



Fifth Session- Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
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BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
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LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
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<i>Vacant</i>	St. Boniface	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 19, 1999

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 12—The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1999

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education (Mr. McCrae), that leave be given to introduce Bill 12, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1999 (Loi de 1999 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have this afternoon twenty-three Grade 5 students from Royal School under the direction of Mr. Greg Carpenter. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

Also, eighteen Grades 11 and 12 students from Teulon Collegiate under the direction of Mr. Al Reinsch. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this afternoon.

\* (1335)

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Education System Parental Fundraising Activities

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, according to the government's own FRAME documents, the amount of money

going directly from this provincial government to the schoolroom and schools has been reduced from \$732 million in the '92-93 budget and now stands at \$709 million. Over the weekend we heard from a number of parents about the pressure this was placing on them to fundraise for basics, and this is very consistent with what we are hearing back in our communities, in our schools across the province.

I would like to ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon): what has been the impact of the actual funding cuts to the schools themselves? What has been the impact on volunteers and the kinds of fundraising activities that they must go through, and how much of that fundraising activity is actually going to raise money for basics?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Education and Training):** Madam Speaker, I am glad the honourable Leader of the Opposition has raised this question. I recently completed consultations with some 600 parents across Manitoba who have expressed their opinions about the education system, and views expressed ranged from the fact that parents are doing fundraising activity, to the fact that they are doing none at all in some school divisions. Interestingly in one of the school divisions where I did hear a complaint about fundraising activities, I looked in the statistics and in the records, and the textbook account surplus in that particular school division is at \$400,000. Something is wrong if that is happening; it ought not to be happening.

The honourable member raises questions about the FRAME Report and talks about funding. I just remind the honourable member that when he and Mr. Pawley were in charge in Manitoba, funding for education reduced from 21 percent of total government spending down to 17.7 percent, which we increased to 19.3 percent.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, the minister stated before that he did not want anybody raising money for basics like textbooks. He made that

statement: I take issue with the NDP suggesting people are fundraising to buy textbooks. It is not necessary to do that.

Can the minister explain to Mrs. Debbie Ashdown, a parental council member from the General Vanier School, why her school parents and her fellow volunteers were required to raise \$6,000 for that school in 1998 to meet the basic necessities of textbooks for their kids?

**Mr. McCrae:** If this matter has not already been brought to the attention of my office, then I can thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition for doing that. But, as I stated, we will be happy to look into the circumstances surrounding that particular assertion made by the honourable Leader of the Opposition.

In response to a radio talk show in which allegation was made that there were people fundraising for textbooks, we issued a public request or invitation for people to let us know of any instances like the one raised by the honourable Leader of the Opposition. We found none that had any substance. There was no response of substance to that. This certainly deserves some review, and I will undertake to do that.

It would have been nice if I had had an opportunity to debate this with the honourable Leader of the Opposition on Saturday when we would have been able to discuss this and other issues in a balanced way. We also would have had an opportunity, Madam Speaker, to express our appreciation for the work that teachers do in our province, but that was denied us by the Manitoba Teachers' Society.

\* (1340)

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, this whining from the minister is unbecoming. It was a Leader's debate, and you had the option of having your Leader at the debate; you had the option not to. The whining after is very unbecoming.

I would ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) this question. The Premier might want to answer this question. The government has said that they do not want parents to be raising money for basics like textbooks. Parents are saying that if they do

not raise money for the basics like textbooks, their kids do not get textbooks. Would the Premier agree today to deal with the underresourcing to the schools over the last four or five years and look at the shortfall in textbooks and technology and do something about it, so our kids can have textbooks that are relevant and important to their future?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Speaker, my previous answer stands. I just wonder what parents were doing back in the days when the honourable Leader of the Opposition and Howard Pawley were slashing funding for schools from 19.3 percent of budget down to 17.7 percent. That question deserves to be asked too. [interjection] It dropped from 21 percent down to 17.7 percent of total spending. It has gone up to 19.3 percent since. I think the honourable Leader of the Opposition does no service when he sits in his ivory tower and suggests that a Minister of Education and Training has no place in a forum respecting education and training. Does he want a balanced discussion out there or not?

#### **Education System Parental Fundraising Activities**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** My question is for the Minister of Education. When we surveyed parent councils this fall across Manitoba, we heard overwhelmingly about how much fundraising was now required of them under the Filmon government. Ninety percent of our time is spent fundraising, said one school council, and mostly for basic school needs. One division alone told us that they were funding early success reading programs, speech and language bags, patrol functions and for classroom books. So I would like to ask the Minister of Education if he could confirm that this fundraising is a direct result of the clear cuts in actual millions of dollars to schools that his government has made.

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Education and Training):** I certainly would not accept that. I accept very much that the education of our children is a partnership between school divisions, the government, parents, educators and others. We accept our role in that partnership. Last fiscal year we put 2.2 percent more money into the education budget in

addition to the year before. This past year, 2.6 percent, when you include the \$2 million—this year, Madam Speaker, 2.6 percent when you include the \$2 million we have added to that budget for special education. The first response to the education review, and which we have heard nothing from the opposition about special education in this province, this government has put down \$2 million as its first steps in response to the special education review. In addition, so that people can plan, we have announced that there will be a minimum of 2 percent additional funding next year. Who knows what it will be today, but we know it will not be less than 2 percent.

\*(1345)

#### **User Fees/Fundraising Guidelines**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Could the minister explain why he has, so far, ignored the directions of his ministerial advisory committee on education to provide, to create, to develop a province-wide approach, province-wide guidelines to user fees and to fundraising?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Education and Training):** Madam Speaker, there has been leadership in the area of provision of some guidelines for the use of fundraising dollars. We do not want the basics to be covered with fundraising dollars. I am a parent, and my children over the years have been involved in various activities, which in my opinion, do not form the basic part of their education. I and my neighbours, like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), who claims to have eaten too many chocolate bars, have been involved in those things too, as have committed parents throughout Manitoba. The honourable member seems to suggest that there is no room whatever for any kind of activity like that, and I do not agree with that.

But I have made it very clear the way this government feels about the basics in education. When we have some school divisions that allow no fundraising whatsoever and manage to educate the children with the dollars that are available from the province and from their municipal taxpayers, I welcome an opportunity to discuss this with the honourable member and

to compare notes because the honourable member is wrong if she suggests that this is a widespread thing. She is wrong because, other than the case that the honourable Leader of the Opposition has brought forward today, which I have undertaken to investigate—the jury is out on that one.

#### **Growing Minds Conference Premier's Attendance**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** My final question is for the Premier, and I wondered if the Premier could explain to the House why, with five months notice, he was unable to attend the growing minds conference this weekend to speak to parents and teachers and to hear one parent, in despair, say: we are nothing but fundraisers now.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** I think it is unfortunate that the Manitoba teachers' union chose to play politics with such an important issue as the education of our children. I recall that in the 1995 election campaign there was a Leaders' debate organized by the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce. The Leader of the Opposition chose not to show. He sent in his place Jerry Storie. The organization were polite, they were reasonable, and they allowed Mr. Storie to represent him.

Now that is the kind of thing that a nonpartisan organization does. If the teachers' union is interested only in partisan actions, then obviously we know where they stand on the issues. It is a very hard-line partisan position. That is not the sort of thing about which you engender good democratic debate.

#### **Gaming Facilities Expansion Funding**

**Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James):** My question is to the Minister responsible for Lotteries. To the Minister responsible for Lotteries, who was the previous Health minister and could not find enough money to build needed personal care homes and other health facilities, I would like to ask how it is he finds so much money to make these massive, expansive casinos both at Regent and McPhillips.

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act):** Madam Speaker, I am very glad that colleagues opposite at least acknowledge the massive investment in health care that this administration is making in constructing over 600 additional personal care home beds. The member has been in this House since 1995, and I am sure in the course of those four years she would have had opportunity to at least learn, as we all have learned, about how these are funded. The Lotteries Corporation is an independent organization, finances its capital construction, not out of tax dollars, not out of public money, but out of its own revenue, and it returns to the province, in essence, a dividend on its profits.

#### Expansion Expenditures

**Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James):** Madam Speaker, my second question to the Minister responsible for Lotteries: recently, approximately two months ago, Manitobans found out cost overruns at that time were \$16 million. Will the Minister responsible for Lotteries indicate what the price tag is today?

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act):** Madam Speaker, it is interesting. I think this question was answered extensively several months ago when members opposite attempted to make an issue of this particular area. If I remember correctly, the issue arose, estimated price versus what tenders came out on. Yes, there was a difference between what the cost estimates were on those projects and what the tendered prices were. That is not a cost overrun. Those projects were being done on a tendered basis with contractual prices.

Madam Speaker, it is very interesting because the members today may try to make a linkage that does not exist; the members opposite may somehow imply that Manitoba Lotteries, in trying to redevelop these two casinos to ensure that we continue to have hundreds upon hundreds of tour buses come into our province—at the same time, the same members opposite have come up with ways to spend every one of those dollars 10 times over.

\* (1350)

#### Renovation Expenditures

**Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James):** My question to the Minister responsible for Lotteries: will he provide a full cost statement, including the cost of renovations which we understand exceeds \$20 million for the Crystal Casino and Club Regent? What is the price tag for renovations in addition to the additions?

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act):** Madam Speaker, I would be delighted in the normal course of business of this House, when these matters are discussed, to ensure that the Lotteries Corporation provides all members with a full accounting, as they do regularly on an annual basis in this Assembly. She will have the opportunity to question them, but I can tell the member, as members opposite usually are, we are not expanding or renovating the Crystal Casino. We are closing it.

#### Health Care Facilities

##### Capital Projects—Community Contribution

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Madam Speaker, it is ironic that the overruns for the expansion of the Regent and the casino on McPhillips are relatively significant, and I suppose the minister, like me, got a copy of a letter from Building for the Future from the cancer care foundation of Manitoba who are trying to raise their \$19 million so they can contribute that to the cancer centre that was promised in '95, '96, '97, has had at least three sod turnings in the last year.

My question to the Minister of Health, who announced the capital plans on Friday: are all of the capital announcements on Friday going to require the 20 percent of the public or the municipality or the individuals to have to raise the money before those projects can proceed?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Health):** Madam Speaker, the community contribution policy, as the member opposite knows, is certainly nothing new in the province of Manitoba. There has been one in place for many, many decades. There used to be a cash

contribution requirement of as much as 50 percent. More recently it was a matter where communities and organizations were contributing the land and other contributions towards change orders. The contribution policy pertains to major capital projects, so some of the projects will require a community contribution policy and some will not.

I should remind the member opposite that an adjustment made to the community contribution policy also gives the communities the opportunity to make their contribution up front, and if they do that, it then becomes 10 percent of the cost. That compares to a province like Saskatchewan that has a community contribution requirement of, I believe, 35 percent. British Columbia, I believe, is 40 percent, and other provinces have contributions.

I am certainly prepared to provide that information to the member for Kildonan as well, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Chomiak:** My supplementary question to the Minister of Health: since the government introduced this policy of 20 percent a couple of years ago, I am wondering—the announcement the minister made on Friday indicated that there was going to be a major announcement about capital equipment purchase. My question to the minister: will this community or the public having to pay user fees, a 20 percent contribution, apply to the capital equipment that the minister is going to be announcing in the short period of the next little while? Are they going to extend it to the equipment that we need for cancer and for heart surgery?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Well, Madam Speaker, again, I do not think I need to remind the member that there has been a community contribution policy in place for many years under all types of governments in the province of Manitoba. We certainly have examples in NDP Saskatchewan, NDP British Columbia of significant community contribution policies which are much higher than the province of Manitoba. I indicated as part of the announcement that the member for Kildonan attended on Friday with the capital projects that we would be very shortly coming forward with our announcement on equipment contributions

for facilities. I believe that the majority, if not all, of those do not require a community contribution.

\* (1355)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, the minister, I believe, indicated that those capital purchases of the equipment would not require a contribution, and I hope that in fact holds true.

My final supplementary to the minister is: can the minister indicate, if those communities cannot raise their 20 percent that the government has imposed as of two years ago and required them to raise, will that then mean the projects will be on hold like the cancer institute, the cancer expansion where they are desperately seeking additional funds—[interjection] Well, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) says it is going ahead. They require an extra—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister indicate whether those projects will go ahead if under circumstances the communities cannot raise the 20 percent the government has now imposed on them?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Speaker, I am a little bit confused by the question because all the member for Kildonan has to do is go by the site and see that the Manitoba Cancer Research and Treatment facility is under construction. The provincial government is making a very significant contribution, as is the foundation itself making a contribution, and that is exactly a good case of the kinds of partnerships that are put in place across Manitoba to see the facility improvements that we are seeing right throughout Manitoba.

I should indicate to the member opposite certainly to date with the introduction of our community contribution policy, which can be 10 percent if the organizations can do it at the front end—and most organizations are attempting to do just that, so they are doing it on the basis of 10 percent—it is working very well. We are having

examples of facilities like the Boundary Trails hospital under construction right now in Morden-Winkler.

Again, I would suggest that the formalization of that policy so everybody knows the rules is something that is very positive to communities, to organizations so they know what role they play. By having the community involved, Madam Speaker, we end up with the best possible health care facilities we can possibly have.

### **Manitoba Hydro Privatization**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Premier. The government commits in excess of a half billion dollars in terms of acquiring Centra Gas, and what has become very clear is the government does not have any plan, as clearly demonstrated in the answers that we received last week, as clearly demonstrated in the lack of appearance in any fashion through the government's throne speech.

My question to the Premier is: how can the Premier assure us that the purchase of Centra Gas is not simply the first step in preparing Manitoba Hydro for the public auction block?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, rather than just simply make this a political football, I think the member opposite would be well advised to take a look at the economics of the transaction. The fact of the matter is that this kind of convergence of different types of energy is taking place not only in the United States but in Canada, where Gaz métropolitain has been bought, or an interest in it, by Hydro Quebec, where places throughout the United States have had the converged utility. Pacific Gas and Electric has been a converged utility for more than a decade, to my knowledge.

These are ways in which the utility can become stronger and more efficient. That is what we want of Manitoba Hydro. Manitoba Hydro is a monopoly provider of electrical services in Manitoba, and it will be strengthened by this transaction. That is the basis on which we authorized their proceeding firstly with the

discussions and then eventually with entering into the agreement. This has absolutely nothing to do with privatization. I have already said publicly that I would commit that we would not privatize the Manitoba Hydro.

\* (1400)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I am sure the Premier will understand why Manitobans as a whole do not necessarily trust that particular argument that they will not privatize Manitoba Telephone System.

My question very specific to the minister was: can the Premier indicate to this House if indeed Manitoba Hydro will be privatized in the same manner that MTS was privatized, given that the rationale that has been used to date has not given the justification in terms of the acquisition of Centra Gas? We want to make sure that there is no hidden agenda here in the long term to sell off Manitoba Hydro.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The question has been put.

**Mr. Filmon:** I can assure the member there is no agenda to sell off Manitoba Hydro. I can also say to him that he, of course, is getting entrenched in the same kind of narrow-minded, ignorant thinking that is shared by the members that he sits next to, the New Democratic Party, in which they, for blind ideology, automatically assume that if it is publicly owned it is good, if it is privately owned it is bad. That, of course, absolutely totally ignores the reality of the marketplace. He would do well to investigate the economics of the transaction as opposed to joining the New Democrats and just simply proceeding based on blind ideology.

### **All-Party Resolution**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Given the comments of the Premier then, if he wants to attempt to depoliticize this particular issue, will the Premier then agree to passage of an all-party resolution in favour of Manitoba retaining public ownership of Manitoba Hydro? Why would he oppose passing a resolution of that nature? Will he stand in his place and agree to pass it?



**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The question has been put.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, I am already on the record as saying that we will not privatize Manitoba Hydro. It may serve the political gamesmanship of the member for Inkster to pursue those kinds of things; I am telling him the facts.

### **Swan River Hospital Capital Projects—Funding**

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** When we heard the announcement of capital funding on hospitals on Friday, I fully expected that this government was going to announce that there was going to be funding for a new hospital in Swan River because the hospital in Swan River has been closed because of a mould problem. However, I was shocked to learn that all the government promised was funding will be available to begin the design and replacement on renovations at the Swan River Hospital.

I would like to ask the minister: does this mean that he has no intention of rebuilding that facility in this year, that all he is going to do is do a design on the replacement? No plans to build a new hospital.

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Health):** Certainly we have been keeping the member for Swan River informed of what is taking place at Swan River with the hospital. We are awaiting a final report to determine whether or not the existing facility can be maintained through major renovations and/or whether a completely new facility will be required. The expectation is that at this stage it appears most likely it will be a new facility, but we are waiting for that final report. Certainly she would understand that the first steps, in terms of the development of a new facility, are the assessment of the kind of facility that can best meet the needs of Swan River and the catchment area of that facility, be exactly the type of facility that can meet those needs today and into the future and to start moving forward with the design stage for that project.

Those are the first two steps. Money is set aside for those very important aspects of the

requirements of the Swan River Hospital, and if additional resources are required as the year unfolds, depending on what the timing is of the facility, either renovations or the new facility, they will be provided.

### **Capital Projects—Community Contribution**

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** I would like to let the minister know that people would have been much more happy to see a commitment to funding here, and there is no commitment.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member was recognized for a supplementary question to which no preamble is required.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given that there is no commitment out of this budget for capital funding, I would like to ask the minister if he will recognize that the people of Swan River have not requested a new facility. This renovation is going to have to take place because of neglect of the government.

Will he guarantee that they will not have to put up the 20 percent penalty because of their neglect, when this facility is built?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Health):** Well, Madam Speaker, there was no neglect on the part of this provincial government, and I think it is unfortunate to even try to point to neglect on the part of anybody, the people administering or running that hospital or whomever.

