follows through. So my presentation will focus on the removal of paid professional development days.

In society today, technology is constantly changing, our societal values are constantly changing, and in schools, teaching methods are constantly changing.

In the global economy, Canada is already falling behind. Certainly, we have an advanced communications industry and perhaps a revived aerospace industry, I am proud to say, if they rebuild the Churchill Rocket Range. So Manitoba has that to be proud of. But we need educated people to keep that momentum going, and educated children become educated workers. We need students to graduate with the current skills and knowledge. We need teachers that are up to date with current technologies and methods to educate those students.

At a time when we believe that our educational system is falling behind, in a time of rising unemployment, and in a time where we see an increasing number of unemployable citizens, people that just cannot find employment and will not be able to, why is the government passing a bill that discourages professional development, in other words, discouraging education among teachers?

Now, what would happen if teachers did not develop professionally after the last day of their teacher training? I would like to pose the question: What would happen if a teacher had no contact at all with other teachers for the rest of their teaching career? And at this point, just allow me to hypothesize for a moment.

Suppose for a moment that I am older than I look. I am one of the younger teachers in the province. Suppose for a moment that I have been teaching for a long, long time. Suppose also that I have not had contact with other teachers since my last days of teacher college many years ago. Suppose you are the students. I would like to read to you a bit of Canadian history from a book authorized for use in Canadian schools, this book here.

It is called A First Book of Canadian History. At this point, I would ask my students to look along in the book with them if they had it. I have here: The human race is divided into several broad families distinguished, as a rule, by the colour of their skins. Asia is the home of the yellow man, Africa of the black man, Europe of the white man and America of the red man.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Mr. Gervais, could I interrupt. Could you stay in front of your mikes. We need you to stay in front of the mikes to pick you up so we can record you.

**Mr. Gervais:** My apologies. I am used to being in a classroom and trying to grab the attention of students.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you.

**Mr. Gervais:** In the greater part of what is now Canada, the red man, or Indian, reigned supreme. They can with truth be called savages, as there are no people poorer than these in the world. They are great thieves and will steal all they can. Such were the primitive inhabitants of this Canada of ours. That is a quote from the First Book of Canadian History.

Now what would happen to me if I promoted those writings as the truth in school today? If I went into my classroom tomorrow and read that out, I think I would likely be accused of promoting hatred against First Nations people by saying those things, and I would say, rightly so. My intent in reading that tonight was not to cause offence, instead just to submit as an example what could happen if professional development did not occur in the teaching profession.

I will go back to the question I asked before reading, what would happen if a teacher had no contact with other teachers for the rest of their teaching career? Nothing would happen. Nothing would change. Schools would fall behind society in technology, in values, and in teaching methods. Without professional development, I may be standing in front of my students lecturing from a book written in 1928 and promoting it as the current truth. Now perhaps there are some people that think that this is the way schools are today, and perhaps there are some people who believe that schools are the same as they were 20, 30, 40 or 50 years ago. Well, they are wrong in my estimation. I cannot vouch that for a fact.

Let us visit my classroom for a moment. It is the beginning of class. The students are entering the room through the door here, and you immediately notice that none of them are carrying books. Also, they do not bring pens, they do not bring pencils, there are no books, nothing else. They do not bring anything to class, but for me that is not a problem. Perhaps you thought I was about to leap into a speech about how today's children are not as disciplined as 20 years ago or how they do not respect authority or anything else. No, they do not bring these things to class because they do not need them. I happen to teach computer

applications in technology. So the students do all their assignments on computers. The only thing for them to bring to class is an open mind. So let us not base our decisions about schools on stereotypes or misconceptions of the past. Let us look at what is really needed today.

So far I am fortunate, my school division has so far been supportive of my needs for professional development, and they have not cut any of the professional development or administrative days to this point. What would happen if that was not the case? I ask myself who would suffer, and I believe it would be my students that would suffer. Right now my students come to class really enthused. They are very enthusiastic. They are excited to learn new things. In fact, some days I have to slow them down coming into my class, and I am very proud of that, and they push me as a teacher to learn. As a teacher, like other teachers, I realize the importance of professional development throughout my career. In fact, I do take correspondence courses on my own. I do read trade journals in the evening, at least a couple a week. I do go to workshops over the summer, and I do all that because I want to. I want to be a good teacher.

I also want to feel, however, that the system in which I work is supportive of the activities I do. In a sense I want to have a partner in this endeavour of professional development. I want to feel that school boards also think that professional development is important. Now, if paid professional development days are cut, I will not be getting the same message. I will feel instead that I am alone in wanting to do better for my students, and I hope that my students do not suffer. I am sure that as the teacher I am, I will continue to do that.

I recognize our school system is expensive. There have been recent studies on how expensive it is. But our future depends on how we educate our children. Professional development and in-service days are not the thing to cut. Paid in-service days also have been negotiated in good faith, and in a sense Bill 22 makes it legal for school divisions to break contracts. To take away paid in-service days ignores the process of contract negotiation and arbitration. Contracts are an important part of Canada's legal system, and I question what is happening here. Is it any different than passing a law allowing someone to steal from

one group to give to another group? In essence I guess a Robin Hood type of law, and I question who is the end victim, is it the students, our children and our society?

I would just like to finish by reading once more a quote for our honoured members of the Legislature on this committee. The quote is from the same book, and it says: They are great thieves and will steal all they can.

I would like to thank you for listening.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairperson, I would like to say to our presenter, I obviously take him seriously, and when he tells me about the commitment he makes to his own education and obviously that which he will impart to those in the classroom, obviously he takes his profession seriously.

In my calculations, sir, you, over the next 30 years as a teacher, will gross somewhere around, as any person would in the profession, around \$2,100,000. Right today if the tax rate stayed more or less the same, you would pay three-quarters of a million dollars in tax. The way I see things unfolding over the course of the next 30 years if you spend that long in the teaching profession, you would be called upon by governments—and I do not care what political stripe the Minister of Finance happens to be of the day—not three-quarters of a million dollars, you will be asked to pay upwards of \$1.4 million in income tax out of the \$2 million that will come until you go. That is what is on the line here, and I can tell you that I take it very seriously.

\* (2320)

I do not make these kinds of rules and bring in these types of laws because I want to attack teachers, I want to attack professional days, I do it because things are spiralling out of control. With all of your best efforts in the 12,000 or in the society who are in our classrooms today, I feel for many of the issues that were discussed earlier tonight in other briefs, because I think it is incredible what society has pushed on those of you who are trying to give guidance in the classroom. But the reality is, unless there is going to be significant wealth created somehow, we are not going to make it, and we will not make it if I continue to borrow money.

So I ask you—because I can sense that you are well-read and you have a feeling of where the world is going and what it is and how it is you want to impart your knowledge to those of our students. Nobody else has been able to show me the way,

either in this country or in any country in the western world, in the dilemma that we have. Do you have a solution that I can follow which would make useless or would not require the movement of Bill 22?

**Mr. Gervais:** Thank you for your kind words about the education system and myself, and I appreciate you recognize me as a well-read person. Unfortunately, I have not been as well-read in the financial numbers that are in the Canadian books and in Manitoba's in particular.

It seems to me that Bill 22 takes away something very close to teachers—their professional development. There is a feeling among teachers that perhaps if there was some sort of consultation that said, how can we streamline the education system, if after that question had been asked, then Bill 22 had come out, then I think teachers, if they were part of the decision-making process, and that was the outcome of that, then I think they would have been more accepting of it—probably not 100 percent, I am sure.

But there are, I believe, ideas out there for reducing it. One that comes to mind is at the beginning of I believe it was this session of the Legislature, the Education minister suggested—actually, my apologies, I believe it was when Mr. Derkach was Education minister, it was suggested that the boundaries be redrawn in school divisions to save money. I question why the present minister has put that in the background. Has that idea been forgotten?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Gervais.

**Ms. Friesen:** I was interested in your responses to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). In effect, you were suggesting the basic procedure of negotiation, first of all, that could have been tried in this event.

The second area I think that you were addressing in your paper was the issue of choices in budgeting, the choices that are made by any government and any Minister of Finance. I wanted to draw your attention to the kind of choices that this government has made in education.

One of them has been, as I have been making reference to over the evening, professional development in the private sector. Some of this does have, certainly, some training value. There is no doubt about that. But the issue is that at the end

of it, what this government has chosen to do is to have better private golf courses, better car dealerships, and to take away, without negotiation, the professional development days of teachers.

It is a choice that they have made, not a question of additional revenue in this sense. There is \$5,000, \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000 and, in total, \$3 million going to those kinds of programs.

So I wanted to draw that to your attention but, particularly, I also wanted to ask your opinion, if you had experience with a program that both the federal and the provincial governments are supporting, which is called a Stay-In-School program. I wondered if you had had any experience of that in your school division.

**Mr. Gervais:** I have had the experience with various programs to help students stay in school. In our school, I am not sure if the activities that are in the school fall under that particular program. It is important for students to stay in school. Yet, as one of the other presenters mentioned, schools have also become a dumping ground for people, and in some cases are being used as part of the penal system as well for sentencing students to school.

**Ms. Frlesen:** Thank you. I am glad you mention that because I did not have a chance, there was not enough time to ask the other presenter about that, and that was new to me. Could you explain it to me, what exactly is happening in that case?

**Mr. Gervais:** Well, it has not happened at the school I am at currently, not in my class anyway, but at the previous school I was at there were students that were given the choice of going to school and obtaining a certain standard of grades, satisfactory grades, a C if you will, staying in school and behaving or going to a youth detention centre. Naturally most students chose school because that allows them more freedom. When they were in school though, many of them, it seems, still were not able to, I guess, follow the rules of society that are set out in our schools. Unfortunately, they eventually end up in the youth detention centres, and that is a very sad state of our society right now.

**Ms. Frlesen:** You spoke, and I think with great passion, about professional development days, and I wonder if you could give us some examples of particular professional development days or conferences or programs that have had a special impact on you and your work.

**Mr. Gervais:** Annually, the special area group conferences are held in Winnipeg and the Learning Is For Teachers conference in Brandon is held annually. That gives an opportunity for the teachers to come together en masse and in special area groups. For example, computer educators get together with computer educators. Industrial arts people get together. Vocational people get together. Math people get together. It allows them to share experiences province-wide so that we do not get regional disparity in education, so that one group does not get good professional development and another gets, I guess, inadequate professional development.

Now, the problem with allowing divisions to take away administration days, one of the problems, is that the special area groups rely heavily on the October conference to gain membership. It is not the only thing they do throughout the year, but they rely heavily on that conference to gain members, and the members pay their dues and that helps the association go right through the year.

Now, if they are not allowed to have all of the teachers free to go to that on the same day—and I have heard that there are certain school divisions that are having classes on October 22 which is set for the special area group conference this year—but if the teachers are not allowed to have that day to go and instead it is a teaching day, then it cuts down the number of teachers that can go to the conference. It cuts down on the number of people that can participate in putting it together. In certain cases it cuts down on the facilities.

There is one group that I know of that had planned to have it in a certain school division, but they are going to be teaching on that day so all the plans that have been done over the last year and a half for the conference now are on hold because they had planned on using a school for the session. Now that school is being used for classes, so obviously they cannot have a few hundred teachers coming there when all the students are going to be there. So now they have to have an alternate place to do it. So not only, in this case, would the teachers not be getting paid to go, but they would not have a place to go unless they were to go rent a facility somewhere else. Then it is asking the teachers to also pay for a place to hold their meeting.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Gervais.

