

**Hon. Mr. Robichaud — March 22**

4) agrees that the government introduce with appropriate speed such legislation as may be required to establish in New Brunswick the language regime appropriate to an officially bilingual province, and in particular to introduce such measures in relation to education, the public service and the judicial system, and

5) recommends that the government cooperate and consult with other provincial governments and with the government of Canada to coordinate linguistic programs.

**Budget Debate**

**Hon. Mr. MELDRUM**, resuming the debate on the budget, spoke as follows:

**Mr. Speaker:**

Perhaps I have been associated with education and with educators for too long. Yesterday I caught myself giving the Financial Critic marks for his performance.

He received an A for endurance. He got an F for speed — too fast to be understood, but too slow to make his speech bearable in length. He was given an A for memory work — he remembered everything he has said in the past, and he repeated it all.

Sadly he failed again on content. There was, as usual, nothing in it. And, as usual, his arithmetic was bad.

There were several clergymen in the House yesterday while the Financial Critic spoke. After he was finished, I asked one how he liked the speech. He replied that it was wonderful. "It was like the peace and mercy of God." That seemed an unusual comparison, and I asked how he came to say that. "Why, very easily," he said, "It was like the peace of God, because it passeth all understanding, and, like His mercy, I thought it would have endured forever."

The Financial Critic has repeatedly proven that he can dive deeper into a subject, stay down longer and come up drier than anyone else in the House. There was nothing new in his speech, nothing that has not been answered or explained repeatedly, and, as usual, he spent his time crying

lack of information while repeating questions which have repeatedly been answered and quoting from material and figures supplied to him by the government. No one asks more questions, gets more detailed answers and gives less credit.

Mr. Speaker, in preparing a budget, the Minister of Finance could be excused if he were to remember Ogden Nash's "Hymn to the Thing that Makes the Wolf Go."

"O money, money, money,  
I'm not necessarily one  
of those who think thee  
holy.

But I often wonder how  
thou canst go out so  
fast when thou comes in  
so slowly."

We are at a time when all the world seems mad. Past wars and present high living, and the pound sterling, for centuries the currency of the world's commerce, is in terrible trouble. Past and present wars and the desire to have and share the good things of life combine to put the American dollar in jeopardy. When all the world has trouble, the Minister of Finance of a small province also has big troubles.

Our minister is to be complimented for a sound and reasonable budget in a most difficult year. As one of those who, in trying to meet the needs of the province, contributed greatly to his difficulty, it becomes my duty to answer to this House for the stewardship of my department for the past year and to set forth our hopes for this year and the years ahead.

Let me warn hon. members again, as the Minister of Finance did, that we are in for a period of difficult budgeting. We demand services. Someone must pay for them.

A rough projection for the next decade suggests that while this year school board budgets will total about \$53 million, in ten years the total cost could run to \$160 million. Those figures are frightening, or, if they are not, they should be. Yet they must be faced. Costs are going up and the needs are going up.

The Minister of Finance quoted an estimate that in ten years

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grants to universities might have to be up to \$100 million. Taxpayers may well ask, as the government does, and repeatedly, as the Minister of Finance does, "Where is the money to come from?" I don't know, and I don't think anyone knows, but some things are certain.

First, education is so important that the necessary funds must be found. Every responsible thinker since the beginning of recorded history has recognized the need for the maximum of education. That recognition continues to the present moment.

On other occasions I have quoted a report of the Economic Council of Canada which pointed out that Canadians get less formal education than Americans, that we are falling farther behind in this regard and that this seems to be an important reason for lower living standards and lower productivity in Canada.

An Atlantic Development Board study quotes some statistics on average family income in New Brunswick. They are not new, not unique. In fact, every study and every examination has repeatedly confirmed that income is in direct proportion to education. They say that in 1961 average family income in New Brunswick for those with elementary education only was \$3,462; for those with secondary education \$5,066, and for university graduates \$7,932.

If income is any guide to the contribution the person is making, then the university graduate is contributing more than twice as much in goods and services for his province than is the man with only a Grade 8 education.

It is no accident that education and industrialization were the priorities mentioned by the Minister of Finance. To compete with our neighbors we must produce more, and produce it efficiently. That will require trained workers, skilled managers, educated planners. Education must have priority. We must provide the facilities and will have to pay the cost. There is no doubt of the value. We must provide education in spite of the cost. That cost is a worthwhile investment from every point of view.

Secondly, though, while there is no doubt that we must spend the funds necessary, we cannot accept such figures readily. While facing the need to spend, and aware of the amounts we must invest, we must also guarantee that every dollar is spent wisely.