This is a situation of mould being found in the facility. We have acted immediately to deal with the well-being of the people in that health care facility to provide alternative health care arrangements to make sure that they do not incur any financial costs as a result of that. The government is picking up those costs. We have acted quickly to do the review of the kind of facility that is required in that community, and we have dedicated resources in this budget to move forward with either a complete renovation of the existing facility or ultimately a new facility.

I did indicate in response to a previous question that, while it is important that the community contribution policy apply in this case, because of the fact that this project did arise on the basis of not much advanced planning—obviously, because of the situation of mould being found—that we were prepared and are prepared to sit down with the hospital board, with the regional health authority to discuss the whole issue of the timing of their community contribution.

### **Population Growth Provincial Decline**

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Madam Speaker, this government should be very concerned that, since it assumed office in 1988, the population growth of this province has not kept pace with that of the Canadian nation. In fact, our population growth has been almost nonexistent. As a result, in 1988 we were 4.1 percent of the Canadian population, but by the end of 1998 we had dropped to 3.7 percent. This is a significant decline and has an impact on federal transfer payments, among other things.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance: why is Manitoba not growing as fast as the rest of the country, given the fact that we are supposed to have such a buoyant economy? Why are we shrinking as a percentage of the total Canadian population?

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, again, the member for Brandon East looks on the dark side of so many things. I think what he should be focusing on is the tremendous growth in the economy of Manitoba where the real gross domestic product grew by 3.4 percent last year, where we have more full-time employment in this province than we have ever had before—in fact, there was a creation of 10,000 new full-time jobs—and where our unemployment rate has now reached 5.4 percent, the lowest unemployment rate across the country. In fact, along with that, we have the lowest youth unemployment rate across the country as well.

There are significant signs, with the growth in the economy, with the shortage of about 5,000 jobs going wanting in our province, that this

trend is being reversed, that there are more people coming back to Manitoba to fill some of these jobs. With the construction season upon us and the tremendous construction you are going to see in Manitoba this year in the hospital sector and other sectors, I believe you are going to see real growth in the Manitoba population this year.

\* (1410)

**Mr. L. Evans:** Madam Speaker, will this minister acknowledge that one reason our population growth has been so insignificant is that we have lost over 67,000 people since this government assumed office in 1988? In fact, in that period of time, our average is well over 6,000 people a year, which is equivalent to losing a town the size of The Pas every year of the 11 years that this government has been in office.

So my question is: why, if our economy is supposed to be so great as the minister has just been pointing out, so buoyant, are we continuing to lose thousands of people to other provinces?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Madam Speaker, the member for Brandon East does not seem to accept that the economy is doing well. I would urge him to look at some of the economic indicators that are in existence. In fact, along with four or five colleagues, I attended the Brandon Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting a few weeks ago, and I can tell you there were 500 or 600 people there from the Brandon area celebrating the growth in the economy of Brandon, the number of jobs that are being created and the fact that the economy there is very buoyant.

**Mr. L. Evans:** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the minister can explain to the people of Manitoba why we continue to lose people to the province of Saskatchewan. Some years ago the tradition was people from Saskatchewan would come in droves to Manitoba. In the last few years we have lost 2,300 people in the last four years alone, and last year we lost between 900 and 1,000 people. Why, if our economy is so great and so buoyant as the minister explains, have we reversed the trend of being a net recipient from Saskatchewan to becoming a net exporter of people to our sister province of Saskatchewan?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Madam Speaker, as I have indicated to the member, with the low unemployment rate here in Manitoba and the creation of thousands and thousands of jobs, I think you are going to see a change in those trends. In fact, in the province of British Columbia at this time there are signs that many people are leaving that province to accept jobs here on the prairies.

### **Household Hazardous Waste Program Status Report**

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Environment. As Manitobans are doing their spring cleaning, they are collecting household hazardous wastes, paints, solvents, batteries and so on. As well, municipalities are anxious to provide collection depots for this waste. However, they are uncertain what they should do with these wastes as this minister has yet to make an announcement regarding this program this year. Will the minister update this House and Manitobans as to the status of the Household Hazardous Waste Program for this fiscal year?

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Environment):** Madam Speaker, Manitoba's record of programming in this area is outstanding in Canada, recognized as that throughout the country. As a matter of fact, the working committee on household hazardous wastes was meeting here in the building, met with them myself about 11:30 this morning. They continue to begin bringing forward recommendations for the minister.

Madam Speaker, we have—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** When they are ready to listen, Madam Speaker, I will—

**Mr. Dewar:** Madam Speaker, what are Manitobans to do with the more than 200,000 kilograms that are collected each year by this program? Is there a program this year, yes or no?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The short answer, Madam Speaker, is yes, and the member himself I think has—I am pleased to see that he is finally asking some questions of the Minister of Environment. I was beginning to think he might go through the session without any. Particularly when our record is so good in this area, I was quite confident there would not be any questions forthcoming.

Manitoba is one of the few provinces that does fund programs of this nature out of general revenue and it is difficult—the Leader of the Opposition would leave it to God to save the Earth, he has just indicated from his chair. God is a good one to rely upon, but human beings, I think, have an obligation to help as well. If the NDP philosophy is that they leave all of this in the hands of God, then they are indicating their lack of commitment to participate with what is happening in the world.

### **Collection Depots**

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** My final question to the minister is: how many collection depots are to be held in rural and northern Manitoba this year?

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Environment):** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Selkirk for his question. I cannot give him the exact number of locations. I can tell him there has been a record, in terms of pesticides, in terms of used oil, in terms of a wide variety of hazardous goods, both household and industrial and farm, that is outstanding in Canada. He knows that. I will be pleased to bring him specific figures. I will do, so that he can look for himself at the percentages that we have in collectibles compared to other provinces, and the outstanding record that has begun under this administration, under my predecessor and other ministers of Environment that sadly was not in place when the NDP were in power, programs started by this government, programs started by the Filmon government in co-operation with citizens of Manitoba for a record that is outstanding. I will bring the data to him because he does not know it.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, I understand that there may be a will to give leave to the introduction for first reading of a bill.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to revert back to Introduction of Bills under Routine Proceedings? [agreed]

Leave has been granted.

**Mr. Filmon:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### **Bill 17—The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act**

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Stefanson), that leave be given to introduce Bill 17, The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi électorale et la Loi sur le financement des campagnes électorales, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. Madam Speaker, I would like to table the message from His Honour with the bill.

**Motion agreed to.**

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### **International Year of Older Persons**

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** As I am sure all the members of this House are aware, 1999 has been designated International Year of Older Persons. In this province, the theme is Manitoba: A Province for All Ages, which encourages an intergenerational approach in celebrating the contributions of seniors to the growth and development of our province. To help promote the recognition of the International Year of Older Persons, our government established a grant program to help support celebration activities, seminars and conferences and other projects around Manitoba.

I am very pleased to find that two organizations in the Gimli constituency were chosen to receive grants for their project proposals. The Teulon and District Seniors Resource Centre has received funding to help provide a caregivers workshop. This is being held today for families, spouses and others who have direct-care responsibilities. The resource centre hopes that a self-help group for caregivers will develop out of this workshop where they can come together to share their experiences and find support.

The Interlake Seniors Resource Council also received a grant for this project entitled Discovering Our Gifts. The goal is to provide a forum where seniors and youth can discover each others' gifts and talents and plan together ways of using these gifts to build healthier communities. Both groups have developed quality events that will have lasting benefits for their communities. So I applaud the efforts of all those involved in the Interlake seniors resource council and also the Teulon Seniors Resource Council who do excellent work year-round for Manitoba seniors. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### **Manitoba Book Week**

**Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne):** Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to recommend to the House Manitoba Book Week, April 18 to 24, culminating on Saturday, April 24 in the Manitoba book awards. This week is a time for us all to consider the importance of writing, publishing and book selling to our economy and the importance of the literary arts to our public and personal lives. Members, I know, will join me in gratefully acknowledging our literary community's economic contribution.

The role the literary arts occupy in our lives and culture is more subtle, but to my mind well spoken by William Carlos Williams who wrote: poetry is a rival government, always in opposition to its cruder replicas. The rival governments or visions of Manitoba writers range from Ralph Connor's moral writings or social gospels to Margaret Laurence's compelling humanism, to Gabrielle Roy's compassion, to Carol Shields' experimental dexterity and imaginative understanding, to

Patrick Friesen's incisive but always sympathetic voice.

\* (1420)

The people here cited are mere examples, names of writers engaged with the questions of craft identity and values, writers who speak to us of the way we are, life in our times and in our place. My time today does not allow me to mention a new and younger generation of poets, novelists and playwrights, some of whom will be honoured on April 24. All deserve our respect. Even if we do not know their names, or all their names, I believe their words are with us, shaping our thinking, deepening our compassion, teasing our imaginations, showing us truth and always developing. Again I quote: a rival government in opposition to its cruder replicas.

#### **Manitoba Moose Hockey Club**

**Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek):** I would like to congratulate the Manitoba Moose Hockey Club on their most successful season in the International Hockey League. The Manitoba Moose ended their regular season Saturday night at the Winnipeg Arena in front of a sold-out crowd of 10,842. The Moose fans were on their feet for the 4-1 season-ending victory over the defending Turner Cup champions, the Chicago Wolves. The Moose finished their year fourth overall with an outstanding 47-21-14 record. The Moose recorded 108 points which makes them the most winning professional hockey team in Manitoba history, recording more points in one season than the Winnipeg Jets of the World Hockey Association or the Winnipeg Jets of the National Hockey League.

The Manitoba Moose announced their annual year-end awards. The awards are as follows: the most valuable player, number 27, Bill Bowler; the best defenceman, number 2, Brett Hauer; the unsung hero, number 23, Jeff Parrot; the community service award, number 4, Michael Stewart; the most points for three-star selection, Scott Thomas; and leading scorer, number 27, Bill Bowler.

The Manitoba Moose begin their playoff quest against the Milwaukee Admirals this Wednesday in Milwaukee and return home for a

game Friday evening. Please join all hockey fans and me in congratulating owner Mark Chipman and coach Randy Carlyle and the entire Manitoba Moose hockey organization on a record season and wish them well in their fight for the Turner Cup.

When we talk hockey, a name that is synonymous is Wayne Gretzky, No. 99. Here is a hockey legend that would need a lot more time for me to speak on than I am allotted, but I am sure every member in this Chamber would join me in extending our thanks to Wayne Gretzky for 20 marvellous years and our heartfelt congratulations to him on his retirement. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

#### **Growing Minds Conference**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the organizing committee of the conference held on the weekend: growing minds. Hundreds of Manitoba teachers and parents, trustees and even municipal councillors attended and heard a wide range of papers. We heard from trustees from Winnipeg as well as from Calgary. We heard from international figures familiar with education in the United Kingdom, in New Zealand and the United States. We listened to journalists, to educators, to authors and to students in a series of what I would congratulate the organizers on as a series of very well-prepared presentations and debates.

This was one of those conferences that had a buzz, a sense of enthusiasm of open debate and common purpose in support of public education. It was, I believe, the Premier's loss that after five months he chose not to attend for even the Saturday portion for which he was invited, but it is all our loss, Madam Speaker, that after 11 years we have a government which chooses not to allow its Leader to face the public in open discussion about public education.

#### **Wilbert Funk**

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Madam Speaker, it is certainly my pleasure today to rise before this House and congratulate Wilbert Funk—we call him Big Red—of Altona who was presented with the 1999 Altona District Chamber of

Commerce Citizen of the Year Award at their annual dinner on Saturday.

Mr. Funk was chosen to receive this honour for his outstanding contribution in working with young people. Mr. Funk was a hockey player, a player in his own right. He, however, excelled in taking upon himself the task of bringing together young people who were very often not very capable and teaching them how to play hockey.

One of the key things that Mr. Funk and his wife—and he always called her Precious. He said: we have to go out and win one for Precious today, boys. I was one of the young fellows who Wilbert coached when I was much younger than I am today. But he always used the theme that if you are going to play well, you are going to become the kind of citizen that you really want to be, or, he said, do you want to be one of those? That was his motto.

**An Honourable Member:** He was pointing at you, Steve.

**Mr. Penner:** No, I am not pointing at anybody in this House, but he always said: or do you want to be one of those? I say to you that Mr. Funk coached better than a thousand games played by young people in his community. He not only coached hockey, but he also umpired and coached baseball. He coached and umpired between 900 and a thousand games of baseball.

The interesting thing, Madam Speaker—and I wish you would let me finish—is Mr. Funk lost his right arm in 1973 in an industrial accident. Did that stop him from being involved with these young people? He said no, and he would raise his right arm without a hand and he said: let us go out there and win; let us play one for Precious, and that is why Mr. Funk was chosen as Citizen of the Year today by the Altona Chamber of Commerce. I would like all of us to congratulate him.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### House Business

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I would ask if you

could please call Bill 2, The Electoral Divisions Amendment Act. For information of the House, I think throughout the next few days there will probably be some announcements around a committee, et cetera, as House leaders work out the details.

## SECOND READINGS

### Bill 2—The Electoral Divisions Amendment Act

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 2, The Electoral Divisions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les circonscriptions électorales, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

### Motion presented.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to bring forward for consideration of this House Bill 2, The Electoral Divisions Amendment Act. This is a bill that has generated considerable speculation and discussion not only within the media and the wider community but also within this House. Members opposite from the Liberal Party, I know, had asked to bring it forward for dealing with sooner, but this is the earliest time that the rules permit, without leave, to be able to deal with it. I am happy that we are able to do so today.

In 1955 Manitoba adopted the process of ensuring that our electoral divisions are established in an open and nonpartisan fashion. This is the fifth time since the establishment of the Electoral Boundaries Commission and the second time for me as Premier that a government has presented a bill implementing their recommendations. As members opposite know, the intent of the Electoral Boundaries Commission is that it should not only be as representative in terms of the quality of people who are on the commission, but also it should be seen to be as completely nonpartisan as possible, and I believe indeed that we can say that of this commission. It is made up by statute of the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, the Honourable Richard Scott, the chief electoral officer, Mr. Richard Balasko, and the president

the University of Manitoba, Dr. Emöke Szathmáry.

The commissioners, over the course of seven public meetings held in Thompson, Dauphin, The Pas, Portage la Prairie, Steinbach, Brandon and Winnipeg, heard 61 presentations. In addition, the commission received 140 written representations from individuals and organizations from across our province. I want to begin by commending the commissioners for their work, and as it did in the last report, the commission has provided not only a set of new boundaries but a number of thoughtful observations for potential future implementation by our Legislature. It is important that we not only review those observations presented in this report, but review and see how we can make modifications to this open process, which is considered to be a first-rate process by people right across our country.

Last time I introduced a similar bill, I spoke about the need to understand the unique and difficult challenges which face our rural and northern members, more so than those shared by our urban members. That was a topic of considerable discussion before the commission, and I believe that the commission struggled very diligently to attempt to bridge those competing interests and concerns that impact more on rural and northern representatives. I know that the commission as well very definitely took note of many of the changes that we have made in terms of supports to our elected members in this House to try and make the task a little easier for rural and northern members to represent their constituents.

\* (1430)

We must continue to work at ensuring that all of these challenges are dealt with on a timely and effective basis. My government will review all of the information provided by the commission and will work with the members of this House in a spirit of nonpartisanship to try and strengthen the longstanding process which we have, which we are proud of and which I believe all Manitobans feel secure in.

Just in addressing some of the finer details of the electoral boundaries which will be

implemented by this particular act, I would say that these boundary changes are probably as even-handed and balanced as they can be, given that they are the subject and decisions of humans who have to try and balance the advice of many different people and many different concerns. When I look at it from a perspective of party politics, I say that the boundaries probably do not work particularly in the favour of any party in this House. I know that when the original proposal was put forward in June, many people suggested that it would have a very significant, positive impact on our side of the House. I believe that the commissioners took note of that, and in re-forming the boundaries, probably did so in such a way as to remove that advantage from this side of the House. I do not object to that, Madam Speaker. I think that the job of the commission is a very difficult one, and I believe that they want to continue the reputation of the commission as being absolutely nonpartisan, absolutely balanced and even-handed in every respect. I believe that they succeeded as much as any group of human beings could be expected to in striking that balance.

I think it is important because we have had comments in this House in recent times, maybe from the member for Brandon East (Mr. L. Evans), the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), about erosion of populations in rural communities. I think that this particular reconstruction of the electoral boundaries speaks more strongly than anything that I have seen to the fact that there has been a better stabilization and indeed growth of rural populations than we have seen in perhaps the last century in this province. Indeed, every previous change in boundaries by the Electoral Boundaries Commission created a circumstance in which there were fewer rural and northern seats and more city of Winnipeg seats. This is the first time, I believe, this century in which that has not occurred. It has not occurred because there has been tremendous growth and stability in the economy of rural Manitoba.

There certainly have still been shifts within rural Manitoba. There certainly has continued to be some communities that, for a whole variety of local reasons, have continued to shrink and even disappear. But, overall, the population of rural Manitoba has stabilized for the first time this

century, which I happen to think is a good thing. I do not think that it benefits anyone to have tremendously increasing concentrations of population and then vast areas of shrinking wasteland. The more we can distribute the population and the economic activity in our province, the healthier our province will be. I certainly believe that a healthy Manitoba needs a healthy northern population, needs a healthy rural population, and it needs, obviously, healthy cities and towns. So, in that respect, I think that it has been a good exercise at relooking at ourselves and seeing what the impacts are of the changes that have been made in recent times.

Among those things, I think we have to speak to decentralization, decentralization of government activity having had some impact on the stabilization and revitalization of various areas in rural Manitoba. We have to look at diversification of our agriculture industry, which is now more diversified than it has ever been in its history, and more value-adding taking place before we ship our agricultural products elsewhere.

I know that, Madam Speaker, we can always look at this from different perspectives. From a party perspective, I will say that our party intends to support this legislation because we believe in the nonpartisan balanced approach to electoral boundaries review that it represents, and we accept, whether we agree with all of the details of the report and the act, the process as producing as much as possible a nonpartisan outcome. There will always be those who will talk about, with perhaps some valid reason, that will lament the disappearance of some well-known names from the electoral map, ones like Sturgeon Creek and Osborne and Gladstone that have been a part of the electoral map for a long, long time.