**Mr. Gervais:** I thank you for allowing me to present.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The next presenter is Mr. Alan Schroeder, private citizen. Mr. Schroeder, would you come forward please. Mr. Schroeder, would you proceed.

**Mr. Alan Schroeder (Private Citizen):** Good evening, Mr. Chairperson, nice to see you again. Just to let Mr. Manness know, I reside in the heart of his riding, Morris, Manitoba. So if he wants to take a shot at me, he has to remember that I still do carry a Conservative card and can exercise my right.

**Mr. Manness:** Oh, I will not shoot at you at all.

**Mr. Schroeder:** No, I did not think so.

I wanted to talk to you tonight about Bill 22, ladies and gentlemen, in regard to the impact on kids. I want to try and ignore the impact on teachers economically, because to be quite honest with you, from my viewpoint, the impact on teachers economically is not going to be devastating. I think what we end up doing is we end up looking at creating trends that will impact on kids that more than anything could change our future to a point that we may not be as happy with as we would otherwise.

\* (2330)

The last 50 years have brought a greater degree of technological change than the 200 years that preceded the Second World War. Many futurists, who make a professional career of determining the flow of the future, say that the next 10 years could eclipse what was thought to be impossible but achieved during the last 50 years. So we are into such a rapid rate of change that, as a result, to keep up, to be quite honest and to be quite blunt, is damned hard.

The availability of energy and the technology that uses energy because we are in a society where technology uses an incredible amount of energy. Canada, which has 5 percent of the world's population, if I am correct, it may even be less than that, probably uses 15 to 20 percent of the world's energy supply. So we use energy to drive technology. It is that energy that is used to drive the engines of commerce that really will be one of the big limiting factors, apart from one other key ingredient that I see, and that is well-equipped people.

In today's constantly changing world, the question has to be asked, really, who is responsible for keeping abreast of the times in terms of education? It would be fine and dandy to say that it is the parents. I would love to say that it is the parents. Yes, as a parent, I agree that I have a real responsibility to keep abreast of what is happening in education, but those children of ours spend an awful lot of time with people called teachers. As a result, those people really called teachers are probably the most responsible for keeping up with things so that they can do what is best for our kids, and in essence, for our society.

When a new educational philosophy is brought into schools, teachers must become familiar with it before children will benefit. I have seen that over and over again where people, who have not embraced changes in philosophy, have not made changes in their classroom. I think you realize that from your work in government. If you want to change the perception that people have, you have to shift their philosophical base, because if that perception is going to be permanent, the philosophy has to be there preceding the shift.

That is one thing I learned a long time ago when I studied a lot of curriculum courses, that you can in-service people to death, but unless you tackle them from a philosophical base they will never, never maintain what you are trying to shift them into.

Once the initial teacher training is completed, the best way to maintain a functionally informed teaching staff, without taking away large blocks of time from their direct contact time with students, is to use what we often refer to as professional development days. Teaching is really an essential service where members must continue to learn and grow while fulfilling their job requirements. Professional development is an ongoing process which includes formal and structured activities intended to stimulate both personal and professional growth. I guess that is where a point has not been made tonight that I would like to make.

These activities are formal and structured. Teachers designate their own income at times to pay their way most of the time. A lot of the time they pay their own way into these activities that are on a day, two-day, three-day basis or whatever. These structured days are there because these people who structure these days know that

teachers with income disposable from a day's worth of earnings that they may be paid while they are away from their classrooms can transfer that money into paying for the activities of the day which they benefit by taking back into their classrooms. So the point was made, well, yes, teachers could take voluntary time, Mr. Manness, and I am not debating that. They could, but they also use the dollars that they are given that day in salary to roll back into, in part and sometimes in whole, depending on the expense of the activity, into buying their way through that activity for that day or those days that they are involved.

As a result, the educational process is enhanced as local professional development opportunities build a stronger school staff through providing designated time for the co-operative sharing of skills and resources. I have seen staff members who were a little on the reticent side to become involved in some PD activities, but with a lot of coaching and a lot of pulling and dragging, and because you said, listen, you are paid today, I want you there, I would like you to be there doing this, you get them there for one and for two. You see some change created.

I think you work with people as well within your departments that are maybe a little more reticent than others to some changes that you may be making. You do not throw them out because they are reticent. You maybe try to bring them along and make them into a far better person than what they may have been prior to the engagement of coaxing them into doing something.

PD days, or professional development days, all have one goal, to benefit the children in our schools. The importance of professional development is the ongoing improvement of what happens in the classroom. Professional development in education has needs very similar to those in the corporate sector, and I do not see business at this point in time in the business world stepping back on the funding and time allotment they feel needed to generate staff development renewal.

When I talk to people from D.W. Friesen in Altona, the amount of money they are spending on people to send them for development training makes what we spend in the school system look pale in comparison. I talked to people at West Park Motors in Altona. I have not known of a salesman as of late who takes his own training without being

paid by the company, put up in some of the best hotels and fed. I am not suggesting we have that done to us, but I am saying the private sector is saying that PD is important for their members.

Professional development days are not haphazardly put together. In order to effectively address the wide variety of educational development and advancement, professional development needs are assessed by teachers, by each school and by the school division. From those assessments, an individual, a school and specific divisional plans are developed to best use the resources available. These priorities are established and cyclically monitored as each year progresses.

So it is a very deliberate organizational attempt by teachers to develop professional development for themselves and for the division. The days give them a focal point with which to work from. If the days are there on a voluntary basis, yes, you will have some staff there. You will not have some of the staff you need to have there. Some of the people you need to drag along may be harder to get there. This gives us a chance to take those people and make sure they get there as well.

The part of Bill 22 that is really most damaging is in the area of removing school divisions' flexibility to provide for their local needs locally. This bill forces divisional teachers to exclusively seek professional development outside of their own division's boundaries and directly discourages locally generated professional development which, by the way, is the most cost-efficient form of professional development.

Yes, teachers still have at their disposal the 200, the 250, the 300 day per teacher in-services that do give them a lot of needed help, but when we can keep those people in our own division by designating a day and spending the money to bring just one person out 90 kilometres or 150 kilometres rather than sending 30 people in, 20 people in, I think we are saving money. In looking at what the local divisions have done with encouraging people, the resource people to come out, I think they have benefited from it.

I really believe, ladies and gentlemen, that Bill 22 is truly not about balancing budgets, but it is really bent on enforcing a current political ideology that is sweeping our nation at this time, and I think you are caught up in that as legislators. You are caught up



in that ideology. It is happening around you. You feel you need to do it here as well, because it is the thing to do at this point in time.

The real losers are not the teachers. Dang it—teachers will survive. They may grumble a bit, but they will be around the next day, they will be around the next week, but I really think in the long run, some of our losers are going to be our children. They are to be our future productive citizens.

\* (2340)

Bill 22 has pitted professionals against the public on many local levels and is giving many citizens the impression that the current provincial government is ruined by haphazard abdication rather than planned decisiveness. Those are not my words. Those are the words of many people that have stopped by and talked to me on a number of different occasions.

The question this committee ought to ask itself, actually, is this one: Does this government really wish to plan for and equip Manitobans with the knowledge and skills they require to meet the challenges of a new century, or are its words in the form of the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) throne speech, only hollow rhetoric that this government up to now has gambled the public of Manitoba will buy without asking any real questions? Thank you.

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

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Schroeder, thank you very much for a powerful presentation. You state your case extremely well.

I suppose I will not ask you to comment on—and the examples you use about the development within the private sector, because I am very well aware of them. I, too, have been impressed with those functions, bearing in mind, of course, ultimately there is a bottom line, and if driven and indeed if certain targets are not met, people are asked to leave. I mean, that is the pressure, that is the other side of the story. I know you understand that.

I would like to take this moment to comment as to why we do it this way, and you might want to tell me in the response what the ideology is. You did not specify what this ideology was that was driving us, because as I look around at Canada, I guess it is the same ideology driving all of the political parties, regardless of their political stripe, and I therefore say there is not an ideology, it is pure arithmetic,

but maybe you can tell me what the ideology is that is driving me.

**Mr. Schroeder:** I agree with you, Mr. Manness, that there are parts of this country that are in worse shape than we are. Okay? That has been said by yourself. It has been said by the opposition. It has been said by a lot of people. Manitoba has a problem, but in comparison to some other jurisdictions which, I believe, have a crisis, we have jumped on board with our problem and possibly decided that, yes, we can solve our problem reacting the same way that other jurisdictions are who have a crisis. Jurisdictions in a crisis tend to act in very severe polarized fashions, and I feel that while we have a problem in this province, yes, we have a debt problem, I do not see this province—and it may be due to some good management. We do not have a debt crisis.

Now, I am not familiar with what has happened in other jurisdictions, but I am aware that up until about 1974, on a cyclical basis, we by and large, as a provincial government, overspent and then underspent and just about evened things out. At a point after 1974, that stopped, but that stopped to a far greater—

**An Honourable Member:** '72.

**Mr. Schroeder:** —'72, I am sorry. That stopped to a far more expansive degree in other provinces. I think what has happened, you have looked at some of the success that perhaps you have seen other jurisdictions have tried to employ in managing the debt, and I think you may have overreacted.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, thank you for clarifying, because I did not know whether you were referring to the fiscal problem that faces us all or not, and you obviously are. I could continue discussion on that, but in fairness to the rest of the committee, I will not. However, I would like to make one assertion here tonight, and I know Mr. Alcock will understand, and certainly my colleagues. I do not expect members of the NDP to understand this, but we have got a problem, and you have heard many people here tonight say increase taxes.

**Mr. Schroeder:** I am sorry?

**Mr. Manness:** You have heard many people here tonight say increase taxes. We are all prepared to pay more. Philosophically, I am opposed to it, but I could do that. But we have a problem in this nation, and the fact is as we increase taxes, we are driving an incredible amount of the economy underground.

As a matter of fact, I asked the federal finance people to do an estimate, see if they could quantify how much we are driving underground and not capturing. It is so big, in the billions, they refused to even give me the number. They refused even to do the work.

**Mr. Schroeder:** I would agree.

**Mr. Manness:** And you would agree?

**Mr. Schroeder:** Yes.

**Mr. Manness:** The only way we can get at it, quite frankly, is if we were to hire a whole army of tax collectors, and what an unproductive—everything opposite to what you have said tonight for how it is we have to create wealth and prepare to compete in the world. So that is a part of the dilemma we have.

When you say increase taxes slightly, it is not slightly. It is big time. It is at least 50 percent. So that is part of the dilemma that we have, and that is why I have asked our public sector people, including myself, whether or not it is time to take a little bit less.

Now I do not say that this is the best area, but given that there are agreements, through general agreement, it was probably the only area that we could see, was in the education world. Yet we were hoping renegotiation would take place between teachers and the local divisions. That has not happened. Do you see that?

**Mr. Schroeder:** Yes I do. However, the public is very sensitive to situations where its legislators, before taking a reduction themselves to set an example, give themselves a raise. That is the perception that is out there among people, however, that before the provincial legislators themselves said, yes, we will take X number of percent as a cut, we will give ourselves 2 percent, and then we will pool ourselves back 4 percent. We end up with a minus two.