To ensure that is the duty of government and opposition. To ensure it is also the role of educational administrators in the Department of Education and in the school boards. We'll have to find the money, but we'll have to spend it with care. The knowledge of the probable amounts involved may well serve as a brake on careless spending.

It will not be easy to control expenses. On operating account, close to 85% of education costs go to pay salaries. There is little we can do to control that cost and there is no fat in the remaining 15%. From every person we must ask moderation in salary demands, and we hope that every person is prepared to give at least a full dollar of service for every dollar of pay. In fact, we expect that each is prepared to go more than the full mile, that each will give something extra, just a little more, to guarantee that we really can afford the investment.

School boards will have to expect much closer scrutiny of their expenses. Many boards are doing a careful, conscientious job in the control of expenses. We in the department will be trying to assist by showing where unnecessary expense can be eliminated, and by reminding school boards repeatedly that they too have a role to play in saving cost to the taxpayer as well as providing education to the children.

I think that school boards have so far found departmental officials fair in budget analysis. I trust they will continue to recognize that there is not an unlimited supply of money and we must repeatedly say no to some requests or we will not even have the money for the budgets we do approve.

Budget time is not a time for a fight between school boards and government, the one trying to get as much money as possible while the other tries to give away as

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little as it can, it is a time of joint effort to together find a way in which we can get the most education for the dollars we have.

What is true of operating budgets is equally true of construction costs.

We have asked architects to design schools at a cost of \$2,000 per pupil. They tell us that this figure is too low, and it may be. Nevertheless, we must insist that such a goal be kept constantly in mind. As I said on another occasion, we are not building monuments to architects or school boards or education officials, we are building tools for teachers who will teach our children. Brick and marble and glass may be fine and may be desirable, but the test is whether the children are dry and warm and the design makes teaching as efficient as possible.

As Minister of Education I may ask some school boards to accept a school consisting of something as simple and functional as a Quonset hut, with a hangar for a gymnasium. There is no reason why students could not learn as much in such facilities, and if it means that by cutting costs to the bone we can get three schools for the price of two, we will do so.

Over the next two years the prospect presented by the knowledge of the increasing cost is going to force everyone involved in education to become cost conscious.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, I am an optimist. I don't know where the extra money will come from, but I do know we must find it.

I recently picked up the budget for 1961-62, which provided for expenditures of \$102,463,176. The figure this year is \$322,047,299.

If the Minister of Finance had been told in 1961 that his budget would more than triple in seven years he would have felt it impossible. Whether or not you agree that it should have grown — and the Financial Critic, if I understand him, does not, although at one point he seemed to be approving Ontario's budget with its \$250-million deficit — the impossible growth has been achieved. It can, if it must, be achieved in the next ten.

On passing from this matter of probable growth, I cannot drop the matter without a reminder of the situation in education which we would be facing if the municipalities were still charged with that expenditure. It was not for nothing that they all asked for the province to take over the costs of education. For the local taxpayer the cost had already become too much. Having taken over, we cannot look back, nor can we shirk our responsibility to provide the best possible education at the lowest possible cost.

All that I have said, Mr. Speaker, dealt with cost, present and future. What, then, of the programs and functions of education during the past year and for the future?

It is perhaps worth noting that while we hear of strikes by teachers in other areas we have been able to meet the salary demands of teachers here and have signed a contract for 2½ years.

The negotiations were not easy. For the teachers' salary committee they must at times have seemed rather frustrating. They dragged through an election, through Christmas and the New Year period, through conferences, discussions, delays. We all faced a period of critical provincial, national and international financial difficulty. As in every negotiating period, we faced differences of interpretation of words, of ideas and even of figures.

Through it all the teachers were constructive in their approach. Even in the heat of negotiation there was less of caustic remarks among negotiators than appeared to develop in the minds of some who were under no pressure and should have been able to "keep their cool".

The settlement provides that during 1968 there will be no increase in the salary scale.

On January 1, 1969, the scale will increase by about 5%. For a student just out of Teachers' College this will mean an increase of starting salary from \$3,600 to \$3,900. For the very few who have Certificate VI — equivalent of three degrees — and 10 years' experience, the raise will be from \$10,300 to \$10,700.

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On July 1, 1969, a further 5% increase in the scale will bring those same two examples to \$4,075 and \$10,900 respectively.

I think that teachers are being well paid — not overpaid, but treated fairly. Certainly we cannot compare with individual cities in the richer areas, but we never could do that, and as a provincial average we need not be ashamed.