I recall in the last change that the member for Fort Rouge at that time spoke about his disappointment at the disappearance of Fort Rouge and now it is back. So names are chosen to reflect differing circumstances, and at the same time I think the commission always attempts to reflect the history and reflect the changes that have been taking place in the ensuing decade that has led to this new map. For my part, I accept it as the work of an eminent

commission that has done its best to reflect the changes of Manitoba's population and to turn that into boundaries and an act that will fairly and equitably reflect the interests of all Manitobans, and I urge everyone to vote for the passage of this legislation.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** I too would like to thank the commission members for their work. We have always supported an independent boundary commission system for Manitoba. It is a system that allows us to adjust populations on a timely basis, and it has obviously over the years since Douglas Campbell, I believe, introduced this legislation and concept allowed various parties to form government. The Liberals were replaced by the Duff Roblin government in the late '50s, and the Weir government was replaced by the Schreyer government, the Lyon government, the Pawley government and now the Filmon government.

\* (1440)

We have had a belief and a practice that politicians in this Chamber do not set the boundaries for politicians to be elected or re-elected, that it is somebody outside of the political process that sets those boundaries. This of course sets Manitoba apart from other jurisdictions over the years. We think the statutory provisions in the act are superior to the government of the day establishing boundaries and picking individuals like the federal system. There are still individuals that are picked rather than positions picked in the act, and many provinces have the same format still where you do not have statutory positions but you rather have individuals.

This country is full of examples where in the past—and I think Grace McCarthy was one example that was always raised in Point Grey of British Columbia. They used to have a very vivid description of these polls that were an angular poll, numbers of polls into a certain area that were always chosen to be part of that old Sacred seat established by the Sacred party, that that in fact was a partisan way of setting boundaries. Even as late as 20 years ago in that province, in fact right up to the 1991 British Columbia election, you still had boundaries established by the government of the day often



argued for the benefit of the government of the day in a majority of the government of the day in the B.C. Legislature.

So certainly we prefer a statutory law, and we have dealt with this law before. I know the member for Brandon East (Mr. L. Evans) has probably dealt with it certainly in the '70s and the '80s. I am sure the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has dealt with it in the '60s, '70s, and '80s. So as we proceed into the '90s, this is only my second time of dealing with it, but I do know that the principle of independent boundaries is a good one and any Legislature that has the majority establish the boundaries in the long run is asking for a practice that works against the best wishes of the people.

I want to thank, as I say, the individual commission members, but, Madam Speaker, I think we have not gone forward with many of the suggestions that have been made in the past on boundaries. Let me deal with a couple of points that I think have caused us a great deal of difficulty. Number one is when do these boundaries take effect? We believe and we said to the commission and we know in Ottawa that there is a particular way of implementing the boundary commissions in such a way that does not allow for the government with the majority to be planning on one set of boundaries and have in a potential election year opposition parties trying to guess what boundaries would be in place or alternatively guess wrong on what boundaries are in place. We think that the commission—and we recommended to the commission before that they must deal with this issue.

The Fox-Decent report, for example, was a commission whose implementation did not take place until after the election. In other words, you start fresh after that election program. There has to be a way of dealing with the independent Boundaries Commission report becoming a political, tactical advantage for the government of the day. One would cite the fact that when the map was first produced in July of this year, the draft map in July, the government said: Oh, we will be running on the new boundaries. We will not call the election until the new boundaries are in place. Then we had the proposed map, which is in this bill, in December

of 1998, and all of a sudden it was, oops, we are not so sure anymore; I cannot commit ourselves to running on the old boundaries or the new boundaries or whatever; I am not making any commitment whatsoever.

Through the media to the government, we said bring the Legislature back in January; bring the Legislature back in February; bring the Legislature back in March. The Legislature was only adjourned, Madam Speaker; it had not been prorogued, and in that way, if we were really committed to the independent Boundaries Commission, then we could have passed those boundaries in those three months. Those of us who were trying to guess what boundaries would be in place would therefore be playing on the same level democratic field as the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and really then we would have an independent boundary process and an independent boundary process transition.

For us, Madam Speaker, with 23 incumbent seats, I dare say that this is a much bigger challenge than it might be for other opposition parties, because we have much more to deal with in terms of transition. It is a pleasant problem in terms of the numbers you have, but it is also a logistical challenge for your transition, and the only party then that knows the boundaries is the government.

**An Honourable Member:** That is the way it should be.

**Mr. Doer:** That is not the way it should be, because that is then not independent. That is taking an independent, nonpartisan process and turning it into a partisan process.

Now, having said that, I want to deal with another couple of issues that arise from the Boundaries Commission report. In 1989, there was a tremendous amount of controversy about the fact that the Boundaries Commission in essence went close to one member, one vote, in terms of representation. Of course, this flows from the '87 legislation that reduced the variation in some ridings of the 25 percent, and provided for a 25 percent variation in northern Manitoba and provided for a 10 percent variation in rural Manitoba.

As a city MLA and as an individual who has the privilege and opportunity to travel both to rural and northern Manitoba, I was extremely disappointed and so were members opposite that the legislative framework established by this Legislature was very much ignored in the '88 map and the '89 boundary law. In fact, the former chair of the commission, and I think it was former Justice Monnin, at a press conference, said: I treat the province like 57 slices of cake and I sliced those pieces of cake up equally and evenly.

Madam Speaker, that was not in the legislation because, quite frankly, for me to represent Concordia in a very, very concentrated community is totally different from the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen). Quite frankly, some of the media coverage comparing Flin Flon to Seine River, with the greatest respect to Madam Speaker, was very, very Perimeter centric in its view. To compare Concordia to Flin Flon with Island Lake and Tadoule Lake in that constituency is absolutely devoid of any reality of Manitoba. The boundary commission report and the boundary commission, in my view, must reflect and should reflect and must in the future reflect the full reality of Manitoba.

So, in 1989, what did we do about this? Well, the former Deputy Premier, the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey), proposed a resolution to this Legislature, and many members opposite, when they spoke, spoke to the fact that we would amend the legislation. We would agree to amend the legislation and have added to the boundary commission representation one member from rural Manitoba and one member from northern Manitoba. I supported that, and we supported that. I know that you have to pick not individuals but statutory positions to get away from, again, gerrymandering the boundaries through the selection of a person.

\* (1450)

I thought the recommendation 10 years ago was a good one, and we supported it.

Regrettably, we did not act on it. The government had a majority, and after the 1990 election when we became the opposition and it had the support of the opposition—I do not know whether the Liberals would have supported that position or not, but I dare say it is not a bad idea. Maybe somebody like the chair of the Rural Institute or the president or the grand chief of MKO or some other statutory position—I do not know which ones they are, but somebody that represents somebody beyond the city of Winnipeg should be on the boundary commission, because to live and work in a community outside of Winnipeg is to understand the different representation that comes to this Chamber.

I am disappointed that we collectively did not do anything about that, because you do not do it after the boundary bill is produced. Then you are back into amending something that is already brought to this Chamber, and then you are getting into issues of political advantage and political disadvantage, which is not the goal of a boundary commission. But I believe this boundary commission law must be and should be changed. It must be and should be changed to deal with the whole composition of the representation on the commission. So we are therefore committed to working with all parties because I do not think any position should be selected, but I am not—think the three individuals on the commission are good people, but I dare say, and I have not looked, I bet you they live in one geographic area of the city. I will bet money that they are—I cannot bet money. That would be illegal. I take that back, I rescind it, I apologize. I would guess that they are probably living in an area of the city that has got particular issues of representation.

But Concordia, where I represent, the 20,000 people in Concordia are a lot easier for me to represent than 18,000 people in The Pas or 18,000 people in Rupertsland or 18,000 people or 19,000 people in Lakeside. It is just not fair to have people who have to represent rural communities have close to the same boundaries as those of us who are in the city. It is unbelievable to have a representation of people in northern Manitoba to be similar to representation for those of us in Winnipeg who are five minutes away from our constituencies,

five minutes away from our constituents, and have very little difficulty going from one community to another.

Now, I have had the privilege of travelling with the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) and to travel in his constituency is unbelievable. It is absolutely unbelievable. It is like that old movie Planes, Trains & Automobiles—planes, boats, airplanes, because I think—and helicopters. I mean, all the modes of transportation—and dog sled teams I have not been into, but I have been into skidoos. You know, you have to wait an hour in an airport to get a skidoo back to the community because the airport, of course, is on one side of the water away from the community versus the other, because the provincial government has the airstrip so the federal government has the community and the people have no connection to it.

You look at the Garden Hill area. There must be 6,000 people in Garden Hill, the First Nations community. The airstrip is across the water. If it is break-up time, you have to wait for a helicopter to get across the water because the airport, as I say, is on the island and the people are, of course, across the way. It is similar in St. Theresa Point, Wasagamack, other parts of that constituency, Oxford House. A lot of these places, it is a massive job to travel. Even in some places, I mean, God's River, the road and the airport are the same place, right. So you have to watch out when you are trying to land there that if you are landing or driving, I suggest you had better keep your head up. Now that is different than Concordia.

The amount of time the member—I know, I have travelled to meetings with the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) and the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) and the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) quite often. I remember last June when the Legislature was sitting, they were at a meeting all weekend in The Pas with the OCN community. Then they had a meeting at Moose Lake. We then had a meeting in Thompson that night that we were able to fly up to from this Legislature. They had to drive four and a half hours, five hours, over to the meeting in Thompson. Then, because of a tragic murder in a community, they had to drive

back to another community five and a half, six hours away to be back at a meeting at nine o'clock the next morning.

I have to tell you that the way the boundaries are now, I am worried about the safety of our four members from northern Manitoba. I am very worried that they work long hours and drive late at night trying to represent their constituents. I am very worried when they get in a vehicle at 10:30 or eleven o'clock at night to go another six hours on the road after going all day long. I do not like it. I do not think it is entirely safe. I know they are pretty used to doing it, but to say that is the same as Concordia or Inkster or even Brandon East is wrong.

I think that the commission, therefore, has to be expanded. We have to keep the concept of an independent Boundaries Commission, but we must look at expanding the commission representation with all party agreement before the next boundary change, and we have to fulfill the recommendation made by the Deputy Premier. Why have we not done this? Why have we not done this in terms of statutory representation on the commission?

Why can we not think of somebody, a position in rural Manitoba that is similar to the position of the president of the University of Manitoba, a statutory provision, not a federal position where you just appoint the members that could be or could not be partisan? Why can we not think of a First Nations person in northern Manitoba, a statutory position, maybe the chief of this community or that community, so at least Manitoba would have more than people in one part of Winnipeg on the Boundaries Commission? So I really strongly urge that that action take place, and let us work on it. Let us think of those people—or positions rather, not people—who would be nonpartisan.

Secondly, I want to deal with the 10 percent and 25 percent. This Legislature passed laws on dealing with a 10 percent variation in rural Manitoba. It passed legislation dealing with a 25 percent variation in northern Manitoba. That was the recommendation of this Legislature to the commission. We did not tell them how to do it, what boundaries to change, what boundaries

not to change, but we said that we know, as legislators, that a 10 percent variation is at least a minimum requirement for a rural representative and 25 percent is a fair and reasonable representation variation for northern Manitoba.

Now, we were told in '89, well, there may be a court case and, you know, the Charter of Rights and all this other stuff, but Madam Speaker, there have been court cases since. In 1992 the Supreme Court ruled on Saskatchewan and of course Saskatchewan had its own history of boundary establishment, if I could use that term in the most diplomatic way, but the Supreme Court said there are two criteria for establishing boundaries. One is the population, obviously the voters. The second criterion that must be considered by legislatures and Parliament and is acceptable in any provincial law is the duty of representation.

Our law, therefore, of 10 percent and 25 percent, the clear directions of this Legislature were found by the Supreme Court to be very consistent with their twin objectives of representation and the population. So when we see the kind of media coverage about Flin Flon versus, let us take Seine River, was one example, or Concordia was another example, the people doing the coverage did not understand the Supreme Court decision, nor did they understand the difficulty of being a rural member. So I think it is important for those of us who live in the city to rise up with the rural and northern members and get this right.

How do we get it right? Again, you do not do it in the middle of a boundary bill, because then it would be perceived to be political, but you do do it, instead of having the words "may be" 10 percent in rural Manitoba and "may be" 25 percent in northern Manitoba, which gives the boundary commission the complete ability to deal with this issue and, if they refuse to do it, the words "shall be" or something like that. I am not saying I would want to work in an all-party way.

I say to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Toews): this is very similar to a resolution that came from the Conservative Party in '89. This is not an NDP idea, but I believe the language should be

agreed upon by all parties. I absolutely agree that the language can be and should be agreed to by all parties, but our Legislature—yes, well, anybody that has negotiated any contract knows how much you get with may as opposed to shall.

But having said that, the '92 Supreme Court basically said that the laws and directions passed by this Legislature in establishing the boundaries, the political direction, the policy decisions were correct. The '87 policy decisions were correct as evaluated by the Supreme Court in 1992. Regrettably, it is not in my view the Boundaries Commission's right to roll back the policy decisions of this Legislature. It is rather their responsibility to have a nonpartisan way of establishing the boundaries but consistent with the Supreme Court and this Legislature's view that representing Lakeside is harder and difficult and more onerous than representing Concordia in the sense of representation.

\* (1500)

I think that rural members and northern members should be joined by city members. I think that to have the balance of population and representation which is consistent with the Supreme Court decision is very consistent with an interpretation of our law that gives a 10 percent variation for rural representation and we give a 25 percent variation for northern representation. I feel strongly that that must be dealt with and must be dealt with after this election campaign, whoever wins or whoever loses. That is something we said in '89. We agreed on that in '89, adding two members to the Boundaries Commission and having a clear delineation of the intent of this Legislature on the policy issue of population as one criterion, representation as the second criterion and dealing with the unique challenges of rural and northern representation.

In 1989, we also thought that the Independent Boundaries Commission should, in fact, have committee meetings in various parts of Manitoba, and included in that should be areas such as First Nations communities. In the Boundaries Commission report in '89, it said that there was quite a lot of criticism for not having any public hearings in First Nations communities.

Well, Madam Speaker, I think that is wrong as well. I think the Boundaries Commission should have—and our provincial secretary wrote the secretary of the Boundaries Commission and the chief electoral officer to say why are you not having any meetings in aboriginal communities? You have got 10 or 11 meetings set all across the province. Why are you not meeting? You are making major proposed changes to Cross Lake and major changes later in Grand Rapids and Easterville and other changes that will directly affect the political organizations of those people, the economic ties of those people, the kind of representation issues for those people, and that you should consult directly with those people first, not just have two meetings in the Convention Centre in Winnipeg and meetings in the nonaboriginal communities. We thought that there should be meetings in First Nations communities. Again, I think the commission should be required by this Legislature, again, not to be dictated on its boundaries, but as a policy matter I think that they should be attending those sessions.

I also want to comment on the timing of this process. I absolutely believe it is wrong to have a draft map produced in July and have meetings take place on the draft map in September, or August rather. It started in August, I believe. There were only four or five weeks from the time the map was produced till the time the public meetings took place.

Some of those communities, Madam Speaker, had, I dare say, agricultural challenges in August. We had an early harvest this year. There was not anybody, I understand, that showed up at Portage la Prairie—maybe they were tied up with the early crop—in terms of that public hearing.

In northern Manitoba, some of those communities have shut down. Some of those people have people that travel out of the community because they can get out of the communities. There are a lot of cultural events—powwows and other events in the summer—and there was very little time for anybody, and many of the organizations do not meet in July. This Legislature does not meet in July unless there is urgent business.

**An Honourable Member:** Or September or October.

**Mr. Doer:** Well, I will not go on. I was not intending this to have any "cheap shots" in it, and I will leave that to the members opposite, but back to my main point. I think that we to again have a map out in May, and public hearings perhaps in September, but it is not fair again to have people that may have a shutdown in Thompson or be on the fields in Manitoba. You know, people in Manitoba do not operate all the same way. The summer for some is a period of vacation with their families; for others, Thompson, for example, they may be shut down part of that period of time so they go visit other people in their communities—agricultural producers, powwows, other events. So I thought it was again wrong to have those hearings take place in the summer.

If the Boundaries Commission itself had a year to deal with the census and come up with the population variations, why cannot the public have a couple of months to come back and talk about the impact on their community, on their ability to have representation? I think one of the reasons why we have had so little turnout in some of our areas, again, was based on the timing of the commission.

I want to raise a couple of other issues about this report that we must deal with. Madam Speaker, we have a serious discrepancy between the band council count and the actual population count in aboriginal communities and the actual census in those communities. We also have a real discrepancy between the count in the inner city from the census and the actual number of people that reside in the inner city. Now this is not a problem unique to Canada, and it is not a problem unique to Manitoba.

There is a huge debate going on in the United States now of whether the inner cities of the major urban centres are properly represented for purposes of the future congressional elections. You have got massive population shifts for congressional elections in the year 2000, but there is a huge debate going on in the United States about the inadequacy of the U.S. census on inner city populations and the underrepresentation of people who may be on

the margins economically in the inner cities of the United States and therefore on the margins of political efficacy and representation.

We know that the Legislature and the purpose of democracy is to have everybody feeling that they are part of the voting on an election campaign and everybody feel that they have a right to vote, and that their vote will make a difference. I think the undercounting of inner city communities is a serious problem in North America. I am not sure whether we will get some kind of consensus—[interjection]

Well, we have never been responsible for the census yet. We have never been in office federally, but the inner city areas are undercounted. Now you talk to the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) or the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), and they will tell you that there is a huge discrepancy between the voters list—and you will know federally—the census number and the actual people living in a particular area. Therefore, we have to find a way in this century, with all the medical records we have and other data that we have, of looking at other ways of coming to a conclusion about actual numbers of people that therefore would dictate voters.