**Mr. Manness:** Right, that happened, yes.

**Mr. Schroeder:** Okay, that happened, okay. It is that perception that is created among people that really hurts. I have not seen a change in salary since 1991 in September, and I am not complaining. I am just adjusting the way I live as a result. I may not see a salary increase for quite some time, and if the employer that I am with does not see its way through to changing things, that is the way it is going to be. But it hurts when the

people I look up to, who lead me, do otherwise or appear to do otherwise.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Thank you, Mr. Schroeder. Any other questions? Thank you.

**Ms. Friesen:** Not a question, but just a thank you for a very thoughtful and forceful presentation.

**Mr. Schroeder:** I appreciate that. Thank you very much. Good evening.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** Mr. Steven Roznowsky, would you come forward please? Steven Roznowsky, have you a written presentation for us?

**Mr. Steven Roznowsky (Private Citizen):** No, I do not.

**Mr. Chalrperson:** No? Would you proceed, please.

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Yes, seeing the time is late, I will try and be as brief as possible.

I have two points that I am kind of dissatisfied with. One of the points is that half of the people live out of Winnipeg in Manitoba and these committee hearings are only and usually held here in the city of Winnipeg. That sort of disenfranchises, you know, half of the Manitobans in and around the province. I know that it is hard to get the committee people out to rural Manitoba, but living in rural Manitoba, as you all may imagine, there are people out there that have a view and should be heard.

\* (2350)

The other thing that I want to bring to this committee is the fact that not only does this bill hurt the public service employees around the province, but being a rural Manitoban it also—I want to bring to this committee level something that probably half of you might even be aware of, and that is the fragility of the rural situation or rural towns in and around Manitoba. Taking any money out of the purse from the economy hurts, and I am not talking about sort of wealthy towns. I am talking about smaller rural poorer towns. You cannot compare the Steinbachs to the, you know, to the Rorketons of Manitoba. You cannot compare a high economic base to a low one. So let us not block each one into a rural versus urban, and I am not here to argue that point.

The point that I am trying to argue is the fact that any kind of economic downturn—or I know the government is fiscally trying to address some monetary problems, and that is okay, but when you do that on the backs of people that are actually the

backbone of some of those communities in and around rural Manitoba, I think not only that the people in those small rural towns, whether they be business people or whether they be care providers or whether they be just people that are in the farming community, they all suffer.

The other thing that probably is worthwhile mentioning is the, you know, dissolution of the family farm, the aging population, also impacts on rural living. All of this seems to be another nail that is nailed in the coffin of rural Manitoba, and I am concerned about it because I do not want to move to the city. I have been born and raised in a small rural town, and I want to stay there. I want to, you know, eventually maybe even raise a family in a rural town, because I think rural towns in Manitoba have a tremendous value to the lifestyle as we know it. That is what I would like to bring to the committee's level.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Roznowsky.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairperson, just a short question. I hear the lament of the presenter and I identify with him. I ask him, if the presenter has been sitting tonight in the audience, he has probably heard certain numbers of people say, increase taxes. What is the difference to the impact on the rural economy as to whether I increase taxes on a citizenry of all or whether I try and reduce disposable income from another source? What is the difference as to the impact?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** In all fairness, I am not an analyst of financial nature. I do not have at my disposal enough information or knowledge to be able to comment on it. What I would like to comment on is, if you unfairly treat any section of the population, that is unfair, whether or not it is a broad brush. Nobody likes the increase in taxes. Let us be honest.

I think people at large, and I speak for fairness to all society, it is unfair to target an individual section of society such as, I do not know, there are 100,000 public sector employees across the province; if you target those that is unfair. I realize the fact that an increase in taxes is not popular to anybody; I would be foolish to assume otherwise. I think it would be much more plausible to see that happen on a broad-brush approach than to unfairly tax one segment of society, because that is not fair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much. Are there any further questions? Thank you very much, Mr. Roznowsky.

Mr. Bill Vail, would you come forward, please? Have you a written presentation, Mr. Vail?

**Mr. Bill Vail (Private Citizen):** Yes. My name is Bill Vail and I live in Thompson, Manitoba.

I am here tonight, of course, like many other people, and I am here almost at the bewitching hour to do this. I have already made a presentation this week in Thompson to our council in regard to the ramifications of Bill 22 and what it is going to do for the economy of the North. I am sad to see that Steve had to leave tonight, because I am sure he would reiterate many of the comments that I am going to make this evening.

One of the areas that I suppose we should be concerned with is the amount of money that this will take out of our economy in the Thompson region. We are talking about \$5.8 million out of our economy. It is going to affect between 1,200 and 1,300 members of the community.

A lot of the people in Thompson work for Inco, but there are a lot of us that work for the provincial government, for Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba Telephones, many Crown corporations that all are going to be affected by this.

The point I would like to make tonight is that when we do not have money to spend in our community it affects our community. It affects everything in our community. We have heard a lot of presentations this evening about education and I am very concerned about education too. I am not going to touch on any of those because as you well know education is going to be affected by Bill 22.

I think that as a northern resident and lived in the community for 15 years, I know that our community base is on what is in that community. The money that we bring in for salary is spent in that community. We try to buy at home. The business community encourages us to buy locally, and I think that is a good point. I think that if I were running a business in Thompson I would appreciate that, and I think that the businesses there do appreciate that.

But let us face it, when you cut our salaries, you cut that ability to buy in our community, and what happens to those businesses? Obviously they have to cut back on their staff. Many of them are low-paid people who are getting limited numbers of

hours. What happens to them? Where do they go? Do they go on the welfare roll? Do they go on unemployment? Where do they go to live? As citizens of this province I think that should be of grave concern to you.

Another area that we were looking at in Thompson, and as a city we have a budget, obviously, that we have to live with. I do not think a lot of thought has gone into the fact that some of the sheriff's officers in our community who work for the provincial government, who take prisoners from Thompson to The Pas and Grand Rapids, usually on a Friday when we are going to be given a day off with no pay, will not be doing that job, and who is going to look after those prisoners? Sometimes it is up to 14 to 15 people. Are they going to be kept in the cages down at the RCMP compound where there are no showers, no lighting?

Are these people going to be just trucked off? If we pay the RCMP to haul these prisoners down to Grand Rapids or The Pas it is going to cost the city in the neighbourhood of \$4,000 to \$5,000. Now, has that been taken into consideration? That is coming out of someone's budget, and by the way it looks right now, the RCMP is paid by our city out of our city budget, where is that money going to come from?

So a lot of areas in our community are going to be drastically affected by this. Health care workers are not going to be available when people need their help, especially on Fridays when it is probably the busiest day of the week for them, and they are not going to be there to give people the support they need.

So as a concerned citizen, and as the hour is late I believe I have covered the points I would like to cover with you tonight and I appreciate your time.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Vail.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Vail, do you know that I probably take out \$100 million out of the Thompson economy by way of the taxes that I impose on the citizens of the province?

**Mr. Vail:** You take out \$100 million?

**Mr. Manness:** Right.

**Mr. Vail:** What do you mean, from Inco or from the citizens?

**Mr. Manness:** From the citizens.

**Mr. Vail:** What is that supposed to mean, sir?

\* (0000)

**Mr. Manness:** It means in income tax, it means in tobacco tax, gasoline tax. I will not even talk about payroll tax, but all the fees that we impose on the citizenry. Do you know I take out roughly \$100 million dollars out of the Thompson area from individuals?

**Mr. Vail:** Well, as a taxpayer, I pay my fair share of taxes like any other citizen in my community, and I do not think that we want to pay any less. Now we feel that a fair amount is a fair amount for something that we are getting, but when you start withdrawing services to our community—we are talking 16,000 hours of services that are going to be withdrawn from our community. That is going to affect everybody in that community and do not tell me that it is not going to affect them.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, I am not going to say that there are not going to be some services that are going to be reduced marginally. I never claimed that. To do that, I would have to say that there were a bunch of civil servants that were not doing very much on certain Fridays, and I will never make that claim. So I might acknowledge that there is going to be some reduction in some areas, but more importantly, you said I was taking \$5.8 million out by reducing payrolls.

**Mr. Vail:** That is right.

**Mr. Manness:** I ask you, would you feel better if I took \$5.8 million out by increasing taxes?

**Mr. Vail:** If that tax money were used for the betterment of our community, I am sure the people would be more acceptable to that.

**Mr. Manness:** No, that money would not be used for the betterment of the community. It would be used to pay the interest on the debt. It would leave Manitoba. Would that make you feel happier?

**Mr. Vail:** I have a hard time with these microphones. The main concern, obviously as a citizen, is that we get a fair shake for our dollar, but the main concern I have here tonight is how it is going to affect the services we get. That is our concern.

Certainly I am concerned as a person that is going to have his salary cut by 10 days every year. I would be crazy if I were not, and we all talked about tax increases. I am sure that was raised several times by yourself, Mr. Manness, about tax increases, but there was no back-and-forth discussions between ourselves and anybody else. Suddenly you come out with a bill. We have a few

hours here to discuss it, and it is going to be done and passed and we will deal with it I suppose.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairperson, I do not know what part of the public sector with whom Mr. Vail might be employed. If it were the MGEU, I offered Mr. Olfert that if at any time, up till even including today, he wanted to renegotiate the master agreement, that I would always look at reconsidering Bill 22. That has been in place now for three months, that offer.

**Mr. Vail:** I do not agree with that statement, Sir. I wish Mr. Olfert were here to respond, because I am sure he would have a different opinion and he will be responding to you tomorrow.

**Mr. Manness:** He will be here and I will talk to him tomorrow.

**Mr. Reid:** Mr. Chairperson, I have listened with considerable interest to a lot of the presentations here tonight, mostly from educators that have come before us and made presentations.

But Mr. Vail, I found yours a very interesting presentation in that it seems to indicate, and you can correct me if I am wrong on this, that as a citizen of the province you value very highly the services that are provided for you in your community. I get the sense that, because being from Thompson, there may be some of the remoteness factor that is involved in that consideration and that is maybe the reason why you value those services so highly.

As a taxpayer of the province, you would, I sense, be willing to pay a small amount more for retention of those services instead of having to lose pay as a result of that if those taxes that were applied were spread over the salary base of those that are earning incomes in this province and done in a fair manner, of course? Am I correct in saying that?

**Mr. Vail:** I think you have a fair idea of it.

I would like to clarify to Mr. Manness, I am not going to hide anything. I work for the Motor Vehicle Branch, and I work in the Thompson office. I take a lot of pride in what I do, and I do not like the comment that you made about a lax bunch of civil servants. I do not know where that came from. You made that comment, sir.

**Mr. Manness:** That was not attributed to me.

**Mr. Vail:** There was a lax civil service. I heard that word mentioned.

**Mr. Manness:** I did not say that.

**Mr. Vail:** You did not make that comment?

**Mr. Manness:** Of course not. Why would I?

**Mr. Vail:** You said a bunch of civil servants complaining about a salary cut because they were not doing enough work.

**Mr. Reid:** I get the sense then, Mr. Vail, and picking up on the minister's comments here that he wanted to renegotiate the contract, the existing contract, the binding legal contract that is in place right now. How do you feel about a government that signs or affixes their signature to a contract that was signed in good faith with members of the unions of the province that signed and sat down to the table to negotiate with the government, and then the government went back on its word, is now introducing Bill 22 and breaking their word and yet the minister—

**Mr. Manness:** That is garbage.

**Mr. Reid:** The minister has the gall to sit in his place here today and say that he wants to renegotiate a contract that was done in good faith. How do you feel about that comment, Mr. Vail?