Each year there are reports of teacher shortages. Those shortages have been with us for generations. We will never have enough good teachers. Competition from industry, from centres of prosperity elsewhere, from the curiosity and need to travel which is built into us all, will always make good teachers an all too scarce commodity.

Within the limits of the perennial shortage of good teachers and the perennial shortage of money we can still take some satisfaction in the new salary scales. At the same time, for those inclined to say that teachers are overpaid, as some have said, that they got a salary increase last year, that they get two months off each year, etc., I would point out some facts.

On January 1, 1967, 82% of New Brunswick teachers received salary increases. That means that 18% did not receive any increase.

The increases were spread throughout the province. I have heard that they were mainly in the north of the province or in the rural areas. These generalizations are not accurate.

Comparing Saint John and Restigouche counties, for example, shows that in the former Saint John City 67% of teachers received increases, in Campbellton 63% did. Among those paid by the Saint John County School Finance Board 92% received increases, and in Restigouche 75%.

In only two divisions did every teacher receive an increase. Those two were in towns, not rural areas, and they were in the south of the province.

A few examples cannot tell the whole picture accurately, but these give a reasonable picture. Some, but not all teachers received increases last year. The next increase

will be January 1, 1969 — for any who were at the top of the experience scale and for the 18% who received no increase in 1967.

Throughout the negotiations there was a tendency for some outside the negotiations to take extreme positions. Some said teachers were not dedicated, had it pretty easy, didn't really care about the pupils, only the money. Others painted the glowing picture of the dear, dedicated teacher putting on the mittens and wiping the little noses of their beloved charges.

Both extremes are wrong. The teachers of New Brunswick on the whole are a group of professionals who do a good job for our children, and we owe them much.

The salary scale is intended to encourage teachers to achieve degree status. In the present scale the difference between a teacher starting with Certificate III and one with Certificate IV is \$1,000. After 10 years the difference is \$2,050 in favor of the degree teacher. On January 1, 1969 the difference will be \$1,100 at the start and \$2,150 after 10 years.

We want to provide more good teachers and to pay them better. Our teachers are doing a good job for us and for our children. We need not see them as idols, or infallible. We are free to question and challenge their positions from time to time. They are human, with human weaknesses, but they have some very great strengths. They are doing a good job for us.

If negotiations are successfully completed, the public can thank teachers for relative moderation and patience throughout. Teachers can thank, and should be slow to criticize, the government, and particularly the Minister of Finance who had to make real sacrifice to give education the priority and teachers the salary they have achieved.

This has not been an easy year for the Minister of Finance. It has not been an easy budget. Under the circumstances of 1968 it is nevertheless a budget in which the minister can take some pride.

We can all take pride in the progress of last year. In education there were some who had real fear that the changes proposed were too

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much for us to manage. The eyes of the nation were on New Brunswick. The very real question was asked, "Can such major changes be managed without breakdown and chaos?"

No one doubted the need for the changes. Many had doubts as to the ability of the government and of educators to carry out the necessary changes. Happily, the changes have been made and the bugs are working out. Schools have been operating for six months, and they have been six testing months.

In July, 33 new school boards took over the responsibility for the former hodgepodge of districts. Partly elected, partly appointed, we have, in many areas, the most competent boards and most capable men ever serving their schools and their fellow citizens.

By September the boards had tackled the problems created by 150 new buses, 200 new bus drivers, new bus routes, new children. There could have been chaos. In fact, there was not.

The opening of school and the organization of classes, bus routes and time tables in September 1967 is a feat in which civil servants, teachers, administrators, bus drivers and many others may take a justifiable pride and sense of accomplishment.

There have been inconveniences, but they have been simply that. They were small compared to our history of schools that didn't open at all, schools where the I.O.D.E. or the W.I. had to provide books, teaching aids and even elementary sanitary equipment. By comparison with what might have been and with what in the past often has been, recent years' planning, last year's budget and last year's work produced a happy and successful school opening in 1967.

December and January of this winter were months of exceptional snow. They could have proven trying if the system had been working for years. It is a credit again to principals and bus operators that schools operated with a relative minimum of disruption or inconvenience.

Members can look with some satisfaction on the progress since

our last budget. There has been progress, too, in what might be termed educational rather than administrative matters.

Considerable progress is being made toward implementation of the curriculum proposals announced in October 1966. At that time we proposed that the province's schools should permit continuous progress promotion in the elementary schools. In the intermediate and secondary years the students would be promoted by subject or unit of work rather than by grade. Most important, an extended curriculum would provide much greater choice, including both broader vocational education on the one hand and enriched academic courses on the other.