There were more people on the voters list, I think in Grand Rapids, if I am not mistaken, than was in the census in the 1995 election. We looked at various communities across northern Manitoba and rural Manitoba, and the undercounting was something like 33 percent. In the Swan River constituency alone, the undercounting of First Nations communities was 33 percent. When we looked at Rupertsland, I think it was comparable, 33 percent undercounting between the number of people that the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) has to represent and the number of people that were actually identified by the census as being therefore population. The member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), the same thing; the member for Interlake (Mr. C. Evans), the same reality; the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), with Nelson House, Split Lake and other communities, York Landing, same situation; the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) with South Indian Lake and Tadoule Lake and other communities, and the Mathias Colomb

community, again a community that was greatly undercounted.

\* (1510)

Madam Speaker, what is the short-term remedy to undercounting those communities? Well, there is a legal short-term remedy. The long-term remedy is to get the act straightened out so that people will not be undercounted. Whether it is in a rural community or in a northern community or in an inner city community, there is a remedy to deal with that. With computers today and with other data that are available like medical numbers and other information that is available, band counts, which is the basis of payments from the federal government, there are ways of dealing with that situation. But the short-term remedy of that situation was there to the Boundaries Commission. In my view, the Boundaries Commission erred dramatically in not having a 10 percent variation of rural Manitoba and not having a 25 percent variation in northern Manitoba, which would have meant that north of 53rd Parallel would have gone from four seats to five seats. If it meant another seat in rural Manitoba, so be it. I would live with that. It is not a political consideration. We went through the political reductions in rural and northern Manitoba last time. But if we were to go to the actual variations of 10 percent, in rural Manitoba it undercounts First Nations people. I dare say there is lots of undercounting going on. Swan River is a 33 percent undercount in those communities. It would be most directly affected in those two geographic areas. We believe that the North should have had 5 seats. I am very disappointed that the 25 percent variation is not in this act and a fifth northern seat is not there.

Now, we can debate about who would win that seat or lose that seat or if it is a rural seat who could win it or lose it. You know, there is past history, but you never know what is going to happen in an election campaign, and I would be very careful to make any predictions about that. I just know that you cannot—the four people, whoever they are, from whatever political party they are who are elected to represent those four northern seats, they are almost in a situation where I believe their safety is at risk just to represent those people. I dare

say if rural members are driving eight or nine or 10 hours at night again after being in this Chamber all day long, that is also a problem for them relative to those of us who have to drive 15 minutes to our constituency and then can be in a very central area in Winnipeg to represent our constituents. So we believe there should be a fifth northern seat.

How long have I gone so far? What is that? Thirty-three minutes?

So we believe that there should be a fifth northern seat. We believe the law is there, we believe the Supreme Court has ruled accordingly, and we believe the undercounting of First Nations people, the remedy is there in law to have a fifth seat. Certainly it is the expressed will of this Legislature, an all-party will of this Legislature.

In 1987, the former member for River Heights, now Senator Carstairs, the NDP in government and the Conservatives in opposition, we said there should be variations for rural Manitoba and northern Manitoba, notwithstanding the political ramifications of that. I think that original consensus has been deferred, has not been properly dealt with in this map. Therefore, the independence is reflected in this bill, but the direction of this Legislature is not in terms of northern Manitoba.

I would also like to make another comment about the inner city. We have a lot of changing population, a lot of transient, or a lot of people moving into the inner city, some from First Nations communities, some from other communities across the world. It is much more difficult to count those communities, as we have witnessed from Supreme Court decisions in the United States, and it is much more difficult for us to represent those communities for those people who are responsible for representing them.

Now, when I saw that Broadway was right on the population average for Manitoba, in fact I think it was 19,000 electors in the original population map, we were hoping, and we wanted to see that in order to make sure inner city residents were well represented that the boundaries actually went from the inner city out.

In other words, the methodology used to establish boundaries in the city of Winnipeg, we would have accepted 10 percent from rural and 25 percent for northern. The boundary bill in this province we believe should have in Winnipeg gone from the inner city out. We have so much work going on to try to make the downtown area of Winnipeg a better place for people to live and work. We have so many social and economic challenges to make sure that people who feel they are disenfranchised rebuild their communities and are able to rebuild their communities with hope and with support from the provincial government. We are trying to invest and trying to come up with solutions on housing, on social services, on health care services, on educational services, on recreational services, on economic development, on downtown redevelopment, on its place in Winnipeg and our place in the future of Manitoba.

So to have a situation where the inner city of Winnipeg loses the inner city seat and southwest Winnipeg gains a seat, I think was a problem in methodology. I do not have any difficulty in distributing the 31 seats in Winnipeg to save the 10 percent from rural. It may be down to 30 seats if we had 10 percent rural and 25 percent northern. It may even be down to 29 seats. Of course, we would say that those are the first priorities, 25 percent and the 10 percent. But I think the methodology to be used by the Boundaries Commission should be inner city out to the burbs, rather than the suburbs in. I think they made some errors by doing that, and that is not to say that it is not—you know, people talk about strategic difference. I mean, we do lose a seat, but we have a lot of other competitive seats that we are in the race on. That is not the point; that is not the point. The point is that if you look at turnout, if you look at economic and social data, if you look at health care data, the people in the city who are most distanced from the democratic process and feel most distant from power or the expression of power in this Legislature I would dare say would be in the inner city.

We also think that, wherever possible, the Boundaries Commission should have had decisions which kept communities as close as possible to the same representation as they had before. Again, it is not a political problem for us

but with the change in Osborne and Crescentwood going one geographic way to going another geographic way, going north and south to east and west, I mean, all it does is it breaks the communities of interest. There are the railway tracks there, and, again, we thought that that was not in keeping with the spirit of the act where a community of interest, wherever possible, would be kept the same.

Having said that, I think the Boundaries Commission did a very good job in a lot of other decisions they had to make. I want to say that the adjustment they made to Roblin for the Dauphin community makes a lot more sense. Anybody who has been to Roblin before knows that their community of interest is not Swan River but Dauphin. People in Roblin make decisions whether to go shop in Yorkton or Dauphin. The hospital infrastructure—Roblin, I believe, is in the Parklands health area. There is a lot more community interest in Roblin than there is in other communities, and that was a good adjustment based on public input from the people of that area. We support that as a positive, positive decision.

\* (1520)

Some of the other decisions on splitting municipal boundaries and how the commission dealt with that based on the feedback they received from the committee were good recommendations. The Boundaries Commission had to deal with the community of interest and the municipal boundaries consistent with the law, and where they made errors—I know that there was an intervention on the Rockwood community in the Rockwood municipality where that municipality was split, and the people in that area felt that that was a disadvantage for their representation. I thought the commission did well to listen to those arguments and acted accordingly.

Madam Speaker, I also think that in some parts of the city there is not a lot of change. Southeast Winnipeg, for example, I think the boundaries reflect the population shifts. It moves quite uniformly out to those areas. In northeast Winnipeg, it moves quite uniformly out to those areas. It makes the adjustments in a very reasonable way. In northwest Winnipeg, I

have already commented that I thought that the boundary adjustments, in all of the city, should come from the burbs in as opposed to the inner city out, or the other way around, rather. It should have come from the inner city out rather than the burbs in, the suburbs in, as a resident of a suburb, I might say, and as an MLA who represents half a suburban seat, only half a suburban seat, not as much as the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson). So we think that that made sense as well. Its adjustments in eastern Manitoba, south-central Manitoba, we think made sense. The new LaVerendrye boundary dealing with some of the Francophone population, we think made sense as well in that riding, and a lot of other changes that were made were the best changes that could be made.

So, Madam Speaker, in conclusion, we made a lot of speeches in '89. There were 16 speeches in '89. I thought we had an all-party consensus on rural and northern Manitoba. I remember the eloquent words of the former member for Churchill. I remember the eloquent words of the former Deputy Premier of this province, the present member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey). Judging by what is going on in that nomination race, you may want to—I will not go there. We believe that this Legislature set the parameters. We did not say that northern and rural Manitoba would be treated the same. We did not say that being an electorate in Flin Flon was the same as being an electorate in Seine River. We said, no, that being an electorate in Flin Flon or Rupertsland, with the 25 percent variation, meant that the variation must be taken into consideration by the Boundaries Commission report.

We also said that rural Manitoba should be 10 percent. We also said that this commission should have additional people. We also think we should deal with the census of the undercounting of aboriginal people all across Manitoba in terms of its impact on ridings and the undercounting in the inner city. So, therefore, we think that the commission should be changed for the future. We think that the North should have and must have five seats in order to achieve the results of the Supreme Court's decision. We think the rural communities should have 10 percent variations; and, we think the inner city count should go from the inner city out. Those would



be our concerns, and this time around, as we deal with the independent Boundaries Commission report and we as politicians honour the recommendations of the independent Boundaries Commission, that does not mean to say that we as the legislators are absolutely devoid of responsibilities. We have to deal with the deficiencies of this new map in terms of rural and northern people.

We should commit ourselves to having rural and northern representatives on the commission and a fair reflection of the Supreme Court in this province. Fifty-seven members of this Chamber are not equal. Those of us who represent a 40-block area in the city of Winnipeg have a lot less travelling responsibilities and representative responsibilities in terms of outreach than those of us who travel by canoe, by skidoo, by airplane, by winter roads and by any other means to represent Manitobans. All Manitobans are equal but not all geographic areas of this province are equal, and this Legislature has got to do something about that before the next Boundaries Commission report. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, I too want to say a few words in regard to Bill 2. After all, it is a bill which we have been calling for for a little while now. Having said that, no doubt the temptation for me personally is very great to not necessarily be politically correct. So I might deviate from being politically correct on a couple of occasions in putting my comments on it, and that is only because at times I think that it is indeed warranted. There are fundamental principles that as a person, as a political party, I believe that we feel are absolutely essential. The disappointment that I have had on a personal level over the last number of months has been overwhelming to the extent that it has been borderline depressing in terms of what I have seen take place.

I would start off, Madam Speaker, and because we are talking about boundary redistribution, I will only allude to the length of the session very, very briefly, by saying that I do believe that there is an obligation for this House to be sitting. Had this House been sitting when it should have been sitting, this bill would, in

fact, have been passed. I look at that as one of the cornerstones of democracy. When you spend and generate billions of dollars of tax dollars, there is a responsibility to the public to be held accountable in what I classify as the centrepiece of democracy. By not sitting here, what we do is we make a mockery of what I believe is one of the cornerstones of democracy.

Another issue, Madam Speaker, is the whole issue of boundary redistribution. My colleague the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) stood in his place at the opening of the session on a matter of privilege and talked about putting off debate on the throne speech. We believe, quite frankly, that there is at least one precedent that shows that we could have put off the debate on the throne speech in order to deal with boundary distribution. We felt that that was critical because no one inside of this Chamber could guarantee that we would, in fact, have the new boundaries before the election itself being called.

Now, having said that, in support of my colleague from The Maples, I assisted in doing what I could with respect to his matter of privilege. Well, it was to my surprise that the government did, in fact, acknowledge that they were prepared to pass the legislation prior to dealing with the throne speech.

Madam Speaker, I applaud the government in taking that particular approach at dealing with the boundary redistribution. I was, again, greatly disappointed when the official opposition, who, I believe, also had a moral responsibility to see this legislation passed, denied the opportunity of this Chamber of passing it, of not changing or allowing for the boundaries to pass prior to debate on the throne speech.

My colleague for The Maples refers to it as playing with democracy. Well, Madam Speaker, yes, the government was wrong in their handling of this particular issue. I would argue that the official opposition was also wrong in the handling of this critical and very important issue.

There is very little doubt in my mind that, had it not been from the positioning of the Liberal Party on this particular issue, we would

likely not be dealing with that legislation here today. I applaud and acknowledge the actions back in January when I had approached the Leader of the Liberal Party and indicated that I was wanting to have my nomination—actually, it would have been towards the end of December after the release of the boundaries—in which our newly elected Leader at the time, and there was no indecision on his part, indicated that there is a moral and ethical obligation for us as a political party to be having our nominations on the new ridings. That then set the stage for the party's position that we would do whatever we could at whatever cost in order to apply pressure on this government to do what was right. What was right was to see these boundaries being passed as soon as possible.

\* (1530)

Madam Speaker, I respect the Leader of the official opposition and the comments that he put on the record in regard to the New Democratic Party's position on some of the content and what they would like to see as a future. I disagree with a lot of content. I want to comment on some of that. I will wait for the member for Thompson's (Mr. Ashton) speech.

When we talk about, for example, the underpopulations or Census Canada not getting a true count of the numbers that are actually there, then what we are really talking about are some of the tools that Elections Manitoba uses in order to gauge what the population actually is. I do not know if Elections Manitoba should be taking flak for that particular issue.

One of the things that we have to be very cognizant of, Madam Speaker, because I know that Elections Manitoba and other parties will be reading what the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) or the Leader of the official opposition, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) have put on the record—so we have to be very careful. I would suggest to Elections Manitoba, as a party that garnered 24 percent of the vote in the last provincial election, that we have a lot of insights on what is necessary in order to see Elections Manitoba remain completely independent and free in making what is absolutely critical in terms of decisions of fairness and equity in

dealing with democracy on the whole issue of boundaries.

Now why I say that quite candidly is because, you know, the 25 percent, 10 percent variation, that is an issue, and I can vaguely recall having that discussion, went back in 1989, amongst our caucus. You know, Madam Speaker, there are pros and cons to being a member of a rural riding as opposed to an urban riding and, yes, that should also be taken into consideration. It would joy me tremendously to be an MLA from rural Manitoba. There are all sorts of other opportunities that are out there in rural Manitoba. I am not going to be announcing; I am quite happy where I am. But I would suggest to you that there are certain opportunities and privileges and enjoyments that a rural candidate has over an urban candidate, so I do not want the Manitoba Elections office to believe that it is all one-sided.

When we talk of duty of representation, you have to take into consideration technology, computerization and Canada Post, telephone communications. There are all sorts of ways in which we communicate with our constituents. I do not believe for a moment that the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) or the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) is any worse off than I because I happen to represent an urban riding. If those members feel that they are worse off, I am more than happy to sit down with them and explain to them some of the things that they can be doing with the extra resources that they are being given, with the modern technology that is out there. There are many.

I know it excites the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). The member for Thompson should be, I am sure, aware that potential opponents that the member for Thompson has—the member for Thompson has a distinct advantage over his potential opponents because of the extra financing, because of the communication budgets, both post office and because of telephones, in terms of going into the next provincial election. It is not like a candidate can go and knock on all 7,000 residential homes. The member for Thompson—you have to take a balanced approach at what we classify as duty of representation, and you have

to balance that with equity and a sense of fairness within our democratic system.

Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you that there are many disadvantages that rural candidates who are not elected have, the nonincumbency factor, that put them at a distinct disadvantage compared to an urban candidate who is hoping to unseat an incumbent. I ask that the member for Thompson respect that fact, and if he does not respect that fact, I would suggest to you that he is being very political. It is indeed—[interjection]

Madam Speaker, when we talk about population, the Leader of the official opposition made reference to Point Douglas and made reference then to Seine River or the Speaker's seat and compared it to Flin Flon and talked about what the media used.

I can tell the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), whenever I had the opportunity to talk to the media, I talked about Point Douglas versus Seine River, a 17,000-18,000 versus a 29,000-30,000. We are talking of a depopulation in certain parts of Winnipeg, and we are talking about serious growth in other areas of Winnipeg.

Those, Madam Speaker, are issues that have to and need to be addressed, and that is the reason why we created this independent process through Elections Manitoba. How can we justify to some MLAs and their constituents, and more importantly to Manitobans, the type of inequities that are here today? How do we then justify the lack of responsibility for actions by the government and the official opposition had this bill not passed because of the inequities that are indeed there?

When we look at the process, Madam Speaker, there are a couple of things that I want to comment on. December 1997 is actually when the research secretary was hired for Elections Manitoba. February '98, the commission first actually met. Between February and May, map options and census Canada figures were released. [interjection] Because I placed the phone call, and every member can place that very same phone call and ask what actually took place.

Madam Speaker, in May, existing maps with populations of variations were in fact released July 1, which is—

**An Honourable Member:** Is this after you phoned them or before?

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I phoned them a few weeks ago—a couple of weeks ago. July 1, the draft was released to the public. Starting on August 27 to September 11, public input was formally received in seven different locations in Manitoba. After considerable feedback, the commission went over several options and recommendations which ultimately led to the final report being released on December 18.

Madam Speaker, from that point on, the responsibility then, the moral and ethical responsibility, was for this government to get us back into session and pass that legislation. [interjection] Wrong. The dean of the Chamber is wrong. I do not want to get off topic. You can refer to my earlier comments in this speech.

Now, having said that, Madam Speaker, I want to go back to 1989. It was May 24, 1989, the last time we debated the boundary redistribution issue inside this Chamber. Actually we did not debate it that day, I stand corrected. It was read for the first time. Like many other bills, 95 percent of the bills that come before this Chamber—the bill is brought in for first reading, no debate occurs for a great deal of time. Well, it actually came to debate for the first time in second reading on June 21, 1989. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) was correct. Sixteen people actually commented.

**An Honourable Member:** Five hours to debate it.

\* (1540)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** That is right, five hours to debate it. Okay, having said that, then on June 23 it went into committee. On June 26 it was going through a third reading; on June 26 it received Royal Assent. That is five days; that is all it took.

You know, Madam Speaker, when it went to committee—[interjection] No, we are talking from first reading. If you want to count first reading in the first four months. We are talking

about legitimate debate days within this Chamber. Between first reading and second reading, I would suggest to you that those were days that it could have been given first reading on June 21, quite frankly.

Madam Speaker, the point is when we went into Committee of the Whole back then, it passed without a word. There were no comments added to it. When it went into third reading, there were no comments to it. It went into Royal Assent. There is a good reason and the Leader of the official opposition raised it in his speech, and that is that we want to be very careful that we are not accused of gerrymandering, which is a terminology that is used where politicians fix the boundaries. We want to prevent that from occurring.