**Mr. Manness:** It was renegotiated, but I am not breaking this one. You know that.

**Mr. Vail:** Well, obviously, as a union member, and one that was a part of that so-called negotiation that we did sign in good faith, obviously I do not trust this government. I do not trust this minister, and when we talked about going back to the table again, what type of an operation would that be? How could you go back to the table and trust a government that rips it up in your face and says, oh, well, we are going to renegotiate it?

**Mr. Manness:** I have not ripped it up. I am pondering it.

**Mr. Reid:** I think the hour is growing late. We could probably debate this for an extensive period of time. I sense that Mr. Vail is very frustrated the way his government has treated him as a resident of the North and as an employee of the province of Manitoba and that he feels that the government has broken their word and their faith with the employees of this province.

I thank Mr. Vail for coming out here this evening and waiting till this late hour to make your presentation and for in fact travelling down to the city of Winnipeg to make your presentation. Many of us had talked during the debate on second

reading of this bill that we thought that committee hearings should have been held in other parts of the province, including Thompson. We thought that that would have been the proper approach instead of your having to travel to us. The committee should have, in some cases, made some opportunity for residents in different parts of the province to make presentations. Thank you for coming out here this evening.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Vail, for your presentation.

**Mr. Vail:** Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The committee will reconvene tomorrow at one o'clock and sit till 5 p.m. Committee rise.

**COMMITTEE ROSE AT:** 12:08 a.m.

### WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS PRESENTED BUT NOT READ

Dear Committee Members:

Bill 22 is wrong. It is wrong morally, ethically and professionally.

Professional development days are crucial to the continued improvement and updating of all professionals. Professional development days keep teachers informed on new programs, methods, changes to curricula. In-services provide the forum to gather teaching colleagues together under one roof to exchange ideas, give support and promote improvements. Students are going to suffer. Manitoba and Canada will take one more step toward becoming a third-world entity.

Do not pass Bill 22.

Thank you for your time.

Esther Fyk  
Garland, Manitoba

\* \* \*

I wish to express to you, the members of the legislative committee studying Bill 22, my strong opposition to this proposed legislation. For a variety of reasons, I deplore the terms of Bill 22. These reasons are detailed in the submission that follows.

#### I. Violations of Contract

More than anything else, I am appalled by the arbitrary decision of this government to alter the terms of contracts already agreed upon by employers and their employees in school divisions

all across Manitoba. This unilateral action frightens me.

All of my life, I have believed that a contract was something that must be honoured, regardless of changed conditions during its tenure. My father taught me that a handshake was a binding agreement; a written contract it followed was sacred. To deviate from the terms, or even the spirit, of a contract is a clear violation of trust.

It was most revealing for me to note the comments of Winnipeg school division trustees who spoke out last month against Education minister Vodrey's proposed changes to the school year. Their argument was that their employees should not have to bear the brunt of government fiscal problems by unilateral changes in contracts already negotiated in good faith. It is significant that here the employer took this position.

If contracts are altered by management side only now, what does this say about the sanctity of contracts in the future? What would be the reaction, I wonder, if teachers were suddenly to declare some aspects of their contracts to be null and void? Such a move would never be tolerated.

Already, though, I hear comments that extracurricular activities will be jeopardized if teaching loads become heavier and administrative days are lost. Since extracurricular activities are not specified in contracts as a required part of the teaching job, I am afraid that there will be an impact on such activities, and on the children who benefit from them. What a loss!

Moderate voices in the debate over such activities will be competing with more militant ones, I fear, the excuse being the immoderate measure of Bill 22.

#### II. Professional Development/Administrative Days Reduction

Bill 22 would authorize school boards to take up to 10 days off the teaching year of its employees. What days will be removed? Administration days? When, then, will the work of those days, which we currently use to prepare for a new semester (one day) and to do all of the necessary end-of-year reporting, evaluation and next-year preparation (three days) be done? Such work has to be done. If administration time is not allowed for these vital tasks, someone's workload has to increase.

Will it be parent-teacher days that are lopped off? Surely not. Those days are an essential means of

communication between home and school, more essential in these troubled times than ever before. Will that communication be done only in the evening when both parents and teachers are cramming in time after a full day at work? Such an arrangement does not give these conferences the fair chance that they deserve.

Or will it be professional development days that are lost? Frankly that thought galls me. In-service days are not, and never have been, some sort of holiday for teachers. Teachers do acquire valuable new ideas and insights at workshops and seminars, most of which have been set up at great expenditure of time and effort by fellow teachers. Just the opportunity for teachers to come together itself provides colleagues with a chance to exchange useful classroom procedures and experience.

A steadily increasing number of new teachers are now making their way in Manitoba classrooms as the wave of retirements from the 1960's generation of teachers rolls by in the 1990's. These young teachers stand to benefit most, or lose most, from decisions now being made on continuing professional development assistance. I can stress this from a personal standpoint. My daughter and son are both just now entering the teaching profession. They need the shared experience and new ideas that arise from in-service days.

How can our government increase professional development funding in one year and then in the next suggest that the ten days traditionally given over to professional development and administration time be cut? The mind boggles at such contradictory direction signals.

When one considers, as well, the inconsistencies already being introduced for next year across the province by these cutbacks in days, the concern grows even greater. In the Parkland region alone, the days being cut for 1993-94 range from no days in one school division to two days in others to five days lost in yet another. Regional professional development planning has thereby been effectively gutted.

Across the province, the numbers of days cut vary from no days to eight days in school divisions already reporting. How can we talk about an education system in the face of this inconsistency?

### III. Financial and Retirement Impact on Teachers

This bill also has a critical impact on at least one other area of concern, and that is teacher economic welfare. If teachers do not express their indignation about this concern, who else will do it for them?

The short-term effect of Bill 22 will certainly be on salary earned. Depending on the number of days cut, and here the inconsistency among school divisions is again glaringly obvious, teachers will lose a significant portion of their wage, one-half percent per day, it has been calculated.

What about the long-term effect on pensionable service years and pension payment amount? Were these factors even considered when the "up to ten days cut" position was being formulated? For those teachers now nearing retirement age, a sizable group in Manitoba, this reduction will be felt for all of their retirement years. With all of the media focus on pension plans lately, it appears obvious that pensions are an important consideration for all of us.

### IV. Conclusion

Until recently, I had never believed that I would feel the need to make a written submission concerning the patent unfairness of unilateral contract changes or the importance of maintaining teachers. Both these issues seemed to me to be unassailable rights.

The proposed changes in Bill 22 strike at the heart of fair labour relation practices and undermine the fundamental need to have teachers as well prepared as possible for their classroom duties.

Ultimately, the students of Manitoba, as well as their teachers, are ill-served by this proposed legislation. Thank you for your consideration of my viewpoint in this matter.

Sincerely,

Dale Yeo  
Roblin, Manitoba

\* \* \*

Concerns:

Bill 22 will have serious effects upon our Manitoba school systems, and I am addressing those that I consider to be the most serious.

The loss of professional development days will have far-reaching effects on our programs and for our students. Obviously, such opportunities lost in

one year are forever gone, as there is no way to catch up.

In this time of technological change and with the increasing demands placed upon schools, the need for teachers to keep current and to advance in skills and information is essential. Everything we read and hear points out the need to prepare students for the changes they will be facing. Manitoba students need help to prepare to meet the competitive demands in the future. Teachers want to help them, but must have opportunities through professional development activities to advance their skills and information. In rural areas especially, teachers have little access to professional development programs, except through in-service programs.

Another area of my concern is regarding days for parent-teacher interviews. Most people will agree, I believe, that these, although demanding, are extremely valuable. It is not realistic to expect teachers to conduct 20 to 30 interviews in an evening after an exhausting teaching day and be effective in the classroom the following morning.

I have mentioned just two of the ways the days in question are used, and there are other equally important uses for the days that will be lost. Basic to this workweek reduction, of course, is the principle which it undermines. Contracts have been negotiated in good faith and this negates such agreements. One wonders, if this is made law, what other rights will be removed?

Hazel Anderson

Teacher, Intermountain School Division No. 36  
Grandview, Manitoba

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Bill 22 deals with the reducing of the school year by reducing the number of professional development days available to school divisions. I feel reducing the number of days is not in the best interest of the education of the children of Manitoba.

As I have been teaching for over 25 years, I know that professional development is a necessary part of my ever changing profession. I always look forward to these days, not just to see the changes or to hear new ideas, but to also sit on the other side of the desk and see what it feels like to learn again. I definitely need these days in the very near future as everyone is aware of the strategy changes in the math program which is being

implemented immediately. The science course has made a major change and again in-servicing is necessary. Then there are also changes in other subject areas that creep in all the time.

In small divisions, we do not meet with many teachers at the same grade level. So we need the Special Area Group, SAG, conferences every fall in Winnipeg. These are very good conferences that bring in the very best of presenters.

There are also divisional goals that need to be addressed by the superintendent, professional development committee and the teacher. I am afraid these days would be lost.

We also have interdivisional or regional in-services which address major changes in philosophy or techniques. One school division cannot afford the necessary speakers. These take a lot of planning and, with the uncertainty with Bill 22 and its ramifications, such planning is impossible for the next couple of years.

School planning is a necessary part of running a school. Now, with the declining number of students and staff cuts, but with the same activities and added burdens put on by society, school planning days are a real must.

Parent-teacher interviews are now more important in the educational process. These cannot be done after school or after supper with a proper job done after a day spent in the classroom. Parent-teacher days are definitely necessary in our profession.

It seems ironic that nonteachers or nonprofessional people can decide the number of professional days that are necessary. We are professionals, and we should know what is needed.

If days are needed to be taken off, then why not take off regular school days. Let the students stay home with their families, the taxpayers, and see what they would say, or is this not a politically sound idea?

If cutting professional development days is such a cost-saving idea, why then did the Department of Education suggest that the grants to school divisions not be cut for the days that schools are closed for PD? To me, there seems to be some misconception about savings with the cutting of PD days or just getting at the teachers.

Because Bill 22 does mean the cutting of professional development days, I suggest that



because of the value being placed on education by society, this bill does not address what society really wants.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Jack Boyko  
Teacher, Grandview School  
Grandview, Manitoba

\* \* \*

#### Concerns:

This is a time of massive technological and social change. Therefore, the need for professional development for teachers is paramount.

It is our feeling that the direction taken by Bill 22 will seriously erode professional development opportunities for teachers.

The format laid out by Bill 22, whereby the number of days given over to professional development may be reduced, seriously limits one major component of our current professional development strategy. The real question is, where will this direction end?

Our ability to plan professional development on a regional basis is now seriously hampered. Why? The reason is that school divisions now have a varied number of days available for administration, parent-teacher meetings and professional development. Thus the collective power of a region to plan in-service days to benefit several school divisions at one time is now gone. Each division must now expend more money to set up the same kind of professional development day that previously several divisions collaborated on, or else the day never occurs.

A third concern is that Bill 22 comes at a time when we are seeing an influx of young teachers into the classroom. These teachers, most need professional development and not just on an occasional, individual day out basis. If we do not provide these newest members of the teaching profession with ample professional development, both individual and collective, we deny them the growth opportunity they need and deserve.