These considerations gave rise to a departmental study which has concluded that certain minimum school sizes are necessary. The following is from that report:

"To offer the total programme, a high school complex must have an enrollment of over 1,500 pupils; between 1,000 and 1,500 pupils, facilities should allow for nearly the total programme; some enriched courses as well as certain aspects of technical or occupational preparatory courses would not be offered for want of a sufficient number of candidates;

"Between 600 and 1,000 pupils, it is not economically or educationally efficient to set up the facilities required for the total vocational programme;

"With less than 600 pupils, it is educationally impossible to offer technical or practical courses, as well as most of the enriched courses; the number of students for each would be too small and the cost prohibitive."

At the time the curriculum report was released it was made clear that a school should endeavor to change over to the new system before September 1968 and that some could not expect to be ready to do an adequate job for perhaps 10 years.

The need is clear for teacher training and retraining and for subject and administration courses and workshops. No school is permitted to move from the tradition-

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al to the new system until it satisfies the department that its staff and its facilities, and clearly, the number of its pupils, make the change possible and assure its success.

The interest of local schools and school boards is evident from the fact that several hundred experimental, research and pilot projects are being carried out — some by local schools, some by the school and the departmental cooperation. The projects touch every phase of New Brunswick education and are preparing teachers and schools for the day when they move into the new curriculum and also for the time when schools throughout the province take a fuller part in plan-

ning and establishing the curriculum.

Last spring I announced 22 school projects which were included in the 1967-68 budget. Some, such as the additions to Birchmount Elementary School and Harrison Tremble High School in District No. 15, are totally or almost completed. Some, such as the elementary schools in District No. 8 and District No. 30, should be completed by fall. Others are in various stages of development from early school board planning to various stages of construction. Each of these will be continued, and budget provision is made for them.

In addition, new projects not previously provided for are included within the budget provisions of \$16,274,000.

District No.	Number of Classrooms	Type of School	Number of Students	Place
5	30	Senior High	1,000	Caraquet
7	16	Junior High	500	Neguac
8	40	Senior High	1,200	Newcastle
10	30	Senior High	1,200	Chatham
11	30	Senior High	1,200	
14	20	Senior High	700	Sackville
15	16	Elementary	480	St. Anselme
15	8	Addition		Riverview
15	4	Addition		West Riverview
15	16	Elementary	500	Lewisville-Humphrey area
20	16	Elementary	500	Spruce Lake
23	24	Elementary	720	St. Stephen
26	60	High School	2,400	Fredericton
26	18	Elementary	500	Fredericton
28	10	Commercial Wing	300	Nackawic
29	20	Senior High	750	Woodstock
31	16	Vocational		Andover
33	60	Senior High	2,400	Edmundston

Mr. Speaker, this, too, is a major program. Not all will necessarily be in course of construction this year. There will be delays, some by the department, some by the school boards, some by architects and planners and builders. This is not by way of excuse or to lay blame, it is simply a fact. In spite of this, we are now committed to all of these. To plan more would simply overtax architects and builders, and overtax our financial resources.

This is a considered long-range program. It is not all we might like to do. It is everything we can do and it will be a big step in catching up.

At this point it seems wise to comment on some of the comments and questions raised by the opposition on the subject of the capital budget for school construction. Somewhere they heard, or claimed to have heard, that the capital budget had been reduced by \$16 million.

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Not one of them saw fit to call me, to check this figure. None even seems to have looked at last year's budget. To have reduced by \$16 million from last year would have wiped out last year's \$14,450,000. Obviously, no such thing was ever thought of or proposed, but no one checked or apparently even thought before they spoke.

The process of planning involves a number of steps. School boards ask for schools. Those requests are never turned down out of hand — each is analyzed and considered. Perhaps someone opposite saw a purloined copy of that list of requests. Some must have priority, and from the initial requests a list of priority schools is prepared. Perhaps someone has improperly shown members opposite a copy of that list. If so, it should be used with care. What we would like and what we can afford are often two different things.

The fact is that the schools we announced last year are those we feel were necessary in September 1967. These are classrooms that should have been in use last year. The ones which I have just mentioned should be in use next September. Obviously, they won't; many won't even get into construction this year.

That priority list, then, must be checked with those we feel we can afford to pay for. Our architects can build and plan, and our contractors can build those we have mentioned. The list is now before you.

There are good reasons why these preliminary lists should be confidential. They represent working papers only. Such working papers can cause confusion and disappointment if improperly used.