Madam Speaker, to this day we still do not have a commitment on paper. Yes, we have a commitment that we are going to pass these bills. That is a signed-off document, prior to the budget. I am a little bit of a skeptic, because I have seen signed documents before. I still do not have a commitment from the Premier saying that he will not call an election before these boundaries are put into place.

So, Madam Speaker, I trust and hope, and most of that faith is going to the official opposition, I must say, to ensure that whatever is taken, whatever has happened—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples):** The Leader of the Opposition said: do not trust us. I am not too sure what he was referring to.

**Mr. Doer:** Trusting somebody who does not have the authority to call an election is not a good idea. So the only person you can trust who has the authority to call the election is the First Minister. I would suggest that we not trust him, because I do not either.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for The Maples did not have a point of order.

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**Mr. Lamoureux:** Here is the point. The Leader of the official opposition I believe will respect what I am saying as pretty close to 100 percent in terms of its accuracy. We know that we cannot trust the Premier. We agree on that point, okay? The Leader of the official opposition acknowledges that particular fact.

Well, Madam Speaker, what I am going to have some trust and faith in is not only in that paper, because that paper, it is signed, yes, but what I am looking for is the assurance from the official opposition. We know that the budget is going to be coming down on the 29th. We know that for a fact. Well, what I am looking for the official opposition party to do is to ensure that this legislation is in fact passed and given Royal Assent prior to the budget debate starting. That is what I look to the official opposition to do. That is something which they can materialize. The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says: no problem, do not worry. There is that wonderful song: Don't Worry, Be Happy. The member for Thompson rectifies it by saying: well, you should always be a little bit worried.

Well, Madam Speaker, you know, that is something in which I trust that only the New Democrats can, because they have full cooperation from us in order to ensure that legislation gets passed. Let us not be petty. History is something that is there behind us. We have the bill. We can tell whether or not they are manipulating. They are prepared to pass it. By all means, let us pass this legislation. There is absolutely no reason why this legislation cannot be passed.

One of the unfortunate things is the moment that I sit down the member for Thompson I believe is going to stand up. When the member for Thompson stands up, I think he might take exception to some of the things that I have said.

**An Honourable Member:** I have been taking notes, Kevin, yes.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** As he indicates, he has been taking notes. Well, Madam Speaker, what I would like the member for Thompson, as I talk for the next 20 minutes or so I figure I have—no, I will not be that long. I am kidding.

Madam Speaker, what I would appeal to the member for Thompson is to keep in mind, as I have pointed out, that the office of Elections Manitoba, in my mind there is absolutely no doubt, will read and will take seriously everything in regard to debates and comments on this particular bill. Hopefully that is in fact the case. I really believe that it is a responsibility of Elections Manitoba, as it does on certain other issues, to convey and have discussions with party representatives. Those party representatives are not necessarily elected individuals. They represent the parties in dealing with different issues regarding the elections and how they are run in the province of Manitoba.

Well, Madam Speaker, I would suggest that as opposed to Elections Manitoba getting overly caught up in possibly some rhetoric, myself included, I guess to a certain degree, on this particular bill, those discussions are better taken outside of this Chamber but take into consideration some of the comments that are being put forward on the record from members of this Chamber. I like to think that we express not only party positions but also positions—what we feel are important to our constituents. That is what I am going to comment on right now in terms of the constituents' aspect.

This is the second time where boundaries are changing. The first time boundaries changed, I lost Brooklands or part of Brooklands, and I lost the part of Weston. Wonderful people, it gave me a great sense of pride in first receiving good support from those communities; and then, unfortunately, because of the boundary distribution, I had lost the privilege of representing them in the following election.

For almost 11 years now, I have been representing the Shaughnessy Park-Mynarski area between McPhillips and Keewatin Streets. It is indeed humbling to know the type of support that I have received from that area. It has been a privilege for me to have represented those constituents, and I trust and I convey that I have always attempted to do what I could to try to make those communities a better place to live. I can only hope at this point in time that, if the boundaries do take effect, I am going to be able

to get the type of support that I have had from the past in the new area, the area in which my colleague for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) currently represents. I know the member for The Maples today will ensure that if, in fact, I am fortunate enough to be re-elected, I am held accountable for that area. I know I can count on that, Madam Speaker.

But going back to what I think constituents want is that they very much believe in the democratic system. They very much believe in those principles, those foundations of democracy. I alluded earlier to the session, a very important issue for me personally and our political party. When we look at the issue in which the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), no doubt, will spend a good 50 percent of his speech, in all likelihood, on—

\* (1550)

**An Honourable Member:** It has gone up to about 90 now.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** —possibly 90, as he has referred to—is some of the perceived and, in some cases, real advantages and disadvantages of being a rural versus an urban MLA. I appeal to the member for Thompson to take into consideration the impact on things such as candidates, the incumbency factor, issues such as everything from abilities to appreciation. When the member for Thompson, I would think, goes to a door in a remote area of his riding, I think that a constituent would look at that as a phenomenal effort. The member for Thompson would likely be rewarded handsomely, and the best thing you could probably get is not only appreciation but also some support. That does not necessarily mean that that is going to happen. I think that there are very clear advantages of being a rural MLA. I also believe there are very clear advantages of being an urban MLA.

What is important, more important than anything else, is not what Elections Manitoba does in order to ensure better democracy—better representation, I should say, not democracy—I misspoke myself. Elections Manitoba's responsibility is to ensure a sense of fairness in the democratic system, and I very much believe

in a one-member, one-vote system, even though I am sympathetic to the 25 percent—and I know our party is sympathetic to the 25 percent—I would not personally support that it should be instituted, that it should be "shall" be 25 percent. I could not support that. I could see Elections Manitoba giving some guidance to be taking that into consideration, along with the 10 percent. I do not believe that it should be "shall." I think that it would be a mistake.

What is more important is not what Elections Manitoba does on that particular issue, it is more important what we do here in the Manitoba Legislature, in particular on the Legislative Assembly Management Commission, because it is through LAMC that those sort of financial resources are given to allow members to ensure that there is a sense of equality in representation. It is not the primary role of Elections Manitoba, it is the primary role of the Legislative Assembly Management Commission.

Madam Speaker, I would trust and hope that Elections Manitoba will at least respect that particular argument that you can reduce—you can have Rupertsland's population reduced to 50 percent, if you like, of the average size of a constituency, yet if we through LAMC give no rural benefits to that member, I would argue that there would be poor representation of that particular rural riding. What is critical, when it comes to fair and equitable and good sound representation, first and foremost, is the individual who gets elected; second, it is the resources that that particular individual is provided.

Madam Speaker, Elections Manitoba is not responsible for either one of those. It is very easy—and that is why I said at the very beginning of my speech that I might not necessarily be politically correct in my statements. When I made that comment, this, what I have just said in the last two paragraphs or two minutes, is the primary reason for that.

So what I believe my constituents would want me to say in regard to boundary redistribution is that their vote has to have some value in terms of equity across the province. That I will articulate for; I will articulate that to

the very best of my ability, not only from within this Chamber but also within the Liberal Party, and I would lobby Elections Manitoba. I would ask that the lobbying of resources in enhancing opportunities to be able to better represent your constituencies is something that happens in LAMC, and that is something that I am deeply, as the Liberal Party is, committed to ensuring takes place. After all, it was the Liberal Party in '88 that brought in a lot of the rules of enhancement of our access allowances in working with the third party at the time—

**An Honourable Member:** Do not call us the third party. I never liked that term.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I do not like the "third party" either. That is a fair comment.

The other opposition party at the time, I would ask that we be treated in the same fashion as the other opposition party. But having said that, Madam Speaker, I think that the proof is in the pudding, and the party has demonstrated, I believe, strong leadership on this whole issue of boundary redistribution and ensuring good, solid, fair representation. It is a message which we plan to continue and be ever so vigilant on.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Madam Speaker, I must admit I had planned on speaking today, but my speech has been assisted greatly by the comments made by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

**An Honourable Member:** Be nice.

**Mr. Ashton:** I will not be nice. I would like to make an invitation here to the member for Inkster and that is to walk a few—I was going to say a few miles in my shoes here, but maybe a few hundred miles in my shoes and the shoes of every rural and northern MLA in this Chamber. I want to preface it by saying that I do not underestimate the challenge facing urban MLAs at all. It is a difficult job being in the public eye. I understand that; I recognize that. We are all in a similar situation, and I never, ever, would suggest that urban MLAs have privileges that we do not have in rural and northern Manitoba. But, you know, when the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) just talked about the privileges that

rural and northern members had, well, I could not resist.

I am just trying to think of what privileges I have as a member of the Legislature. Now, first of all, my constituency is about 750 kilometres north of the city. I had the privilege this morning of getting up, getting on the plane, coming down here. I am lucky this week I got to fly because if I drove, it would be nine hours—

**Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas):** I left at 5:30.

**Mr. Ashton:** The member for The Pas left at 5:30 this morning. I will not be back home until Thursday night. That is a real privilege, is it not? I get to spend four days here in the city, away from my family. That is just the start, the travel we have to do just to get back and forth where we live. I look to the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings), the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), I look around at our caucus, the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), the member for Interlake (Mr. C. Evans)—we are all in the same situation—the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), the member for Brandon East (Mr. L. Evans). That is something urban members do not have to face, that geographic separation from their constituencies.

Now, I realize it may be a long trip back home for the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) if there is a traffic jam. I suspect it might be 15 minutes.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** No, 25.

**Mr. Ashton:** Twenty-five? Well, I guess the member for Inkster must drive a little bit slower than I do. [interjection] I appreciate the honesty of urban members—the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), who says seven minutes to travel home. Now, that is one of the privileges, right? We get to spend the week in Winnipeg. Wait a sec. Some of us also represent a lot of communities in our constituency. You know, we have the privilege. I will give you an example of this because the member for Inkster actually is not alone in this. There was a presenter to the Boundaries Commission I thought summed up the same mentality. Actually, it was somebody associated with the Conservative Party. I think it was the lawyer who was originally supposed to

be part of the Monnin inquiry. It was talking about how in the technological age we did not need to have any recognition in terms of the size of constituencies because of the technological age.

I would like to invite the member for Inkster and anybody else who is not aware of how far that technological age penetrates in Manitoba to come to my constituency. I represent eight communities. By the way, I have it a lot easier than the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson). I have it a lot easier than the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen). I think the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) and I are probably in an equivalent set of circumstances, but I have four communities out of eight that do not have any roads. Oops, there goes that sort of technology aspect.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Do they have telephones?

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, there is another one. The member says do they have telephones. For the member for Inkster, how many people does he think in remote communities can afford telephones, 10 percent, 20 percent? I do not want to assume that the member for Inkster is not aware of this, but in many of my communities, you have 10-20 percent having phones, and it is getting smaller and smaller the way the phone rates are going. So, so much for this technology.

\* (1600)

I just want to outline some of the kind of circumstances we went through because by way of background—by the way, when I first found out about the first draft of the boundaries, I was on holidays. I was told, Steve, your seat is going to be the biggest seat in the province. I am in the first draft, and I thought, my goodness, they gave me half of Rupertsland. Do you know what? They had made Thompson the largest seat by population.

So what I did, I went into the boundaries' hearings, and I actually took the map. I wish I could unroll it here, it would be considered an exhibit, I am sure. I kind of said, welcome to Thompson, welcome to the Thompson constituency, and I outlined the eight communities and what it is like to be a member

of the Legislature representing those eight communities. I would note that anybody who has travelled in the North, like the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Newman), previous ministers and some of the MLAs who have taken the time to do that, will understand what it is like.

I started with Thompson obviously, urban community. Now, all I have to do is drive nine hours to get home, and I can represent my constituency, okay. Now, Wabowden, it is actually on Highway 6. It is not that bad. It is about an hour from Thompson. Then I started getting into the communities with road access.

Now, Nelson House, by the way, one hour outside of Thompson, has some of the worst road conditions in the province. I mean, we have been a little bit vocal about that in the House. We know it is an hour's drive, but you are lucky if you get there with your four tires intact. The same thing with Split Lake, it has an all-weather road. By the way, that is the end of the access to roads in my constituency.

Now, if you want to get to York Landing, there is a ferry. Do you know how often it runs? Twice a week. Now, if you want to go to York Landing right now, can you go by ferry? No, because we have not had the spring thaw yet. [interjection] Even if you are, if you want to spend three or four days in York Landing—please, I would invite the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) to do that. I am sure the community would be a very gracious host. Do you know what? You could say, well, there is the winter road. Well, you know, the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) took the time to travel on that winter road, and it is not an easy road to travel on. If you get an early thaw like we did this year—I was planning on going in at the end of March. Guess what? No winter road.

Now, I actually have communities that are accessible by train only. The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) has been in that community, as well as the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid). You know, what is interesting is you can get into those communities. Now, one problem, the train runs three times a week. Now, you can actually go into one of the communities, in and out the same day,

if you catch the southbound train and the northbound train. There is only one problem with that. Sometimes the train can be 24 hours late, so you might run into a little bit of difficulty. Sometimes the two trains coincide so that you get about half an hour in that community.

Now, the other two communities on the rail line, you have to spend at least a day, if not two days, in the community, okay? Now, no all-weather road access. You know, I tell you, there are not a lot of people sitting around playing games on the Internet, you know. This is the reality of a northern community.

Now, let us deal with the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) because people will say, aw, it looks pretty good, right? The member for The Pas represents Cross Lake and Norway House. I will tell you how good our road networks are into Cross Lake and Norway House. A year ago, the road was closed for several days. This is a provincial highway. Of course, it happens to be in the North, okay, so provincial highways in the North have a slightly different character than provincial highways in those parts of the province where, you know, if you want to put a political map over them, they are coloured blue. So you cannot necessarily even get in there. You cannot get in necessarily right now. In fact, between the time the ice bridge is open and the ferry runs, you have several weeks when that community is not accessible.

Okay, I am just dealing with Thompson and The Pas here. What about Rupertsland and Flin Flon? Now, I say to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), who talked about the privileges that members have, you know, you can send out all the franks and householders your want, you can have all the travel money you want, but try and put yourself in the situation of the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen). Now, he lives in Cranberry Portage. He represents Flin Flon. Do you know where else he represents? Brochet, Lac Brochet, Tadoule Lake, South Indian Lake. Do you know what? They do not have road access. Do you know how the member for Flin Flon accesses his constituency? He gets in a car from Cross Lake. He drives to Thompson. Then he drives through my constituency in its entirety to hit the first community that is accessible in the



northern part of his riding at Leaf Rapids. Do you know how long a drive that is? About four hours, five hours, if you do not get stuck on Highway 391. That is the member for Flin Flon.

Now, I have left the best or in this case the worst till last, the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson). Now, actually, the member for Rupertsland has a unique distinction. He right now in the current boundaries can be in his constituency in about an hour and a half. You may say, boy, he is lucky. He gets to go and he is in his constituency in an hour and a half. The only problem is it starts at Sagkeeng First Nation and goes all the way to the 60th Parallel—[interjection] Well, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says how many ridings will we have in northern Manitoba? We said put in place in terms of what the North had before 1989, which was five northern ridings. That would solve the problem, and that was the position of many northerners.

**An Honourable Member:** Five would resolve all those problems?

**An Honourable Member:** It would go a long way.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, you know the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says, and five would resolve all those problems, and as the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) points out, it would go a long way.

I realize the member for Inkster does not quite get this privilege that he thinks we have. You know, actually, I am very proud to represent Thompson, and I would not like to change places with the member for Inkster—but maybe even for a week. I think I could handle the 25-minute drive back. We will trade it, the nine-hour drives. This is something any of us who represent rural and northern areas do on a regular basis. I know rural and northern members in this House who are travelling within much closer constituencies. I recognize this as well. The LaVerendrye constituency, for example. It looks very easy to service, right? But how many communities are within that? You know, it is not like in a city riding where you have one event here, and you are five minutes—[interjection] How many?

**An Honourable Member:** Eighteen.

**Mr. Ashton:** Eighteen communities, the member for LaVerendrye (Mr. Sveinsson). The member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), you look at the area that he has to represent.

**An Honourable Member:** We should give him 18 ridings.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, and the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says we should give 18 ridings. I say to the member for Inkster—and I could be political—I could suggest that maybe the mentality of the member for Inkster showing today is one of the reasons why the Liberal Party has I think had one MLA outside of the city in the last 20 years. Because you know it shows a complete ignorance. As much as I disagree with the Conservatives on so many issues of principle, I mean I do recognize there are many members across the way who represent rural ridings the same way we represent rural and northern areas, and probably understand of what I speak, and many urban members too, because a lot of our urban MLAs in our caucus have travelled into those communities. In fact, when I look around right now, everybody in this room has been in my constituency at least one time.

**An Honourable Member:** I have been there four times.

**Mr. Ashton:** And the member for Inkster has been in Thompson four times. That is sort of like one month of being the MLA for Thompson here. I understand that may have been a great experience for the member.

**An Honourable Member:** How many times have you been in Inkster?

**Mr. Ashton:** Oh, I have been in Inkster. I have actually knocked on doors in Inkster too, by the way.

**An Honourable Member:** Are you talking old or new?

**Mr. Ashton:** No, I am talking I have been in Inkster. I can say to the member opposite, do not talk about the rural northern ridings as somehow being privileged because of any kind

of assumptions you have about modern technology. It is not the case.

**An Honourable Member:** I said there are advantages and disadvantages—

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, you said advantages, disadvantages. Earlier on you talked about the privileges. Now you said about the advantage that incumbents have. You know, I would like to show you my shoes if I could, but that would be another exhibit. With these shoes, you know the big advantage I have in my communities. When I go into communities like Thicket Portage and Pikwitonei and Ilford and York Factory First Nation, York Landing, you know what I do, the big advantage I do? Do you think I mail tons of stuff in? That is the big advantage. Do you know, do you think I go around with glossy leaflets? You know what I do? I knock on their door, and I ask them if they have any problems or any concerns. That is the experience of most rural and northern MLAs is community contact, the same thing as in the city. There is no magic thing when you step outside of the Perimeter. You know, the bottom line is, in fact, we have a distinct disadvantage in one way. Tonight, you will be back in your constituency; tomorrow you will be back in it. The day after you will be back, and rural and northern MLAs cannot do that.