With the increasing rate of change in technology and our changing society, new programs and changing methodology are needed for teachers to operate effectively. This has been aptly dubbed "the information age." Are we really prepared to reduce information opportunities to teachers then at this time?

Massive curriculum changes are being and will be launched as we enter the 21st Century. These changes must be accompanied by ample professional development time, if the classroom teacher is to have any hope of staying abreast of these changes.

Teachers in rural Manitoba, in school divisions like ours, also face a kind of academic isolation foreign to urban schools. One teacher in a building may be the kindergarten teacher or the special needs teacher or the industrial arts teacher. With whom does this teacher communicate for new ideas, for new techniques? Removing that teacher for a one-day individual visit to another classroom or to a remote workshop for a few teachers is a help. There is a need, though, for the wide-scale kind of in-service that allows many teachers across a wide region of the province to come together for a shared session. Such an in-service pools resources and allows for better expertise to be made available to teachers. Special Area Group (SAG) sessions have provided such expertise despite some problems with them.

The end loser in any proposed cutback of professional development is not just the classroom teacher, although he/she is the immediate victim of such cutbacks. Our young people deserve the best qualified instructor possible. The demands of an increasingly global society make that all too apparent.

Our plea is that we do not take steps that undermine professional development at this critical moment in time. Bill 22, we fear, does just that.

Intermountain Teachers' Association  
Professional Development Committee

Alvin Funk (Chairperson), Grandview School  
Diane Stirling, Grandview School  
Shelley Tucker, Grandview School  
Randy Langstaff, Roblin Elementary School  
Don Bedford, Gilbert Plains Collegiate  
Linda Ballantyne, Gilbert Plains Elementary School

\* \* \*

I am a teacher in my 31st year of teaching. Over these 31 years, I believe I have given dedicated professional service to the education of hundreds of rural Manitoba students as well as to my profession. It is, therefore, with complete dismay that I find myself and my colleagues confronted with a thoroughly regressive and unjustified attack on our ability to pursue our profession on a level

that our students need and deserve. Beyond that, I find myself thanked by legislation giving my employer the unilateral right to violate our collective agreement. I am, to understate the case, deeply affronted, appalled and more than a little disaffected.

### **The Throne Speech**

In the throne speech, the government said: My government realizes that Education and Training are the keys that unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity. To this end my government will chart a course to equip Manitobans with the knowledge and skills they require to meet the challenges of a new century.

These are noble words but, unfortunately, subsequent actions by the government have rendered them totally hollow. The problem is that the message is right, but it is apparently nothing more than words. Given a pattern of inadequate funding leading to unequal educational opportunities in the province, this was a message that required appropriate fiscal support to give it substance. Instead, we have the opposite.

### **Bill 22**

Bill 22 is essentially a travesty. It is a corruption of long-held principles of collective bargaining, and it has significant implications with respect to the delivery of education services, whose need is recognized by Mr. Filmon in the throne speech.

#### **1. Administration Days**

Schools have administration days for a purpose. A wide variety of documentation, much of it demanded by the Department of Education, must be done. Parent-teacher days are included in these days. Organizing for a change in semester is done on these days. These tasks must all be done, yet the time to do them is arbitrarily and capriciously done away with. Will poorly delivered parent-teacher interviews—try them after a tiring day at school—not affect students? Will a less well-organized semester not affect students?

#### **2. Professional Development Days**

Any cut in professional development days will have an intermediate- and long-range effect on students. I would certainly not pretend that all professional development days are used to the fullest advantage, but that hardly justifies arbitrarily removing all of them (10 out of a possible 11 days).

Professional development is essential to adjust to the changing and increasing demands of the public school system. New programs and new techniques are required, but they require time to do them properly. Schools must have time to adjust their philosophy to changing circumstances. Teachers need to be refreshed professionally, intellectually and personally. All these things have a direct bearing on the well-being of our students. It would be nice to have the luxury of dreaming that cutting professional development days will have no effect on students as well as teachers.

In rural areas, where we are often the only person in a school offering a particular program, professional development days allow us to meet with our colleagues. Now that will be denied. Moreover, being in a rural area often means that we do not have the support of our subject area groups, and with funding cutbacks, little or no support from the department consultants (if there are any left). Cutting back professional development days will not hurt students? Indeed!

With very few exceptions, I have attended every SAG conference in Winnipeg to seek professional development in all the ways I identified previously. Like most other teachers, I have done so at my own cost. This year, if I lose a day's pay, it means I will not be able to go. The normal cost of about \$200 will suddenly become more like \$400. This is too much to expect me and others to bear.

My school board is investing a large sum of money in computer technology, presumably to benefit the students of our division. If, as seems probable, teachers are denied the opportunity to learn how to use this technology, it will essentially sit there and look impressive. In any event, without adequate training, it will be, for a long time, a thoroughly inefficient investment. Does this kind of reasoning really suggest a "saving"? More probably, it is a new way of squandering precious funds while reaping some sort of political profit from appearing to be doing something. In a time of scarce resources, this penny wise and pound foolish approach is beyond comprehension. This is "unlocking a world of opportunity"?

### **Conclusion**

Bill 22 corrupts the collective bargaining process and does nothing to "save" the province any money. It is clearly unjust and immoral.

The reduced workweek program is based on the most far-fetched premise that professional development and administrative days are essentially do-nothing days for teachers and that cutting them will not have any effect on students. Perhaps those responsible believe that teachers will volunteer their time to compensate for the fewer days. I doubt it, but even if it were true, teachers already at the limit of their ability to function effectively will not be able to do so effectively.

Would it not be nice if those precious words in the throne speech really meant something?

Respectfully submitted,

Boris Bugera, Teacher  
Roblin, Manitoba

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### **Goose Lake High Brief to the Legislative Committee on Bill 22**

My government realizes that Education and training are the keys that unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity. To this end my government will chart a course to equip Manitobans with the knowledge and skills they require to meet the challenges of a new century. The Throne speech

From the report of the Panel on Education Legislation Reform:

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

##### **EQUITY**

Education legislation must be designed to ensure fairness and to provide the best learning opportunities for all Manitobans regardless of background or geographic location.

##### **Goals of Education**

b) To provide equitable opportunities for all Manitobans to obtain quality education and training programs to meet lifelong needs;

##### **Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers**

69. That teachers be required to upgrade their professional competence continuously.

These are the words that were to provide a beginning to a new era in education for the students of Manitoba. Words showing insight and vision for the rapidly changing future, now rendered hollow by Bill 22 and funding reductions.

### **The Reduced Workweek Program**

The reduced workweek program, as it applies to schools, allows school boards to eliminate up to 10 nonteaching days from the school year in order to effect wage rollbacks. This flies entirely in the face of Premier Filmon's words in the Throne speech and the recommendation of the reform panel that teachers must upgrade their professional competence continually. Elimination of up to 10 days reserved for administration and professional development suggests that the task reserved for those days are of little consequence or that they should be done on a voluntary basis out of a sense of charity or professional obligation to the well-being of our students.

### **Administration Days**

Administration days are essential to allow a school to function effectively. These are not days for idling away time. Administration days are used to organize in a school system so that it can best serve the needs of students. Parent-teacher conferences are held on administration days. Certainly, these conferences can be held in the evening, but their effectiveness is necessarily diminished by virtue of the fact that the teachers' energy is inevitably sapped after a "normal day" in the classroom. These are days when a variety of documentation, much of it required by the department, must be done. These are often days when school staff review the operation and vision of their school. All of these are essential to meet the demands of the present as well as to prepare for the circumstances of the future. Cutting these days will mean a diminished capacity to serve the needs of students.

### **Professional Development Days**

Professional development has many dimensions to it, some of which can best be delivered by providing professional development days. Professional development provides a continuing source of renewal, professional, intellectual, and personal. Much of this is done at some personal sacrifice—sometimes considerable—and cost. While it is true that not all professional development days are fruitful and that there are other ways of delivering professional development, it is most certainly true that some professional development can best be delivered in a manner requiring days away from the classroom. The need for professional development, unfortunately, appears

to have been trampled in the rush by school boards to effect a wage rollback encouraged and legitimized by Bill 22.

Teachers in rural Manitoba are most often isolated professionally. Very often there is only one person teaching a particular program in a given school. Professional development days allow for a cost-effective way for all teachers to come into contact with their colleagues from other schools. Likewise, rural teachers are unable to take advantage of contact with their colleagues through subject area groups. As often as not, their sole contact with their subject areas groups is at the annual co-ordinated conferences held in October. Most teachers have been prepared to accept the personal financial burden of attending on a regular basis. With salary reductions tied to professional development cutbacks, it will mean the cost for rural teachers will simply become too onerous to continue and a valuable resource will be lost. The shortsightedness involved in cutting professional development days as a means of achieving a cost saving is not only stunning, it is regressive and shamefully counterproductive.

Our school, as are many schools throughout the province, is just now beginning to move rapidly into the era of computer technology. New materials and new technology with which most teachers are unfamiliar are being introduced. Regrettably, they will not be used effectively if teachers are denied the opportunity to be adequately trained in their use. To place the burden of this training on a voluntary approach is unreasonable and inappropriate. The net result will be that school authorities will feel good about providing the technology, but it will sit there primarily as a symbolic gesture. One must wonder what kind of a saving this represents to the education system. As for the "keys that unlock a world of opportunity," apparently someone changed the lock and our teachers and students still will not be able to enter.

### **Wage Rollbacks**

The principal object of Bill 22 appears to be to sanction and enable a wage rollback by school boards. This is to be done through a gross violation of the principle of collective bargaining. Given the pattern of negotiations through the years, it is not surprising that school boards grabbed the opportunity to achieve what they could not through collective bargaining, that is, a wage freeze or a rollback. The 30 days for "consultations" are a

meaningless charade because the employer can do, in the end, whatever he pleases. The essence of collective bargaining is the semblance of some form of equality; Bill 22 totally corrupts it.

The inference appears to be that teachers are a privileged and overpaid lot who are well able to make financial sacrifices beyond those required by others. The truth is that, over the last decade, teachers' contracts have rarely met or exceeded increases in the cost of living. For the last decade, teachers have experienced a decrease in their real wages, although their nominal income has increased.

There is already a wide difference in teachers' salaries across the province. Bill 22 will simply make it worse, since some teachers will face no wage rollback at all while others may face a wage rollback of more than 5 percent. Disparities which already exist will potentially become enormous by the end of the workweek reduction program.

The government claims that its goal is to have everyone share equally in helping with its deficit crisis. Bill 22 is not an equal sharing of the financial burden because it asks public sector employees to assume a far greater burden than others. While this may be politically expedient, it is far from being fair or just.

### **Conclusion**

If the government is truly interested in a fair and just sharing of the fiscal burden, it will explore other alternatives. If it is truly interested in "the keys that unlock a world of opportunity," it will certainly reconsider its workweek reduction program, which will undermine the ability of teachers to acquire the skills necessary to providing education for the 21st Century.

Respectfully submitted,

The Teachers of Goose Lake High  
Roblin, Manitoba

\* \* \*

Bill 22 will be a serious blow to education in Manitoba, particularly rural Manitoba.

In the past few years, great concern for the quality of education in Manitoba and Canada has been expressed by the public in the media. While our provincial government has expressed commitment in the past to a quality education for Manitobans, your actual response is to cut

teachers' professional development days with Bill 22.