If members are going to use improper methods to get access to confidential documents, then they should at least have the good sense to check the list to determine its accuracy and its meaning. My door is always open. As the Financial Critic knows from experience, my department has and does provide prompt and detailed information. If members want information, it is there. If they want politics, then we haven't time to play.

There is no secret about this list. It represents our considered opinion of what can be achieved. It does show our idea of the needs. It is an active move to meet those needs.

Mr. Speaker, this discussion has mentioned areas of responsibility, including school board operations, teachers and school construction. There remains the matter of higher education.

I would call the attention of members to the first report of the New Brunswick Higher Education Commission. This group is designed to fill the important role of studying the needs of higher education in the province. They recommend steps to assist higher education. They pay out such grants as the province may be able to provide.

For the past and for the present year we are following the recommendations of the second Deutsch Commission. This will provide to the universities an amount of \$11,583,800 next year. In four years, while student enrolment is up by 42%, the total operating grants from government sources are up by 217% — all this supplied by governments, not as a result of marches or pressure but in trying to meet the needs.

Last year, the province budgeted \$250,000 for undergraduate scholarships and bursaries. We actually paid out over \$550,000. This year the budget provides \$1,000,000 for undergraduate and postgraduate student assistance.

Perhaps none of these is enough. The troubles of universities and of students, as of governments and individuals, are serious. The Higher Education Commission is currently restudying the requests of the various universities for amendment of the Deutsch formula. We will give careful study to their representations as to the means of satisfying the universities' needs and of the best methods of expending money for student aid.

Insofar as we are able, we shall help. There will be no easy solutions. They will not be easy for government, nor for taxpayers, nor universities, nor students. Each must make some sacrifice if our appetites are not to outrun our re-

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sources. That, Mr. Speaker, is the purpose of a budget. It must measure the resources available and allocate them as best we can among the needs.

This year the resources have been limited, just as resources of Great Britain, the United States and the rest of Canada are strained this year. In spite of this, we plan no \$80-million or \$250-million deficit, as is expected in some jurisdictions which were yesterday held up to us as prime examples. We cannot blindly follow the example of others. Our budgets must be made in New Brunswick for New Brunswick priorities. I am proud that those priorities place education, industrial development and jobs uppermost.

In New Brunswick we have 173,000 wage earners and the average wage is about \$3,787. We are spending over \$100 million next year on education. As a percentage of personal income, that means a greater expenditure than most other provinces can claim.

Not all of that money will be spent wisely. No one, however wise, has ever spent that sum without some slips. There will be cases where some school boards will buy equipment they perhaps could do without. There will be the odd teacher who does not give the best possible service. There will be mistakes by civil servants, perhaps some even by politicians. Mr. Speaker, these cases will be rare. The vast majority are doing a good, competent, conscientious and dedicated job.

That \$100 million will prove a wise investment. It will pay dividends for your children and mine. The return on that investment will be their better life and their greater contribution to our province and its prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the government and of the people whose representatives are now being asked to approve this budget. Nothing we could do will produce a happier or more certain result.

Thank you.

Mr. SHERWOOD continued the debate in these words:

Mr. Speaker:

I have listened attentively and with interest to the remarks of the Hon. Minister of Education, and I should like to say, Sir, that he is without doubt much more credible when he is dealing with his department than when he is dealing with the Financial Critic. I recommend to the minister that he tend to his own knitting. Surely, Sir, with the problems he has, the Minister of Education is not writing the sort of humor contained in the early part of his remarks.

Mr. CYR took the chair as Deputy Speaker.

Mr. SHERWOOD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm sorry the Speaker is not in his chair, because at the outset of these remarks I wish to heartily congratulate him upon being selected Speaker of this assembly. The Speaker is the symbol of authority, impartiality, responsibility and fairness in this chamber. In the discharge of his important and sometimes difficult duties, I offer him my respect and cooperation.

I congratulate all members who have participated in the debates during this session. Granted, issues have been raised upon which we disagree, but on the whole, debate has been healthy and constructive.

To the mover and seconder of the address in reply to the speech from the throne, I offer congratulations. They, like the many new members in this House, acquitted themselves well.

We on this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, take great pride in the presence of the new member from Albert County, the first lady ever elected to this assembly. I also point out, Sir, that Mrs. Robertson is a Kings County girl by birth, and I wish, personally and on behalf of the people of Kings County, to extend hearty congratulations and good wishes to her. The capable manner in which she is dealing with important matters in this session is not unnoticed, inside or outside this House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heartily congratulate the Leader of the Opposition, not only upon being chosen for this important office, but also upon the excellent way he is fulfilling his responsibilities.