That, by the way, brings me to the bottom line with the boundaries discussion. In 1989, a lot of the problem we are seeing today with northern seats was created. I say to the member for Inkster—in 1989, in fact 1988, the Boundaries Commission took the law which allowed for a 25 percent variation in northern Manitoba, 10 percent rural Manitoba—you know what they did? They said: we assume that the Charter of Rights will result in this being struck down. So they went and they eliminated the fifth northern seat, Churchill.

Now that was not the legislation; they assumed that. You know what happened in 1992? The Supreme Court of Canada, in a case involving Saskatchewan, said you are allowed to have those kinds of population variations because the reality is you need to balance out both representation in terms of the legislative sense and also representation in terms of

members of constituencies having access to their member of the Legislature.

\* (1610)

So, in 1989, the Boundaries Commission made a mistake, a serious mistake, I believe. In 1992, it was proven to be the case. We ended up with this set of boundaries discussions.

Well, I want to note that the first map that was put out was one of the worst pieces of work I could have imagined under these circumstances. I understand it is an independent commission, and I am saying this now after we are dealing with the final report, but I can tell you, to have had Thompson be the largest constituency by population was an insult, an absolute insult. To ignore the needs. In fact, staff people—I appreciate by the way that I think the commissioners were concerned about this—were going around saying: well, the North is not going to get a fifth northern seat.

You know, we did not ask for any special privilege. We asked for the use of the 25 percent provision which would have dealt with that, and the member says: Oh, sure we asked for special privileges. And what special provisions? To make sure that—

**An Honourable Member:** Then why do you say they have to take into consideration?

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, I am saying to the member, and the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) still does not get it. The first map that was drafted, the seats like Seine River's, for example, were some of the smallest seats by population; Seine River was smaller than some of the rural ridings. [interjection] Well, the member for Inkster is suggesting that his constituents are not as good as ours. I assume if we have a situation of 25 percent representation—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the member for Thompson has definitely left on the record—he is trying to put words in my mouth to the effect that he is saying that my constituents are not quite as valuable as maybe they could be or should be. I did not

catch the exact words because the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) was trying to imply something which I totally disagreed with. I do believe that the value of my constituents is equal to the member for Thompson's or the member for The Pas's.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Inkster does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Ashton:** Madam Speaker, my entire point here is that constituents of the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) should have the best possible opportunity to access their member of the Legislature. Unless you have fair boundaries that reflect the act at 25 percent, you are unable to have that take place. I would say to the member for Inkster who will be driving home to his constituency tonight, that 25-minute drive that he talks about, that tonight he will be back in his constituency and people can phone him at any particular point in time. They can phone him at home.

I will not be home tonight. I will not be home until Thursday. That is one of the difficulties you have as a rural and northern MLA. I cannot commute, and I say to the member for Inkster that one of the reasons we have a balance is because of that. By the way, in Saskatchewan, my understanding is that the variation that is included there is a 40 percent variation in the northern area.

The member for Inkster seems to have this thing about the North getting recognition of its geographic area in terms of electoral boundaries. I know the member said he did not have a problem with the 25 percent. He seems to have this fixation on northern Manitoba. I say to the member for Inkster, the bottom line is here. This is something that is enshrined in every Legislature in this country, the fact that there is a difference by region, and that is why the first map that was issued was such an insult to northerners.

Madam Speaker, I give the commission some credit on the second round of hearings, but I want to note that having been at the hearings in

Thompson, by the way, one of the main recommendations we made was that the commission, which, coincidentally, consists of three people based in the city of Winnipeg, should have taken the opportunity not just to go into the major urban centres but to go into, for example, Cross Lake or Norway House or Nelson, travel into some of the aboriginal communities because, believe you me, this was a significant concern at the time, particularly in Cross Lake. I give the commission credit—

**An Honourable Member:** Is that not where Cubby Barrett got his license?

**Mr. Ashton:** Where Cubby Barrett got his license. Yes. We will get into that. I am diverging here because I want to point out the fact that the commission did not travel to aboriginal communities. If they had, I think they would have heard, as I hear from my constituents, very direct concerns about ensuring that the North was treated fairly.

Now, I want to make a couple of suggestions here by the way, because I think part of this—this could have been dealt with by the commission. It can be dealt with by legislation. I want to make a number of suggestions to resolve some of these problems. First of all, I would suggest that from now on in, as we discussed in 1989, we have a Boundaries Commission that has both rural and northern representation. [interjection]

Well, the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) asks a very good question. We could do it, for example, on the basis of we have the University of Manitoba. We also have institutions outside of the city, Brandon University, Keewatin Community College. There are various different institutional arrangements. I think, if we accept the principle, we can work out someone who is objective on these matters. I think that would help give the broader perspective that we need. That is the first recommendation that I think we can all agree on, okay.

The second thing I would like to suggest, by the way, Madam Speaker, to resolve some of the other ongoing difficulties, I think we really

should revisit the provisions of the act in terms of the 10 and the 25 percent variation. I think the intent was very clear in 1987. It was not followed in 1989, and I do not think it was followed this time in its fullest sense to allow the kind of variation that ensures that you get fair boundaries.

I also want to make another suggestion, that we look at changing the timing in the dealing with boundaries, because one thing that I find is very unfortunate about this situation because of the fact that for the first time in more than a decade we did not have a fall sitting, is that we end up in a situation where the final map was drafted in December, our session did not begin until April. By the way, the government could have brought us back in under the old session to deal with boundaries. They chose not to. We then were dealing with the throne speech. We are now dealing with the act in place here, and there has been a fair amount of debate back and forth from Liberal members, Conservative members and from our side about when those boundaries will come into play. Well, there is I think a solution to this.

One suggestion I would make is that we could have avoided this problem if we, for example, had required the commission to bring its boundaries in at the end of, say, 1998 and then have those boundaries come into place upon passage by the Legislature not the following January but the January after that, okay. That would have given plenty of opportunity of notice to the political parties who would then be aware of the different boundaries, would have given people I think a chance to familiarize themselves with different boundaries, because we would end up with a rather unique situation now. We could have an election within a matter of days, weeks, months. A lot of people with the changes will not know which boundary they are in, which constituency they are in. The solution I think would be to get some delay.

By the way, as much as we have had some strong words back and forth, we have not engaged in the kind of a manipulation that took place in the federal House of Commons. I would just like to draw the attention of people to that, with the delay of the boundaries, some of

the interesting developments where candidates were basically persuaded not to run again, were appointed to bodies such as the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. Oh, I am sorry, I am talking about a specific case here. I should not say too much about Ron Fewchuk because he no longer is in that job. I guess he has gone on to Liberal patronage—Senate, well, not the Senate but the pension heaven—but that was a case of how you do not deal with boundaries. I do not want to see us lose that.

\* (1620)

I want to suggest, Madam Speaker, we very really came close to losing that this time. I point the finger in this case at the Premier (Mr. Filmon) who said originally there would be new boundaries and then a few months ago suggested we might be running under old boundaries and now we are back to new boundaries. As the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) points out, we do not yet have a definitive position in terms of the time of the election, but I would say the agreement ensures that. I cannot see anybody in this House supporting any other situation than having those boundaries in place before the election. That was the intent of what we have agreed to in terms of the seven days we are to debate, but from now on in let us take that temptation out of the mix. When the final decision comes down, that is it. There is no more recourse. There should be no ability of a government or an opposition party or any party to be able to time the circumstances as to whether it is better for them or worse for them politically. I think we are all agreed on that, and that can be easily dealt with.

Well, I want to go a bit further as well, because I want to get back to some of the suggestions that can be made in terms of the northern seats. The current act says that the commission may be able to go to 25 percent. It has proven it has not done that, and I would suggest we need to look at bringing in the provision "shall" and defining it in that sense. I do not think that is unreasonable, by the way. By the way, I will tell you what we said in Thompson, and I guess it depends sometimes your view of the province. When you are in northern Manitoba, I like to take those maps and sort of turn them on their head a bit.

Think about this for a moment. We went to the Boundaries Commission, a cross-section of people. Even the returning officer for Thompson, an appointment of this government, a very respectable community official, said five seats is fair.

You know what I said? The real issue here, if you want to put it in perspective, is not four seats versus five seats for the North. The real question, Madam Speaker, was whether there were going to be 52 seats or 53 seats for southern Manitoba. Fifty-three seats was the original draft of the map. We were arguing that it should be—or 54, pardon me, and it should be 53, or 53 and 52. We argued that it was not unfair to suggest that the North should have five seats, and the rest of the province should have 52.

Now, if we got our way, if we had been listened to as northerners fully, I do not think we would have tilted the balance of power in this province too much by having that extra northern seat. I know the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Newman), who I am sure is an advocate within his caucus for the North, would agree with me. I mean, that one extra seat, what would it have done? Would it have created chaos politically? [interjection] Well, the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) says one more NDP seat. I notice he did not suggest the Liberals in that mix, but, you know, there have been competitive races in the North.

**An Honourable Member:** Who represented Thompson before you?

**Mr. Ashton:** As the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) points out, I defeated a Tory cabinet minister in the North. We have had Tories in the North. It is interesting because, you know, I ran against a very well-known incumbent, and I beat him, to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). So it is possible; it is possible. You know, there are Tories in the North. They are easy to identify because all you have to do is look at the board appointments. It is like if we have one member—I am sure they sit there and the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Newman) says we have one member in Pikwitonei. I know how you can spot him; he is on a board already.

I must admit, too, we have made it very easy for them to appoint defeated Tory candidates in the North. We produce a lot of them in the North, and we have produced a regular supply now since 1981, perfect candidates for regional health authorities and other government positions.

But, you know, that is not the point. The point is fairness. Thirty years ago the North voted Conservative, to the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski). [interjection] Well, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says why five; why not six; why not seven? It is interesting, he has gone from four, now he is up to six or seven. [interjection] Well, to the member for Inkster, the act says the commission can go up to a variation of 25 percent which is a reasonable variation. What I am suggesting is that is what the commission should have done, and the result would have been five seats, following the intent of the act. [interjection] Well, it is interesting, because, you know, the member for Inkster cannot make up his mind whether he wants four northern seats or six or seven—[interjection] I appreciate that. I actually invite the member for Inkster to make his fifth trip to northern Manitoba, perhaps come up and we will organize a forum on this in Thompson. I will invite the member for Inkster to get up and explain why he thinks that northern constituencies and northern MLAs have all these great privileges. I am sure the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) perhaps in his new career might be able to come along and give some assistance to the member for Inkster because he might create a bit of a stir in Thompson. [interjection] That is right, we will give him a tour of the mine.

But, you know, I want to appeal to the good nature of all members of this House and even to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). I will almost forgive him for his comments about us having these great privileges in rural and northern Manitoba.

**An Honourable Member:** You do not think it is a privilege to be in Thompson?

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, I consider it a privilege to be in Thompson, to live in Thompson. I am proud of Thompson. It is my home community;

I have lived in it since I was a kid. I am proud to represent Thompson in the Legislature, but, you know what, the only privilege is representing Thompson in the Legislature. I do not get any material privileges. To tell you the truth—I want to say this on the record—I actually got to the point after 17 years where I must have travelled a couple of a million miles back and forth, that I actually do not quite enjoy travelling the way I used to.

I look at the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae). I am sure when he gets out on Highway 1, you know, every time he goes back to Brandon, he is saying, boy—he is probably thinking of the member for Inkster's comments here. He is sitting there and, Madam Speaker, it is, boy, what a privilege to be able to represent a rural constituency. I can see the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson). He is going to be travelling this weekend around his 18 communities. He going to be thinking, boy, Kevin is right. This is great. This is a great privilege. I look at the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), and he is doing the same thing. The member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin). We are all going to be thinking about those inspiring words of the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

I am going to be driving back, and I am going to be saying, boy, I am lucky. I always have these advantages as an incumbent. As I drive through Highway 6, and after I get beyond St. Martin and I do not see anybody past Grand Rapids, except—well, pardon me, Ponton, which has I think six registered voters.

**An Honourable Member:** Well, when you get into an outboard motor.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, I did not talk about that. I am glad the member for The Pas reminded me. I have been lucky because I have travelled every which way in the North, except for dog team, I have to work on it, but I give the member for Inkster an example, the kind that we in the North have to face on a regular basis. I went into York Landing, York Factory First Nation, I went in in November, no ferry, no winter road. You fly in. So actually one of the members in the community said to me, are you going to over-night, Steve? I said, well, maybe next time.

Well, I spoke too soon. The weather got bad. I could not get out that night, could not get out the rest of the morning. You know what somebody said—in fact, Thomas Beardy, who is a counsellor, said, you know what, do not worry, Steve. There were two other people that were in the community at the time. They said, we will get you out by skidoo. Now this is November, okay. So we went off by skidoo over to Split Lake. We then caught a taxi from Split Lake to try and meet the incoming van that was sent up by the airline—remember, we could not get on the plane. We caught it on the highway. We then went back. Two other people from Winnipeg, they got on the bus, and they travelled 10 hours to Winnipeg. I still remember going downtown to see my wife who was not expecting me for the whole weekend, and I must admit she was a little bit shocked that I was going by skidoo in November, but that is the reality. If you want to get into Thicket Portage in the summer, you know one of the best ways is going by boat. Phone somebody up—if they have a phone, I just said that to the member for Inkster—and they will pick you up by boat.

**An Honourable Member:** It sounds like you do not like this. You do not like this job, Steve.

**Mr. Ashton:** The member for Inkster says it sounds like I do not like this job. Look, I have already announced I am running again. I am proud to represent Thompson. But you know what, all I ask is that the member for Inkster—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, Madam Speaker, I just want to ask the member for Thompson: why does he feel so depressed about the riding which he represents? That is what I want to know. That is the point.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Inkster, I am not sure if you were up on a point of order, but, regardless, it is not a point of order. It is a matter of interruption.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Ashton:** Madam Speaker, my whole point, to the member for Inkster and I wish you would be listening, is give me the opportunity as a

northern member. Do not tie one hand behind my back by making sure, as the original draft of the boundaries was going to do, that I have the biggest by population. Give the member for The Pas, the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), the member for Flin Flon, the opportunity of the same contact with our constituents that you do every night when you drive home to your constituency.

\* (1630)

**An Honourable Member:** That is not possible, Steve.

**Mr. Ashton:** The member for Inkster says, it is not possible. Give us the best possible chance. Give us what the legislation allows, the 25 percent, that is all we are asking. In the end, I tell you, one thing about northern MLAs is that you could say we are proud of giving good representation. You can still call us suckers for punishment, whatever you want, but I will say one thing, you can give us whatever boundaries, and we will try our best and we do. I say to the member for Inkster, again, who seems to be now—and I assume that he is speaking officially for the Liberal Party because he is the one MLA that is running again. I do not know if he is an acting leader. I do not want to get into that, sorry. It is a sensitive issue, but, anyway, I assume—[interjection] He is arguing this. I want to say to the member for Inkster, if you want to have any chance of winning seats outside of the city, what you need is to have some sense of rural and northern Manitoba.

When I talk about the experience of travelling in my communities, and I look at all the other rural MLAs—one thing, by the way, what I always do as a matter of course is to make sure I travel like everybody else does. When the winter roads open, I am on the winter road. When it comes to highway travel, I travel by highway. That is what we do. That is part of representing your constituency.

But, you know, I say to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) that one of the things we have to do for all of us, including the rural MLAs as well, is to ensure that the constituents of the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) or my constituents or any of the rural and

northern constituents have a fair chance to see us, have a fair chance to have contact with us. You know, it is not fair—and the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach) understands of what I speak. It is not fair if you have a situation in which you have two different categories of MLAs in this province.

You know, you can give some support through constituency allowances, and, by the way, I welcome the members' comments because we are still inadequate. I know members of this House in rural and northern areas who pay out of their pockets every year because they do not have enough allowance to be able to travel even just within their constituency, and I notice the member for Portage (Mr. Faurichou) and the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) and the member for Interlake (Mr. C. Evans). We do that on a regular basis because we care about our constituents, but, you know, I say you can give us all the travel allowances you want, but you still have to have some sense of balance. That is why we have the allowance for 25 percent; that is why we have the allowance for 10 percent.

I want to appeal not just to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), but I want to appeal to this Legislature and the future Legislature to learn from the experience of what has happened. I have deep concerns about the fact that we in the North have to even go and argue our case before the Boundaries Commission. That should never happen again. We should not have to go cap in hand. We should have what is our just due under the legislation. I say that for rural Manitoba as well, because I actually questioned some of the constituency boundaries in rural Manitoba because I really think that there was not full use of the 10 percent in some cases that has led to some constituencies in rural Manitoba that are not fair constituencies. I note, by the way, there is an assumption of growth in the city. The smallest ridings right now are the suburban ridings in the city, and I know some of the other members will talk about the situation facing core area ridings, for example. But, you know, there are some inequities built in there.

But I want to make sure we do not have to go cap in hand again, Madam Speaker. What I want to suggest on this is that because this is an independent commission, I do not think we have

any choice other than to support its recommendations, and I want to note on the record, it is one heck of a lot better than the first map which I classified as an insult to northerners and I think to many others in rural Manitoba.

I want to state, by the way, that I think the commission did listen on some of the smaller concerns, the community-by-community concerns, but the next time around, next time, the next Legislature perhaps, we should be making sure that we have—and I want to sum up here—a fairer commission that represents rural and northern Manitoba. It is not acceptable that we do not have a single member from a rural and northern area.