We as teachers are reminded at in-services, that we were able to have this year, that we are now in a technological age, "The Information Age." We need to embrace and use these new technologies in our classrooms to prepare our students for life in the 21st Century. This is just one important area that teachers need to address at professional development days.

So, while we as a society enter a new age of technology, Bill 22 will take education in Manitoba back to a darker age at the beginning of this century when there was greater inequality in the standards of education between urban and rural schools. Differences existed then between facilities, equipment and programs available to students, and wages and working conditions were much better for teachers in urban schools.

I believe that Bill 22 would encourage the development of similar conditions in Manitoba today. Through media reports, we have heard of a number of large Winnipeg school divisions that have expressed their commitment to honour collective agreements signed with their teachers' associations and to continue with a full slate of professional development days, while quite a number of rural divisions have expressed interest in cutting professional development days and teachers' wages.

If this situation were allowed to develop with the passing of Bill 22, there would develop two levels of education—a higher level for those students fortunate enough to attend school in a division where the importance of professional development and active collective bargaining are recognized and therefore a quality education is better ensured, and a lower level for those students unfortunate enough to attend school in divisions where professional development is not important, collective agreements are not honoured and saving a dollar is more important than a quality education.

The government of Manitoba has the responsibility to ensure a quality education for all Manitoba students regardless of where they live. Bill 22 would set up a situation in this province where there could be various levels in education standards and working conditions for teachers. Bill 22 should be stopped.

Barb Grexton  
Teacher, Grandview School  
Grandview, Manitoba

\* \* \*

Bill 22 Committee:

We, the staff of Rorketon School have many concerns about Bill 22:

Administrative Days: If we are to lose these days:

When will student registration occur and where will we get the time to organize them into classes? As they register?

Many organizational tasks are required at the beginning of the year, change of semester and end of the year.

If teachers are in class full time with few if any spare periods, when are exams to be marked?

Many parents do not have the opportunity to attend parent-teacher interviews in the evenings and many schools hold them during school time. With no days allowed, how do we communicate with the parents?

Student placement, student awards and the like take much valuable student time, but no days will be available to do this.

Graduations and other special events take much time in planning. Teachers have lessons to prepare in the evenings and do not have a lot of time to attend evening meetings to plan special events.

Professional Development Days:

Continued in-servicing on co-operative learning and style of learning and other new methodology courses will no longer be carried on.

Courses are constantly changing (new curriculum) and teachers will not be able to be in-serviced to prepare for these courses (new high school courses, business education and computer courses).

Keeping up to date and meeting with other teachers that teach the same course, especially in the rural and northern areas.

How can a school staff plan a school philosophy or a vision or mission statement?

How do teachers keep abreast of evaluation methods?

How can teachers be taught to teach special needs students that are presently being integrated into regular classrooms?

Any of the adverse factors that will affect teachers will be a loss to the students in their classrooms. It will be the children that will suffer the most if teachers are not allowed to keep up to date with new courses, curricula and methodology.

Passing this bill will be adversely affecting the future of Manitoba's young people for many more than two years (the time length of the bill).

Rorketon School Staff

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Bill 22 Committee:

I am deeply disturbed by the possible changes Bill 22 will cause to the school year.

Professional development in this rapidly changing world is of utmost importance if we are going to adequately prepare our students for the future.

Eliminating professional development days during the school year will be detrimental in a number of ways. First of all, PD days will be held during the summer months. Spending a couple of days AFTER one has recuperated from the last school year is acceptable. HOWEVER, we also need PD days DURING the school year to give us ideas with our present teaching load and to rejuvenate us. Each group of students presents different challenges and ongoing in-service helps us meet those challenges.

If the school is not closed for these days, this necessitates hiring a substitute teacher. This is not an ideal solution, as often students do not treat subs as "real" teachers; continuity and productive learning can be lost. I have been out of my classroom four days this month; as a parent I know I become concerned if my child's classroom teacher is "absent" too often.

In addition, the question of fairness must be addressed. While other occupations are losing a number of days, it must be noted that civil servants, Hydro and MTS employees and others do not have their salaries based on 197 days and thus the financial loss is not as great.

I sincerely hope you consider this matter seriously.

Thank you,

Katherine Bellemare  
Teacher, Dauphin Regional  
Comprehensive Secondary School  
Dauphin, Manitoba

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### **Gilbert Plains Collegiate Brief to the Legislative Committee on Bill 22**

My government realizes that education and training are the keys that unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity. To this end my government will chart a course to equip Manitobans with the knowledge and skills they require to meet the challenges of a new century.  
The Throne speech

From the report of the Panel on Education Legislation Reform:

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **EQUITY**

Education legislation must be designed to ensure fairness and to provide the best learning opportunities for all Manitobans regardless of background or geographic location.

#### **Goals of Education**

b) To provide equitable opportunities for all Manitobans to obtain quality education and training programs to meet lifelong needs;

#### **Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers**

69. That teachers be required to upgrade their professional competence continuously.

These are the words that were to provide a beginning to a new era in education for the students of Manitoba. Words showing insight and vision for the rapidly changing future, now rendered hollow by Bill 22 and funding reductions.

#### **The Reduced Workweek Program**

The reduced workweek program, as it applies to schools, allows school boards to eliminate up to 10 nonteaching days from the school year in order to effect wage rollbacks. This flies entirely in the face of Premier Filmon's words in the Throne speech and the recommendation of the reform panel that teachers must upgrade their professional competence continually. Elimination of up to 10 days reserved for administration and professional development suggests that the task reserved for those days are of little consequence or that they should be done on a voluntary basis out of a sense

of charity or professional obligation to the well-being of our students.

### **Administration Days**

Administration days are essential to allow a school to function effectively. These are not days for idling away time. Administration days are used to organize in a school system so that it can best serve the needs of students. Parent-teacher conferences are held on administration days. Certainly, these conferences can be held in the evening, but their effectiveness is necessarily diminished by virtue of the fact that the teachers' energy is inevitably sapped after a "normal day" in the classroom. These are days when a variety of documentation, much of it required by the department, must be done. These are often days when school staff review the operation and vision of their school. All of these are essential to meet the demands of the present as well as to prepare for the circumstances of the future. Cutting these days will mean a diminished capacity to serve the needs of students.

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annual co-ordinated conferences held in October. Most teachers have been prepared to accept the personal financial burden of attending on a regular basis. With salary reductions tied to professional development cutbacks, it will mean the cost for rural teachers will simply become too onerous to continue and a valuable resource will be lost. The shortsightedness involved in cutting professional development days as a means of achieving a cost saving is not only stunning, it is regressive and shamefully counterproductive.

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The inference appears to be that teachers are a privileged and overpaid lot who are well able to make financial sacrifices beyond those required by others. The truth is that, over the last decade, teachers' contracts have rarely met or exceeded increases in the cost of living. For the last decade, teachers have experienced a decrease in their real wages, although their nominal income has increased.

There is already a wide difference in teachers' salaries across the province. Bill 22 will simply make it worse, since some teachers will face no wage rollback at all while others may face a wage rollback of more than 5 percent. Disparities which already exist will potentially become enormous by the end of the workweek reduction program.

The government claims that its goal is to have everyone share equally in helping with its deficit crisis. Bill 22 is not an equal sharing of the financial burden because it asks public sector employees to assume a far greater burden than others. While this may be politically expedient, it is far from being fair or just.

### Conclusion

If the government is truly interested in a fair and just sharing of the fiscal burden, it will explore other alternatives. If it is truly interested in "the keys that unlock a world of opportunity," it will certainly reconsider its workweek reduction program, which will undermine the ability of teachers to acquire the skills necessary to providing education for the 21st Century.

Respectfully submitted,

Staff of Gilbert Plains Collegiate

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Dear Sirs:

The enclosed brief has been prepared by the staff of Reston Collegiate and represents their sentiments as to the proposed legislation - Bill 22.

Yours truly,

A.V. Walker

Brief to Manitoba Legislature

Re: Bill 22

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned, being teachers at the Reston Collegiate Institute in Reston, Manitoba, respectfully request that the committee studying Bill 22 accept the following brief for information in their deliberations. We further urge that information contained herein be used to reject certain aspects of the bill, or at the very least, amend the said legislation.

As teachers, we are concerned about the forced closure of schools that is permitted under the terms of Bill 22. The bill states that such closures are "unpaid leave;" this is a mere camouflage for a

government-sponsored lockout of teachers who want to go to school and do the work we are expected, even required to do.

The days to be taken are "in-service and administration days." Perhaps the honourable members are unaware of the use to which such days are put. At Reston Collegiate, in-service days are used for the in-house development of long- and short-term educational goals for the school; for developing strategies for the implementation of the new high school curricula and considering the implications thereof vis à vis timetabling, student course selection, et cetera; and for developing strategies and methodologies to overcome deficiencies indicated by provincial testing-evaluation at the Senior 1-4 levels. It is understood that such planning and development are necessary. But when does the government suggest this activity take place?

Administration days are used for the purposes of marking examinations, staff conferring about student development, preparing reports on students and for parent-teacher interviews. Again, we ask, from where does the time for these duties come?

The committee should also consider that teachers are being unfairly singled out. They have no means of making up lost income, as they are effectively locked out of their place of employment. Government workers, on the other hand, may be called in to make up work left incomplete by enforced closure and be paid at a higher rate if the day of recall is on the weekend. Witness the recent MPIC fiasco where work that could have been done on the day the office was forced to close—at the regular rate of pay—was in fact done the next day, a Saturday, at time and a half. So much for cost-saving. I'm sure there are many teachers in this province who would appreciate the chance for time-and-a-half pay for school work done outside regular "office" hours.

Of equal concern to the staff at RCI is the piecemeal implementation of the provisions of Bill 2: School divisions may or may not implement as their trustees see fit and then often with little regard to the impact upon the students, whose best interests they are elected to serve. Such an uneven application of Bill 22 will inevitably lead to inequities between school divisions. School divisions with a large tax base will require little or no implementation of Bill 22, whereas smaller rural



divisions may have to implement to the limits permitted by the bill, further discriminating against students who are already disadvantaged by living outside Winnipeg and all its resources. Bill 22 will therefore further emphasize the discrepancies that exist between the rural students with little access to resources and rural teachers who are denied professional development time, and the city students and teachers, in terms of program quality and upgrading of courses and materials.

The staff of RCI understands that the minister and the other members of the Manitoba cabinet were placed in their respective offices to make constructive decisions on behalf of all the people of Manitoba, including students and teachers. The steps proposed by the minister in Bill 22 are an abnegation of her responsibilities. A more equitable solution would have been for the minister to propose a cut of a certain number of days, if indeed such a cut is warranted, equitably upon all school divisions. Any excuse the minister may offer for not taking the course of action proposed above can be laid on the sad state of education funding methods, which are hopelessly outmoded, a fact long recognized but not addressed by our provincial politicians.

The State of Michigan is, however, proposing a change to its own education funding methods. This is not, as appears at first sight, a radical change, but rather a recognition of needed adjustments to an antiquated educational funding structure that is mirrored here in Manitoba. Perhaps Manitoba should be addressing education funding in a similar manner. Removing education funding from locally levied taxes would both improve the economic equality within education in Manitoba and at the same time create the opportunity to move toward larger, regional administrative structures, resulting in cost efficiencies that would effectively make additional funds available for real education programming, instead of paying for self-perpetuating minibureaucracies.

The staff of RCE also view with concern the clauses abrogating collective bargaining and contract rights while at the same time granting autocratic lockout provisions to the school boards. These clauses effectively tip the negotiation process so as to unfairly advantage the employer and permit school boards to balance their budgets at the expense of teachers. School boards are in

fact levying an additional tax on teachers in order to reduce the tax burden on others. By limiting a school board's right to levy taxes at the local level and giving boards the right to tax their employees, Bill 22 must be seen as a regressive tax measure affecting only a small group within the total population. This must surely be considered discriminatory, as Bill 22 also removes virtually all means of redress on the part of teachers.

To compound the injury, the provisions of Bill 22 have an impact on teachers far beyond the planned life of this bill. Teachers' pensions as far as 20 years into the future will be directly affected by the bill. By allowing boards to remove working days from their teachers, while keeping the school year the same provincially, teachers may be denied a full year's pensionable service for each year of the effect of Bill 22. This committee should consider whether a school year thus reduced is a fraction of a year for pension purposes or whether in fact it is a whole year. After all, the teachers will still be required to do the same amount of work in that period.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate our request that you seriously consider rejecting or amending aspects of the proposed legislation, for the various reasons cited.

Respectfully submitted by the staff of Reston Collegiate Institute: Cory L. Nevill, Diane Burke, Jocelyn C. Winkless, B. Kemkaren, Susan Stewart, D. Adams, Jerome Brockman, Philip B. Winkless, A.V. Walker, M. Jane Hunter, Michael Bertram, Dianne McFadzean, Lesia Wilson

\* \* \*

Dear Committee Members:

I am appalled at this government's attitude towards education as expressed in Bill 22. It seems deliberately designed to impoverish our future and provoke reluctant militancy in teachers and disharmony in the community.

Professional development days are essential to the ability of the classroom teachers and specialists to best support the overwhelming range and volume of student needs in today's classrooms.

Professional development days for me are days to define, share and explore solutions to new problems and to be more effective with "old" problems.

Professional development days allow me to keep up to date and meet the changing needs of programs, methodologies, curriculum and students.

Last week I saw another pair of concerned parents. Their upper grade child, in spite of much work and many techniques over the years, was still having difficulty remembering basic spelling words and maths facts. Finally, a successful strategy! This new strategy was one I learned during a professional development day this year and had tried with success back at school. On another professional development day I learned a new reading comprehension strategy that is also helping students who could not seem to make much progress before. Without access to these professional development sessions, I may never have learned about these new methods.

I am not new to the teaching profession. I have over six years of university and 23 years of teaching experience and consider myself to be knowledgeable and effective. However, there are as many different ways to learn as there are learners. There are patterns that apply, but each individual is unique. I find that my basic teacher training must be added to constantly to be successful with the expectations of success for all children in today's classrooms.

When I "signed on" I didn't know the day would come when I would have to provide services for physically, emotionally and behaviourally challenging students in my classroom. Boy, did I have a lot to learn as my classrooms became social service centres as well as educational centres. Professional development days have provided part of that critical knowledge. Without constant training, I could not keep up attempts to meet all these challenges.

Professional development days are important to me to continue to learn to be the best teacher I can be so that children in my classrooms can be the best citizens they can be.

I sincerely hope that this government will wake up to the need to make massive investments in our future as opposed to massive cuts for a short-term fix which guarantees long-term economic stagnation in that our future citizens will not be skilled or competitive in the world markets.

Carole Free  
Resource Teacher, St. George School  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

\* \* \*

To: Members of Bill 22 Committee

### IS IT FAIR?

Is it fair:

for Manitoba's students to have teachers who are less well-trained due to cuts in professional development days;

for Manitoba's students to lack new methods and initiatives due to their teachers having less opportunities to learn about them;

for Manitoba's teachers to be asked to take on exceedingly more challenges (violence, special needs students, new methodology, curriculum, technology, et cetera) without time (professional development days) to train for those challenges;

for Manitoba's parents to lose valuable time spent with teachers for interview and evaluation of their children;

for teachers in some school divisions to lose few or no professional development days while others lose up to 10 days, even though they teach the same curriculum and students in the same province;

for teachers who already take on many hours of their own professional development to be asked to provide for more professional development on their own time for less remuneration rather than school divisions providing same;

for Manitoba's teachers to be asked to take on parent-teacher interviews, grading papers, planning, staff meetings, consultations, et cetera, over and above the instructional day, but be given no time (loss of professional development days) to do it;

for Manitoba's government and local school boards to circumvent duly negotiated collective bargaining agreements; and

for the Manitoba government to give school boards the method and the authority to unilaterally cut teachers' wages, even when it can be proven this is unnecessary in some school divisions?

No, it is not fair. Bill 22 does not cut fairly, it cuts for the sake of cuts. There was no master plan in place; no consequences considered.

Bill 22 is regressive. It takes teachers' bargaining back to the 1940s (or before). It also places in jeopardy our students' futures. Are we, as Manitobans, content to allow our students to lose their competitive edge?

Therefore, I strongly urge the committee to reject Bill 22.

"If you think education is expensive, try ignorance."

Robert A. Rondeau  
Beausejour, Manitoba

\* \* \*

To: The Bill 22 Committee:

I am writing to you on behalf of the teachers of the White Horse Plain Teachers' Association in order to protest the government's proposed Bill 22. Bill 22 can only be seen as a backward step, both in terms of employee-employer relations and in terms of education.

In the past several years the Teachers' Association and the Board of Trustees of White Horse Plain have been on relatively good terms and have successfully negotiated collective agreements agreeable to both parties. They have enjoyed a relatively good working relationship and have viewed each other as partners in the education of the student in our division. The introduction of Bill 22 has upset that relationship and put the Board of Trustees into the position of dictators rather than partners and has overridden the collective agreement which was duly agreed to by both parties.

This can only be seen as unwarranted interference by the government in an employee-employer relationship and represents a definite step backward in labour relations. For several years now the government has pursued a policy of reducing education funding. We have been repeatedly told that we must "tighten our belts" and "do more with less." In White Horse Plain the ensuing cuts have resulted in greater class sizes, greater course loads, increased supervision, loss of support staff and the reduction or complete loss of preparation time.

Education does not take place in a vacuum and is certainly not restricted to a teacher walking into a classroom and delivering a lesson. For every lesson that is taught there are varying degrees of preparation and follow up. Preparation may

include lesson planning, research, reading, preparation of notes, work sheets or tests, running off or laminating of materials, gathering or arranging of physical materials, arranging outings or activities, or arranging visits by resource persons.

Follow-up to lessons may include gathering up and storage of materials, marking of student work, writing up and filing of observations made during the lesson, evaluation of student achievement, reporting of student achievement and evaluation of the effectiveness of the lesson, which leads into the preparation for the next lesson.

While obviously not every lesson includes all of these elements, every lesson does include some preparation and follow-up. The situation in our school division with regard to support staff and preparation time, particularly in the elementary schools, leaves the teachers in the position of having to do all of their preparation and follow-up outside of school hours on their own time. As class sizes and course loads increase so do teachers' out-of-school workloads.

It may be argued that all of the above is part of being a teacher and that if teachers do not like it they can seek other employment. That may be true to some degree, but it should also serve to point out that teachers do much of their work outside of the classroom and outside of class hours and should not be considered to be working only on those days and at those times when they are standing in a classroom full of students.

This brings us to Bill 22 and its provision for the reduction of administration-professional development days by up to eight days. The White Horse Plain board of trustees is proposing a reduction of five days, and these are five days that effective education cannot afford to lose. No more than education can occur in a vacuum can teachers teach effectively in isolation. Just as each lesson requires preparation and follow-up to be effective, so does each school and division require planning and follow-up on a school or division-wide basis in order to be effective. The loss of administration days makes it very difficult to do any effective school or division planning or follow-up and leaves each teacher teaching in isolation.

We are reminded more and more often of the importance of effective evaluation and the importance of reporting to parents and students on

the students' progress. We are urged in elementary schools to use observation techniques and anecdotal reporting, as these methods allow a more in-depth analysis and understanding of a child's progress. But these are time-consuming processes, and the teacher whose class size has increased from 20 to 30 due to staff cuts and whose in- and out-of-school workload has thus increased by 50 percent is faced with an overwhelming task. Previously, in recognition of the magnitude of this task and in recognition of the fact that she was working, and working hard, an administration day was allotted to assist in the completion of this task. Now the government in its wisdom has decreed that teachers are not working on these days and that they can be cut in a cost-saving effort.

Similarly we are urged to include parents in their children's education and to consult with them and report as fully as possible on their children's progress. But the days set aside for this purpose have also been deemed to be nonworking and nonessential days. The loss of professional development days is equally insupportable. It is of vital importance that teachers have the opportunity to expand their professional horizons through sharing sessions and professional development activities. It is particularly important in small rural schools and divisions that teachers be given an opportunity to meet and share with other teachers teaching similar grades or subjects. Teachers cannot develop effectively in isolation.

We are living in a world of constant change and are inundated with new programs and ever changing curricula. It is stressed repeatedly that thorough inservicing is essential to the successful implementation of a new curriculum. The new curricula are developed and distributed by the government, and yet that same government has decreed as nonessential the days on which teachers could have been in-serviced on these same curricula. It would seem that the one hand of government does not know or care what the other hand is doing. Money seems to be the only issue of importance and the effectiveness or quality of education is not even considered.

It is ludicrous to maintain, as the government is attempting to do, that these cuts will not affect students as they only involve teachers' "nonworking" days. Everything that affects teachers affects students in terms of the quality and

effectiveness of the education that teachers can deliver.

It is time for the government to take off their dollar sign blinders and recognize the true effects of these lost days and the possible long-term consequences.

We urge you to reconsider the passage of Bill 22 as being detrimental to established employee-employer relations, and even more importantly as being detrimental to education.

We thank you for your attention to our concerns.

V. Stephenson, President  
White Horse Plain Teachers' Association

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To Whom This May Concern:

As a teacher, employed by the Brandon School Division No. 40, I can no longer sit quietly aside while my professional integrity is being squandered. Bill 22 is a regressive piece of legislation that will do more harm to society than good.

I am opposed to the loss of up to 10 in-service days, including professional development and administrative days, as unpaid leave. This will initiate an attitude of indifference to develop that will directly affect the important and necessary feelings of self-worth required by any teacher. Organizational activities will also suffer from this change whereby many activities will either be performed haphazardly or cancelled completely.

More importantly I am opposed to the implications of Bill 22 itself. Under present legislation it takes away our collective bargaining rights allowing the employer total authority. If education is moving towards complete federal authority whereby schools will become more autonomous, this implication can and will have serious side effects. Bill 22, which will permit the employer unilaterally to impose bargainable conditions, is a step backward and must be opposed on principle.

Unfortunately, I am unable to appear before you in person to bring forth these important concerns. I ask only that you listen to us, the people on the front line, and support our desire for excellence by re-examining Bill 22 and call for its abolition.

Yours truly,

Sharon Woodman  
Teacher, Brandon School Division No. 40  
Brandon, Manitoba

\* \* \*

Bill 22 is creating a two-tier system in Manitoba. On the one hand, as the chart illustrates, teachers in Agassiz will be paid significantly less than teachers in many other divisions.

On the other hand, students in Agassiz suffer because the board has removed money for all sports trips and field trips. Students in Brandon and Winnipeg do not have to travel to find opposition. Therefore, their games can continue while Agassiz children have nothing.