We should have, Madam Speaker, a proper timetable to put this into place, so it is put in place perhaps a year after the reports come out, so there is none of this jockeying back and forth, no questions asked about that. We should make sure that next time around that the 25 percent provision is available to northern seats and the 10 percent in the rural areas. It will not tilt the balance in this province. I do not think this time around that it would have made much difference, if any, certainly to the political balance or even the rural and northern balance.

*Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

I want to stress, especially to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), because, you know, as a northern member, I have always fought for a province that is inclusive, yet I believe in fighting for Winnipeg when its interests are affected. Winnipeg is the driving engine, but without rural and northern Manitoba, there would not be much in this province. This is part of I think the arrangement that we need, understanding our unique needs in this province.

One of the things we need in northern Manitoba and rural Manitoba is we need electoral processes and boundaries that are fair, Mr. Acting Speaker. I think we have gone a long way by having an independent process the last 40 years, but we have to go a lot further in the future, and I strongly urge that we not forget this lesson. We have to make sure we do it better next time, and doing it better means giving

better representation to rural and northern Manitoba. Thank you.

*Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

**Mr. Kowalski:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to put a few words on the record in regard to this bill.

A number of times, I spent Christmases with Douglas Campbell. He is related to my wife. I remember often speaking to him about what was his proudest achievement. Many people, when they speak of what Douglas Campbell did for this province, they talked about electrification, yet he felt that the most important thing he did was introduce this independent body to set boundaries. The principle behind it was that no political party, no lobbyist—the term "gerrymandering" has been used—would interfere for political purposes with the setting of fair boundaries for a fair and democratic election. I think that is something we all agree with, but we are almost interfering with that principle by using the timing of setting those boundaries for political purposes. So I am glad we have gotten to this point today, but I am not going to rest easy until this bill receives Royal Assent.

We talk about whether the Premier (Mr. Filmon) will call an election before or after this bill is passed. We talk about that it should be passed before the budget, but in the brief time I have been in politics, I have learned there is very little you can count on for sure. You have to be flexible. Things could happen. The budget could be defeated theoretically. Anything could happen, and we are gambling with a fair and democratic election by not passing this bill as soon as possible. So I will not rest secure until this bill has been passed and know that the next election will be fair and democratic. So that is the one point.

Also, I know that, before I did my matter of privilege, I read the debate from 10 years ago. I read all the different speakers. I am sure that Elections Manitoba referred to that before they did this review of the boundaries, and I am sure 10 years from now before they do it again, they will be reading the debate from this session. So a couple of suggestions.



Number one is that in the naming of the ridings I believe we should avoid naming ridings after towns, especially in rural Manitoba. For example, they have chosen to name one riding Carman, but what about all the other towns in that riding? When whoever is successfully elected from that is in some other town in that area and says, I am the member for Carman, do they feel disenfranchised? So I think that is something that they should look at in the future, that in the naming of boundaries they get away from naming provincial ridings by referring to towns. One member has suggested maybe hyphenated names, but still they did Winnipeg-St. Paul federally. That might be one solution, but in some areas you might have three or four towns of equal size or close. Why should one be favoured? So 10 years from now when the Boundaries Commission is going to do this again, I hope they will get away from naming provincial ridings after towns.

The other thing to get away from this, this was a matter of circumstances that, when the normal rotation of elections comes and when the 10 years come and that, the timing was unfortunate. It is unfortunate that we were not called into session prior to dealing with this, but maybe there is something we could change in the legislation in the future so that we do not get into this predicament once again. The suggestion is possibly—and it is not up to Elections Manitoba, that would be up for us to do it as the Legislature—to put it in the act that, when the bill is passed, it is retroactive to the release of the report. If we passed the legislation and made it retroactive, whenever the report is—bang, that is the new boundaries. We still retain the responsibility of passing that legislation because ultimately it is ours, but by making it retroactive to when the Boundaries Commission—then it cannot be used for political manipulation.

So I hope debate will proceed quickly through the House, through second reading, through committee stage and third reading, and we pass this bill so that the next election is based on fair and democratic boundaries. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

\* (1640)

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is written: "But ye be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass mirror: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

I would like to talk about The Electoral Divisions Act, the democratic principle, and some ideals of a good, democratic, political system. The Electoral Divisions Act of Manitoba was passed initially, as I can recall, in 1957, maybe earlier, but I know from 1957 up, which created the Electoral Boundaries Commission, consisting of: (1) The person who, from time to time, is the Chief Justice of Manitoba; (2) the person who, from time to time, is the president of the University of Manitoba; and (3) the person who, from time to time, is the chief electoral officer. In other words, it is naming institutionalized positions, rather than particular individuals who may occupy such positions.

The Electoral Divisions Act empowers the Electoral Boundaries Commission in the year 1968 and every ten years thereafter to proceed and establish a cushion for its electoral divisions in the Province of Manitoba. They do this by dividing the total population of the province by 57, the number of electoral divisions in this province. So all you do is get the population according to census statistics, divide it by 57. That is the average provincial number of people in every district, in every riding.

Now, since the Legislative Assembly, this Assembly, was not in session, neither in July 15, 1988, nor in December 18, 1988, the president of the council, namely the Premier, who presides in cabinet meetings, has this Boundaries Commission report, both the preliminary and the final report, without the report being made publicly known to the people of this province, some of whose basic rights, the weights in their respective voting rights, are being fundamentally altered to promote the basic democratic principle, both in theory and in practice. Believe me, there is a wide gap between the theory and the practice of democracy.

Now, let us look analytically at this so-called democratic principle. What is the basic democratic principle?

*Madam Speaker in the Chair*

The basic democratic principle asserts that since the political community is composed of people who live under a framework of an established political order, to say that political authority emanates from political order is equivalent to saying that the political authority to govern emanates from the people living in the ordered political community, which in our case is Manitoba. The people are the source of the political authority to govern.

Therefore the English political philosopher by the name of Thomas Hobbes said, in his book, the *Leviathan*: For the prosperity of a people rules by an aristocratical or democratical assembly, cometh not from aristocracy or democracy, but from the obedience and concord of the subjects; nor do the people flourish in a monarchy because one man has the right to rule over them, but because they obey him. Take away, in any kind of state, the obedience and consequently the concord of the people, they shall not only not flourish, but in a short time they shall be dissolved. Therefore, human beings as individuals are the ultimate choice makers in determining group actions as well as private, personal actions in the calculus of consent in determining the political right to govern.

In a truly democratic society, the governors govern through the consent of the governed, to whom the persons in authority are made responsible and accountable to through the periodic exercise of the right to vote where its voter is counted as an individual in the determination of the majority which decides who is to govern.

The British philosopher John Locke said, and this is the rationale for the majority rule: For that which acts any community, being only the consent of the individuals in it, and being one body, it must move only one way. It is necessary that the body should move that way whither the greater force carries it, which is the consent of the majority. But let us accept it.

The majority is not always right. There is always that potential risk of the tyranny of the majority to the detriment of the minority.

What, then, are the component characteristics of the democratic principle? There is the authority to govern; established, it emanates and derives from the consent of the governed. Two, the authority to govern derives from the doctrine of majority rule. However, since the majority is not always right, adequate protection of notice and hearing of the views of the minority is guaranteed, so that the minority may not be subject to the ever-present risk of the tyranny of the majority, which is always there. Consequently, the majority of electors in the process of general election gives legitimacy to the assumption of governmental power by those who have been elected to positions of authority by the same democratic process. The same election can unseat the political ruler as the fluid majority of electors may decide, for what was previously the minority may now become the majority.

Finally, another characteristic of the democratic principle is that there are specific limits to governmental powers. Those who are temporarily vested with the power of making authoritative decisions, those who run the government, have no right to intrude into the constitutionally guaranteed rights of citizens, such as the democratic right to vote in an election for members of the House of Commons or the legislative assembly of any province and the right to be qualified as candidate for membership in those bodies.

Such constitutionally guaranteed rights are subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society. Examples of such would be reasonable limits prescribed by law, demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society. Examples are the necessity to protect the public safety, to protect the public health of the people, to protect the public morale and the fundamental right of the freedom of other citizens.

\* (1650)

If a vote-rigging plot, according to Chief Justice Monnin, is an unconscionable

debasement of the citizens' right to vote, and, if to reduce the voting rights of individuals is a violation of our democratic system, how can a nonelective political party bureaucracy consent or sanction any manipulation whatsoever by any minority of the entitlement of the right of the majority of individual party members in good standing and residents within the constituency boundaries to nominate and vote at any nominating meeting the candidate of the majority's choice? How can they do that?

Let me recall some incident in the past. The Chair in a Canadian Parliamentary Association Conference pointed out that legislators are most of the time males; wealth, privilege, education, and Euro-Canadian ethnicity still are advantages to getting elected in Canada. Then when a minority or disadvantaged group is culturally different from the larger society, the views and experiences of the group will often be different. He said our challenge in our daily work is to use a framework of consistent principles to guide our future decisions. He said today we can discuss and help develop a framework of principles to guide ourselves.

He said resolving such conflicts is not so easy; legal, scientific, historical, ethical, financial considerations all play a role in government decisions. If we were afraid of difficult decision making, he said, we should not be here as legislators. Many individuals and social groups are seeking redress for social and physical harm that they suffer. This requires serious consideration, he said, and I look forward to discussion of these issues.

Then the Chair opened the floor for discussion and said: *Si vous avez des questions? Alors, M. Conrad Santos, Manitoba.*

Conrad Santos said: The new minority groups are not well represented in the Legislature, even the corresponding proportionate distribution of themselves in the total population. When the minority group succeeds in being represented in one seat in a 57-seat Legislature, I would like to hear some explanation from you why the Boundaries Commission should abolish that one seat which factually is the most stable in the province. These are just the facts.

So I asked the question, and one of the participants said: I am not familiar with the situation you describe in Manitoba. And then Mr. Santos said: I am saying any province. I am just saying a theoretical thing, but it is applicable to Manitoba.

Then the Chair said: Maybe we could ask someone from Manitoba to answer the question if you feel at ease with it, and if not, I do not want to put anyone on the spot. So they called on our Honourable Speaker. The Honourable Speaker said, Louise Dacquay—she introduced herself—Speaker from Manitoba: The reference Conrad made is that in Manitoba we are undergoing a boundary review based on our legislation which dictates that every 10 years the boundaries be reviewed, and it is based on population. The inner core portion of the city of Winnipeg has decreased in size, which I think is not necessarily restricted only to Winnipeg but also some of the other larger cities in the neighbouring provinces. The suburban area has grown substantially. Regrettably, Conrad's constituency of Broadway has now been deleted—at least this is the proposal. It will be going to public hearings. Nothing is final at this point in time. This is the proposal put out by the independent Boundaries Commission. Regrettably, Conrad is the only member of the Manitoba Legislature from the Filipino community. We do have members in the Manitoba Legislature from aboriginal population. That is only for clarification. Regrettably, I cannot answer the question. I have absolutely nothing to do with it.

And that is indeed the truth. Now I ask the question: If every member of a political party elected to public office, who is a member of the constituency he represented and he represented all the people in the constituency in which he or she was voted to public office by the majority of the electorate in his or her riding, how can a nonelected, nonpartisan electoral Boundaries Commission of three of the most eminent citizens of the province justly abolish any constituency, as distinguished from merely redrawing the limits of his boundary without adversely affecting either the rights of the citizens who are qualified voters to vote or the right of the elected representative of the people to run once more as a candidate for public office

when that representative has no more riding to contest for election.

Could the abolition of the most stable innermost core area riding be justified? The facts show that the constituency population in that riding is merely 26 persons over the desired provincial cushion of 19,547, the average provincial constituency population. If you divide 26 by 19,546, it is only one-tenth of 1 percent difference. Stable. Now, if you use the population of Winnipeg, which is greater than the provincial average, it will only be 378 persons less than the desired city average of 19,951. If you, again, do your division there to get the present day's equivalent, it is no greater than 2 percent difference, the most stable there is in all of the province's boundaries in all constituencies in this province. I ask the question: why is it abolished? I cannot answer; no one can answer.

Now I want to shift gears and talk about democratic attitudes, values and belief system in democratic societies. The honourable Deputy Speaker is looking at the clock—maybe I should stop at this point in time.

**An Honourable Member:** No, no.

**Mr. Santos:** I wish to talk about democratic attitudes, values and belief systems in democratic political communities, truly democratic ones. In writing about the deriving of the just powers of government from the consent of the govern as the centrepiece of the democratic principle, the American distinguished professor of political science of long ago, Charles Merriam, he was also active in practical politics, wrote a book called Systemic Politics. He said: Between coercion and consent there are many intermediate stages that run into each other so subtly as to make distinctions difficult. There is the continuum including intimidation, threat, fear. There is the continuum: information, suggestion and persuasion. Deeper than what we see, the miranda of political interaction. That is what he is terming, miranda, what you see, lies the credenda, what you really believe. The credenda of consent and then behind the credenda cries the real politic, the inner workings, the political goings on, the practice, the tactics and all the

strategies that could possibly be invented by the human mind in the struggle for political power to govern.

In securing the consent of the govern, governments are run inevitably by human beings, and we are not angels. So we utilized a variety of ways and means in different societies, in widely different cultures, we have utilized bodies of doctrines to be believed, things much in same, stage of reason so that the masses of the people will be obliged in their human intellect to give their consent to the continuance of the governance of the many by the few through the institution of government. Three examples of such credenda inculcated in us believed by the masses and by the people generally are the following: During the days of absolute—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) will have 20 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour.

\* (1700)

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

### PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

#### Res. 1—Volunteerism

**Mr. Denis Rocan (Gladstone):** I thank you very much for the opportunity to debate volunteerism during private members' hour, but I wonder if you would be so kind as to canvass the House and see if there would be a willingness on the part of members to waive the second WHEREAS, because in consultation with my House leader and members opposite it appears there is a willingness that if we would remove the second WHEREAS, there might be an opportunity that we could pass said Resolution.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to delete the second WHEREAS in the Resolution?

**An Honourable Member:** What does it say?

**Madam Speaker:** Do you want it read?

The one that has been asked to be deleted reads: WHEREAS governments in Canada must put tax dollars to the best possible use in providing important public services;

Agreed? [agreed]

**Mr. Rocan:** I thank members for their indulgence.

I would like to move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau),

WHEREAS volunteers have contributed immensely to the rich fabric of Manitoba throughout its development; and

WHEREAS volunteers make a remarkable contribution to our communities through service clubs, religious organizations, sport associations, community clubs and health and social service auxiliary groups; and

WHEREAS the spirit of volunteerism abounds in Manitobans across the province who are willing to invest their time and expertise in making Manitoba the best place to live, work, and raise a family.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba commend all those who work tirelessly in their communities to improve the quality of life of all Manitobans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assembly encourage the spirit of volunteerism among the people of Manitoba which assists in the growth and enhancement of Manitoba's communities.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Rocan:** Again, I take this opportunity just to thank members for giving us this opportunity this afternoon to put some remarks on the record in regard to our volunteerism, which happens on a regular basis throughout the province. It is fitting that I should have this opportunity to bring this resolution before the members of the

House today, as people in this province and people around the country celebrate National Volunteer Week. This resolution speaks to the very heart of what National Volunteer Week is all about, to recognize the invaluable contribution that volunteers make in this province, year in and year out.

Here in Manitoba, one way in which we are celebrating volunteer week is with the Premier's volunteer service award, which will be awarded to 12 individuals and organizations who have shown an outstanding dedication to volunteer service in this province.

What we are talking about today is the spirit of volunteerism, which poses the question: how do we define volunteerism and why do people choose to be a volunteer?

I would answer that question by saying that the spirit of volunteerism is present any time an individual is helping others and is doing so because it makes that person feel good inside. Many people also chose to volunteer because they recognize it as an important part of building a healthy community.

To put it into a few words, the spirit of volunteerism was captured by Sir Winston Churchill when he said: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Every day in Manitoba, thousands of individuals volunteer their time to make a difference in their communities. It may be making a visit to the personal care home to sit and talk with the residents or to the hospital to bring comfort to patients. It could be leading a troop of Brownies or Scouts after school or being a Big Brother or Big Sister. It may be driving the local handi-van or being a part of a Rural Crime Watch program, where neighbours help neighbours by keeping their eyes and ears open.

We even see the spirit of volunteerism extend to people far away when, as individuals or as a country, we offer support to strangers facing disasters or turmoil such as is happening in Kosovo. There are countless social, cultural, community, and nonprofit organizations active

in my constituency and around the province that each make important contributions through their volunteer and charity work.

Although there are too many to name them all, I would like to take a moment to recognize a few of those organizations which I am proud to have been associated or I am associated with: The Shriner's, who make an enormous difference in the lives of thousands of children who have burn and spinal cord or orthopedic injuries, through their network of children's hospitals. The Lions Clubs are another organization that has made great contributions in their communities and our province with their eye programs. The Masonic Lodge, another great philanthropy organization, dedicated to helping individuals or their families travel to and fro hospitals to get cancer treatments.

Volunteers also provide the backbone for many of the large events that we take pride in hosting. Take, for example, the cultural event such as the Fringe Festival and the Jazz Festival and sporting events like the Grey Cup and World Junior Hockey. In fact, it is unimaginable that our province could this summer be hosting such a large event as the Pan Am Games without the generous support of volunteers. The Pan Am Games will be the largest celebration of sport and culture ever staged in Canada. The games will have a great immediate economic impact on this city and will provide Manitoba with a vehicle to expand economic and cultural relationships in the Americas. This just goes to show how much we can accomplish as a province with the help of a dedicated and enthusiastic volunteer base.

The time and effort given by volunteers is one of the major reasons that Manitoba is one of the best places to live, work, and raise a family. It has been estimated that the annual economic contribution of volunteer activities to Manitoba, if calculated just at minimum wage, is \$264 million. However, it truly is not possible to put a dollar figure on an act of kindness and giving. People coming together to help others is a spirit that really builds and binds communities, and that is priceless. The people of Manitoba are our strongest resource as we all know. Often the important work performed by volunteers is done

quietly and may go unnoticed or unappreciated, but we would certainly be a much poorer society if we were to lose the spirit of volunteerism.