#### **Class 4 teachers at maximum 1993**

All divisions taking zero days, except Agassiz is taking eight.

		Agassiz	Difference
		(After deductions)	
Pine Falls	49,836	45,118	4,718
St. Vital	48,945	45,118	3,827
Brandon	48,303	45,118	3,185
Rolling River	47,955	45,118	2,837
Duck Mountain	47,803	45,118	2,685

R. Reid  
Lac du Bonnet Senior School

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Memorandum to: The Standing Committee on Economic Development

Subject: Bill 22

This statement on Bill 22 reflects the concerns raised about Bill 22 by the 135 members of MGEU Local 2003 at Brandon University.

At the outset, I would say that I find it ironic to be making this submission to a Progressive Conservative government in Manitoba at the very time the Progressive Conservative opposition in Ontario is attacking the NDP government for introducing legislation that is almost identical to Bill 22 (although it is evident that the PCs in Ontario, like their counterparts in Manitoba, do not understand the nature of "collective bargaining rights.")

Bill 22 is a particularly repugnant piece of legislation which summarily strips public sector workers of their collective bargaining rights and

gives employers the power to unilaterally compel employees to accept reductions in their wages.

At Brandon University, the bill has resulted in a significant deterioration in the collective bargaining relationships between campus unions and the employer.

In the case of my own local, our collective agreement expired March 31, 1993. We started bargaining on a new agreement prior to the expiry date, i.e., in March 1993. The employer stalled negotiations in anticipation of the introduction of Bill 22, i.e., in anticipation of legislation which would give it the power to unilaterally force employees to take days off without pay.

As well, the employer used the "climate" created by the government's actions which, in effect, declared open season on the rights of public sector workers, to introduce a host of proposals in collective bargaining which would eliminate many of the rights and benefits that members have fought for and paid for since we first gained bargaining rights.

The other unions on campus are faced with similar demands from the employers, demands for the elimination of benefits, and demands for changes in wording which would result in a drastic reduction of the opportunities for university employees to participate in decision-making processes on campus.

This situation has had a number of effects, but two in particular stand out. First, bargaining relationships which were previously based on co-operation and mutual respect have become acrimonious and bitter. We have not made any progress at all in bargaining and have applied for conciliation.

We are not optimistic that conciliation will do much to advance the process. The two locals of the IUOE on campus have already used the services of a conciliator. However, the employer all but refused to participate in the process. As a consequence, bargaining remains at an impasse.

Secondly, there has been a marked reduction in the morale of employees in my bargaining unit and in other bargaining units. The demoralization of unionized employees was further accentuated when the board of governors approved, in a closed, secret session, improvements in the terms and conditions of nonunion employees on campus.

Bill 22 is not even law yet, and already it has done great damage to employer-employee relations in the public sector. We believe the bill should be dropped, taken off the agenda and that employers should be instructed to bargain constructively with the employees to achieve a renewal of collective agreements.

As it reads, Bill 22 is enabling legislation. We understand that to mean that employers were not obligated to force their employees to take days off without pay. Yet we have heard that the Manitoba government "ordered" employers to avail themselves of the provisions of Bill 22.

At Brandon University, the employer has notified us that we will be obliged to take six days off without pay. No justification was offered in support of this action. Indeed, the members of one union were told that the employer is not obliged to show justification to demonstrate that such action is warranted.

Clearly, this kind of a situation flies in the face of values and traditions that have been established and maintained in Manitoba since the Second World War. But, of course, employers such as Brandon University are simply following the lead of the government, which itself provided no justification for the imposition of Bill 22, no evidence that this draconian measure would contribute to the achievement of important goals in Manitoba, no evidence that there were no alternatives which would produce the same amount of revenue for the public sector.

As I have already stated, the members of my local would urge that Bill 22 be scrapped. If, however, the government insists that this ill-conceived legislation must be implemented, we would urge that it be amended to: (I) make it effective on the date it is proclaimed rather than retroactive to April 1, 1993; (II) require employers that invoke Bill 22 to show justification for such action; and (III) inform employers that the bill does not absolve them of the obligation to negotiate in good faith with their employees on the renewal of collective agreements.

Jan Chaboyer, President  
MGEU Local 2003, Brandon University  
Brandon, Manitoba

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In the throne speech of November 26, the Lieutenant-Governor declared: " . . . My

government realizes that education and children are the keys that unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity."

Bill 22 contradicts that statement and makes it an untruth because Bill 22 negatively affects all aspects of education, especially impacting on students and their teachers not only today but far into the future.

That same throne speech statement will continue to haunt this government because its actions make a mockery of its own words. If "education and children . . . unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity," then this government has effectively discarded the keys by implementing, among other of its policies, Bill 22.

#### **A. Bill 22 and its effect on teachers:**

##### **1. Contract Negotiations**

Bill 22 puts an end to collective bargaining. The school board is given the power to unilaterally change whole sections of a collective agreement. The Agassiz School Division No. 13 board decided to reduce eight days of administration and professional development without consulting with the teachers or any of its employees.

##### **2. Pensions**

Employee pensions are affected by Bill 22. An eight-day reduction in professional development and administration time means an average 4 percent cut in gross salary. If a teacher is 20 years from retirement, the individual will have lost \$80,000.00. Compounded over the 20-year period, the loss is well in excess of \$150,000 in pensionable earnings. In addition, the teachers' pension plan is nowhere comparable to the plan the MLAs have provided for themselves, and the government's legislation of Bill 22 makes the teachers' plan even more inequitable.

##### **3. Years of Service**

An eight-day loss of administration and professional development time may mean that an employee would have to work 21 school years to obtain 20 years of pensionable service. (Eight days over each of 20 years equal one less year of pensionable service.)

##### **4. "Personal Leave"**

Bill 22 names the days of layoff "personal leave". In our contract, personal leave costs

the teacher substitute pay on the first day, and 1/240 of salary for each day thereafter. The Agassiz Board changed that clause unilaterally by demanding 1/197 for each of the eight days it has taken away from the teachers. This action is unfair and once again breaks the contracts between the board and the teachers, with the approval of the provincial government. The board, in collusion with the provincial government, has dictatorially removed collective bargaining from rights of teachers and other employees in this province. Our children are witnesses to this undemocratic action on behalf of elected officials. It would provide a good lesson for classroom study on how governments and school boards should not conduct themselves.

#### 5. Professional Development Days

Professional development days are essential to teachers and their students. Teachers gain insight into new and progressive educational ideas and keep abreast with current educational theory and, of course, the students benefit from these professional development days. The Department of Education is constantly changing curricula, introducing new philosophies of education, and teachers need PD time to comply with the department's directives. English programs, Math courses, History, Middle School Philosophy, Co-operative Learning, Skills for Independent Learning, and Special Needs are only a few of the innovations that teachers need to deal with. School boards who, with the encouragement of the provincial government, cut PD days obviously denigrate the value of those days, and it follows therefore that new programs and new ideas are not very important to teachers and students. This is totally illogical.

#### 6. Administration Days

The Agassiz School Board has determined that three of the days of "unpaid personal leave" will fall on September 1, 2 and 3 of the 1993 fall term. The schools will be closed on those days. School begins on September 7 for the students. When are the teachers to prepare for the first day of school? Teachers are in reality locked out. In previous years an administration day before school started was essential in planning for the first few weeks, for

filling in forms, for co-ordinating class, for distributing information, and for assisting new teachers. What does the school board expect from the teachers in this scenario? Is this particular administration day not a valuable day for teachers in preparing for a new school year? Our board, whose mandate is to provide local control and to foster an atmosphere allowing education to flourish, does not have a clue about what it is doing, and it is taking its cue from a provincial government that has no idea of the effect of Bill 22 on teachers and students!

The loss of other administration days causes problems with parent-teacher meetings, setting in-school and division-wide exams, school planning, marking of exams, and a wide range of other issues. How and when are teachers to deal with all these administrative issues?

The Agassiz Board has not informed the teachers on this question. The teachers are waiting for some sign of leadership from the Department of Education, the provincial government and the local board of trustees on the matter of professional development and administration days. The comment by the school board chairman indicates the quality of leadership and the vision of the local trustees: "If you guys think things are tough this year, just wait till next year!" With that kind of threat, how can teachers function effectively in their classrooms? Try to find the answer in Bill 22!

### B. Bill 22 and effects on students

#### 1. Inequality

Bill 22 provides an unequal quality of education. Agassiz has removed eight days of administration and professional development. Many divisions have not penalized their teachers and students by the loss of those days. Will students in Agassiz receive the same quality of education as those in Seven Oaks, for example, where there is no loss of professional development and administration days? Obviously, the students in Seven Oaks will receive a superior education. Is this what the Agassiz School Board wants? Is this what the provincial government wants? Bill 22 provides for this disparity, and our board has embraced this concept with what seems thoughtless

decisions. In fact, this board received Bill 22 and a reduction in education funding with little protest and seems willing to provide students in Agassiz with a second-class education compared to other school divisions.

## 2. Professional Development Days

Students in Agassiz will suffer because teachers will not be given the opportunity for professional development. Teachers are frustrated because the demands of the job are getting greater, the chance to improve methods and explore new ideas has been taken away and professional development made infinitely more difficult. But, since the board has removed professional development days, it is obvious to them that these days are of little value. Yet, the expectations remain! Teachers are expected to improve themselves and get better at their jobs! Where is the logic and common sense in all of this?

## 3. Administration Days

Students will be the losers because teachers will not have the time to perform all the tasks done during administration days in the past. When are teachers to do those tasks? Once again, expectations remain the same, yet the opportunity is taken away by the Agassiz School Board through Bill 22.

## 4. Class Size

In addition to losing eight professional development and administration days, the Agassiz School Board is laying off five teachers. Students will suffer because classes are getting larger, yet expectations remain the same. Teachers are still expected to deliver a quality education to a larger range of abilities and special needs, thanks to Bill 22 and provincial cuts in the Education budget.

## 5. Field and Sports Trips

The Agassiz School Board has deleted from its budget, because of provincial government

cuts, field and sports trips. Of course students will suffer. Yet, the board expects that such activities will continue to be carried on. Teachers are still expected to coach and parents and/or teachers are expected to drive the students to games. This is nearly impossible in rural areas where great distances exist between schools. Nor are similar amenities available to rural schools as the city schools regarding field trips.

## 6. Teacher Morale

In Agassiz, teachers are victims of the local board and the provincial government. Many feel that the board has undermined their ability to do a good job. They also feel frustrated and confused about the direction the levels of government are taking regarding education. On the one hand, education and training are valuable "keys" to prosperity, yet the actions and the attitudes taken by government and the public contradict that philosophy. If teachers are not given confidence and support and value in their role of educators, how can they be expected to function effectively? Bill 22 causes great concern to teachers, and it cannot help but reflect on the quality of education.

In summary, Bill 22 negatively affects teachers, students and education in general. Bill 22 is a deliberately planned and cultivated cancer growing on education, opportunity, economic growth and prosperity, and that cancer should be removed immediately.

The teachers in Agassiz School Division ask that the government not just pay lip service to the importance and value of education, but to show through positive action that it really believes that ". . . education and children are keys that unlock a world of opportunity and a future of economic growth and prosperity."

Agassiz Teachers' Association  
Agassiz School Division No. 13