To give just a few example, in Manitoba, children and youth are very active and successful in sports. Yet, this would not be possible without the volunteer time donated by teachers and parents to extracurricular sports programs. Manitobans, both young and old, are culturally enriched through our libraries, museums, and arts programs, many of which could not run without volunteer staff. The safety and security of our families is dependent on the fact that we have a strong network of volunteer firefighters in rural Manitoba. Manitoba is blessed with a strong spirit of volunteerism. I can speak particularly for rural Manitoba in saying that in our small communities, volunteering has always been accepted as a way of life. Whether it is through the church or a local organization, volunteering your time is just something that we do as a member of our communities.

In today's world, we seem to lead much busier lives. In many families, both parents juggle work and children, and it can often take a great deal of our time and energy just to balance both. Given this reality, it is even more important to recognize and thank Manitoba's volunteers and to remind ourselves of the great contribution volunteers make on a daily basis to the quality of life that we enjoy here in Manitoba.

\* (1710)

For all of these reasons, I ask the Members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in commending Manitoba's volunteers and to encourage the spirit of volunteerism among the people of Manitoba. We should encourage volunteerism so that it is not lost upon the next generations of Manitobans and so that our communities and our province may continue to grow stronger in the future.

Therefore, this resolution should be supported by the members of the Legislative Assembly as it commends the work of volunteers and supports efforts to encourage the spirit of volunteerism among the people of Manitoba.

I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to put those few remarks on the record.

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Madam Speaker, we are happy on this side of the House to support a resolution that recognizes volunteers and Volunteer Week in Manitoba, which is this week, April 18-24. We want to recognize the contribution that people across the province make to our communities.

I have a few remarks that I want to contribute to the debate. I think we all have the chance to visit with a variety of different organizations in our constituencies, and a number of those are volunteer organizations that we realize the community would not be the same without. I also want to talk a little bit based on my own experience and make the point that volunteers do not just happen. Good volunteer programs require a lot of planning, a lot of good management, and there is a lot of work that goes into recruiting volunteers, into making sure they are aware of what they can do and cannot do, and into making sure that they get the proper recognition on an ongoing basis so that they really feel that they are part of that organization. All of this has been the establishment in the charitable and nonprofit sector and, in fact, in government sector and through the philanthropic endeavours of a lot of companies and businesses in the private sector toward a much more structured and organized volunteer management approach to dealing with volunteers.

Prior to being elected, I was trained in volunteer management and certified through organizations in Winnipeg at the United Way as well as courses through our own Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. There is a wonderful program called the National Skills Program that trains people—and I have brought some of the materials with me—in all facets of fundraising, of time management, of building communication and decision making among volunteers, volunteer board management. Now there are even certification programs and degrees in universities dedicated to this sector. There has been a lot of work done in our province in the development of these programs.

I remember back when I was a young person, one of my first positions after university

on a nonprofit board was on the Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg. I sat as a youth representative for the Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg for three years. One of the jobs that I had at that organization as well was organizing for International Youth Year the youth volunteer award that was given out as a special award by the Premier in that year. That was 1985. That, I think, represented one of the other new trends in volunteerism, and that trend was to start recognizing that volunteerism provided an opportunity for work experience and for valued skill development.

Young people, it should be recognized, are increasing the rate of volunteerism the quickest and the most rapidly. They are showing the greatest increase by doubling to 33 percent in 1997 from 10 years before that where it was only 18 percent.

So this is a dramatic shift and trend where young people now—there are many programs in schools where young people are introduced to volunteering by having part of a course requirement that they spend time in some type of volunteer position as part of a school credit. Oftentimes I think that introduces them into something that they carry forward through the rest of their life without having to get any kind of recognition through a course credit or any other kind of compensation, but they just realize how valuable it is.

Another trend, I think, is we see across the country with an aging population and with people being able to retire with so much more time available to them and retire at a younger age in better health, we are now seeing that more people are able to volunteer after retirement.

But there is another trend that I think is significant, and that is the effect of the economy and changes that we are seeing. That is also having a squeeze on a lot of families. I think the member across the way for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan) recognized this too. This trend, I think, fits in with something else that we have to be very concerned about, that the trend is for us to have more shift workers, to have more people with part-time jobs, to have more people working overtime, and a greater number of families where both parents are working. They

are feeling like they cannot fit in the kind of volunteer requirements that are being asked of them, because the other trend that we are seeing, and I am going to talk about how we are seeing it from this government, is for a decline in public services and an offload onto the charitable sector and an offload on relying on volunteers of what previously was done by paid people, particularly government.

This government in particular, where we have had a very nice resolution today put forward by the member for Gladstone, but if you look at this government's record and realizing that actions speak louder than words, we see an interesting trend when it comes to volunteerism.

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** What would that be?

**Ms. Cerilli:** The member for Dauphin asks: what would that trend be? And I am going to tell you. If I was going department by department and looking at the kind of community-based or volunteer-related organizations that this government has had to deal with, there is a telling picture. I look at what this government did with Child and Family Services, where they had volunteer boards throughout the province. They had volunteer boards that were running incredible volunteer programs throughout the province. What did they do? They centralized Child and Family Services. They eliminated thousands of hours of volunteer contribution throughout the province. The one program that has remained in the district that Child and Family impacts on my constituency in east area, until this day they have been fighting to try and maintain the historic volunteer effort related to supporting children and families.

The same thing happened in Manitoba Housing in 1991. This government took over Manitoba Housing. There were 91 local-98, 91-volunteer housing authorities throughout the province made up of community people, municipal officials, and this government again reached in and amalgamated Manitoba Housing. There was a mandate at that time to set up social housing advisory groups in the regions that were supposed to at least carry on this tradition of housing volunteer representation. This government never implemented that. Now again we

have one government board of politically appointed people who do get some compensation for their meetings. This government may say that they are volunteers, but it certainly is a far cry from what used to exist.

The same thing happened with the Manitoba Environment Council. There used to be over 50 environmental, I would call them, experts. They were volunteers, but they dedicated their life. Again the government reached in, eliminated the Manitoba Environment Council, appointed about half a dozen of their people that they chose, and wiped out volunteer input to the provincial government in the area of environment from the wide range of people from across the province.

Similarly, last session this government passed the changes to The City of Winnipeg Act, where they eliminated and supported the city, eliminating the resident advisory groups, who were completely volunteer. They ensured that there was some kind of regional input across the municipality of residents into City Council on a regular basis by having city councillors meet with residents from their area. This government saw fit to wipe out those volunteer organizations.

\* (1720)

The same thing with our community hospitals. This government saw fit to go ahead and centralize through the Winnipeg Hospital Authority and the Long Term Care Authority hundreds of volunteer positions from the community who represented the needs of the community, the understanding of the community that only people who live in those communities can have. They chose to create this whole new bureaucracy around a centrally administered hospital and long-term care by eliminating those community volunteer boards.

If we look even further back in this government, this is a trend that has been longstanding, not only with just having volunteer boards but with the kinds of things that they have volunteer organizations do that advise government. The Manitoba Intercultural Council is another example of how they chose to no longer have that organization be involved in advising the government how to distribute funds.



I believe they maybe thought that that was a responsibility that a volunteer group could not have.

Similarly, when you look at the Manitoba Sports Federation, we all know of the thousands and thousands of people who volunteer as coaches and officials in the area of sport. Those people also have a history of running very well-organized agencies for sport, and they have in the past elected people to the Manitoba Sports Federation en masse. That was basically an elected community-represented, voter-based by that, or community-agency-represented-based organizations, and this government has changed that. People tell me on a regular basis that they are concerned about how that has affected what is now called Sport Manitoba, what used to be the Manitoba Sports Federation.

We raised the issue today in the House of the kind of work that is going on in the community by parents who are forced to volunteer more and more in their schools under this government's cutbacks in education, but looking at the kinds of things that those parents are now doing, and what are they doing more often than not, they are fundraising. We were concerned today that the Minister of Education (Mr. McCrae) is not necessarily going to listen to those parent volunteers to hear the concern about what is happening in our education system.

So when we talk about volunteers, we cannot only see them as a way to offload services and a way for them to generate more revenue. I think we also have to realize that one of the most valuable things that volunteers bring is that voice from the community, is that advisory capacity, is that ongoing checks and evaluation and needs assessing that can so much benefit government programs.

That seems to be what this government really does not want to have volunteers do, or else they would not have eliminated this very small grant they gave to the Foster Parents' Association, which was another volunteer-based organization that allowed foster parents to come together and deal with issues and provide support to each other, but also at a time when the government was reducing the funds to foster

parents, they would have provided some strong advocacy for that important service. I guess when it comes to volunteers in that capacity, the government is not necessarily as interested in having those volunteers recognized.

I often talk about the shifts that go on in our community with respect to the voluntary or charitable sector and how if we are going to see certain things like education and health care as a right—and we believe that education and health care are a right—then we have to be very careful about transferring those kinds of services onto the charitable sector, just like you cannot have something be a right if you have to pay for it. It is also not a right if you are relying completely on the charitable sector to provide that service.

So with those few comments, I do want to wish all the thousands of volunteers well in Manitoba and recognize them for their contributions and wish that they would be recognized on an ongoing basis and recognized in all their capacities whether it is the service they do, the funds they raise, and the important advocacy that they provide. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in support of the resolution brought forward by the honourable member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan), in recognition of volunteers in the province of Manitoba.

This week, from April 18 to 23, 1999, Canadians celebrate National Volunteer Week. Though we want to pay particular attention to volunteers in Manitoba, where we derive a great deal of benefit from all of the work that they do, I am also very pleased to spread that recognition across Canada, recognizing that there was this August a major conference on volunteerism. It was an international conference. Manitoba had representatives there. I know that those representatives came back to Manitoba able to in an even stronger way recognize the volunteer element of our province.

This annual event gives us an opportunity to show our appreciation for the vast contributions

of many volunteers and also the many volunteer organizations who really do give selflessly of their time, and also of their resources in order to enhance the quality of living in communities across our province and across our country.

The 1997 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating reports that 31.4 percent of Canadians aged 15 and older volunteer an average of 149 hours per year, for a Canadian total of 1.1 billion hours of volunteer time. Closer to home, 40 percent of Manitobans aged 15 and over volunteer an average of 130 hours per year. The annual economic contribution, as referenced by my colleague for Gladstone, of this volunteerism in Manitoba has been measured at \$264 million if assessed at a minimum wage, and that is a very large commitment quantified for the people of Manitoba.

As a Manitoban, I am very, very proud of our volunteers throughout the province, and I know that there is no work that is more rewarding than volunteering. The volunteer effort is often the basis of people's interest and passion, and they spend hours and hours in an effort to assist in an area of their interest.

I come from a volunteer background also, Madam Speaker. Other members have spoken about that. I have had extremely good training as a volunteer, and it has really assisted me in all areas of my life. This government recognizes the tremendous contribution of the extensive volunteer effort that we are so fortunate to have in all of our communities. As the member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan) referenced, there will be a recognition at a specific event, a luncheon a little bit later this week, when individuals will be recognized for their very specific and tremendous volunteer effort and contribution to Manitoba.

Never was the spirit of co-operation and community service more evident, however, than it was in our largest civil disaster in our province's history, and that was the flood of 1997. With the assistance of tens of thousands of volunteers, Manitobans joined together with courage and with determination to assist friends and neighbours in this time of great adversity.

I know that many people in this Chamber were out for hours on end as well sandbagging. Wherever the call was given, volunteers went to that area. It did not have to be an area that they knew well or that they represented. There was a need, and Manitobans went to that area to assist and to save a property and people's homes.

Volunteerism not only creates a co-operative community atmosphere, but it is also a part of a healthy and active lifestyle. Manitobans play an important role in assisting Manitoba to host events of national and international status, and that has allowed Manitoba to showcase our home-grown hospitality to all of the world.

We have cultural events such as the Winnipeg Folk Festival which I know many Manitobans enjoy, and it really runs on an incredible volunteer base of people from all areas and interests in Manitoba; the Winnipeg Fringe Festival which I think many people in this Chamber have enjoyed; the Jazz Winnipeg Festival, a very successful event here in the city of Winnipeg, International Children's Festival.

It goes on and on. I think many of us, and most Manitobans, have had the opportunity to experience a benefit in our cultural showcases which again are by and large actually run during the time of the event by volunteers. Those volunteers, many of them make a commitment year over year. It is not just a one-time effort and then they forget about it. It has become their passion, their interest, and they volunteer year over year.

The 1997 Canada Summer Games in Brandon; the 1998 Grey Cup; and, most recently, the World Junior Hockey Championship which was the most successful junior championship ever. All those things seem to occur in a very short period of time. It is amazing the resiliency of volunteers in Manitoba that they continue to give over and over again to benefit our province and also to show our hospitality to the world.

\*(1730)

My colleague for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan) mentioned the upcoming Pan American Games. That is the third largest sporting event in history.

I just wanted to pay some respect and some attention to those people who are volunteering, because many of those people began their volunteer effort three, five years ago. They were involved as volunteers to conceptualize what was required. They were involved and beginning to recruit volunteers years before the event, and they had to be able to explain and gain a commitment. Manitobans did come forward and agree to act as volunteers, and now we are less than 95 days to those games. I believe that, again, the world will see Manitoba's spirit of volunteerism and Manitoba's spirit of hospitality.

Volunteers also play an integral role in providing an important community service function as well. I would like to just give a few examples. Volunteers are an important support to Manitoba's multicultural community, and they provide such vast services as supporting English as a Second Language program. They work as tutors and also as learning partners, serving as host to assist newcomers in understanding rules and systems and cultures, committing to sponsorship agreements to assist refugees on arrival.

Manitoba would like to attract more immigrants, more immigration to our province. Not only do we want to attract and increase our immigration, we also want those people to stay here. In order to help them stay here, we have to make sure that there is a system in place that will assist people in their settlement. Volunteers have had a very, very important role in our settlement services. That settlement service being, as I said, to help people understand the cultural and legal framework of Manitoba, as well as, to assist them in simply getting settled and providing a friendship basis.

Multicultural volunteers are also an important component of the voluntary sector. They volunteer within their own cultural groups to support new arrivals and act as interpreters and translators, volunteer in business and social service and education committees to improve language and employment skills. They support cultural awareness training for main street groups.

Madam Speaker, I think at this time it would also be important to recognize the efforts of

volunteers in terms of their concern with what is happening internationally at the moment with the people of Kosovo. Manitobans very early stepped forward to say that they were prepared to offer support to people from Kosovo, who may not yet be refugees but to whom Canada may be asked to in fact take to a safe sanctuary and allow those people to finally be returned home. As I think all members in the Chamber know this effort is one which actually is being organized by the United Nations, and Canada is responding. I think one of the important messages has been that Manitobans stepped right up first and without being asked. There have been meetings with our settlement services organizations in Manitoba, organizations who work with refugees. I know that, should Manitoba then be called upon by the United Nations, Manitoba will be ready because our volunteers are very heartfelt in wanting to help people who are in these very desperate situations.

Madam Speaker, I would like to also speak for a moment about the cultural boards, because Manitoba is really known for its cultural activity. It has a reputation across Canada, and because of the efforts of a number of our cultural organizations, its reputation is, in fact, international. But the work that goes into organizing and setting up a system is often done by the cultural boards, and those people are volunteers.

I have had the opportunity to meet with cultural boards across this province, both community boards, who are inspiring cultural activity within their own community, and the cultural boards, who support our major cultural organizations within the province. I know that they give a lot of time and that they spend a lot of their time working for the organization and also spreading the word about Manitoba's wonderful cultural opportunities, so I would just like to take a moment in speaking today to acknowledge the work that they do.

I would also like to recognize those people who work in recreation and fitness across the province. There are a lot of individuals who come together within their region or municipality to support recreation councils. It is through those recreation councils that there is a co-ordinated effort for a community then to have

recreation and fitness opportunities. These lead to a healthy lifestyle. These lead to an improved quality of life, and these individuals do spend a lot of their time and effort on improving our quality of living.

I know that others have also spoken about volunteers in sport. I had the opportunity to work with communities who are involved in sport, not necessarily the elite side of Sport Manitoba, as has been spoken about before, but communities who are actually organizing themselves around community clubs for recreation, fitness and sport. I would like to recognize all of those individuals who spend a lot of their time organizing hockey and ringette and aerobics and all of those sporting activities that take place in neighbourhoods.

I would also like to recognize those people who work as volunteers on our historic and heritage projects across the province. It is because there are Manitobans who really have a deep love of their history and their heritage, who want to promote their heritage and who want other Manitobans to know and be able to appreciate where we came from and what the very valuable contributions of those who came before us have made, that they then put a great deal of their time into recognizing and preserving historic and heritage—sometimes it is a building; sometimes it is a monument; sometimes it is a place. But they spend time in making sure that we as Manitobans of today do not lose sight of what happened in the past. I would like to say that for that volunteer community it is really a very vibrant and, it seems to me, growing community of volunteers, and I would I like to recognize them as well.

I would also like to recognize parents. We have spoken about parents and the role of parents in terms of school, parent advisory committees, the work that they do on behalf of their young person. Sometimes people are on those committees and they do not have children in the school, but they are community volunteers who want to assist in the development of that particular community.

People who volunteer in seniors homes. In my community, we have seniors homes, and I can tell you their door is open to the community

to come in and volunteer so that those seniors are still members of the community.

People who volunteer in the hospital guilds. I would like to give particular recognition to the Victoria Hospital Guild because that is an area that I represent, but I know that there are guilds in hospitals all across this province where there is a great deal of effort and time made to make the life of people who need to be confined to a hospital for a short or a long time better.

Volunteer training is important. Volunteer recognition is important. We will be announcing a method of recognition of volunteers across the province, in co-operation with municipalities, in the very short while.

So, Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity during National Volunteer Week to extend my appreciation to the numerous individuals and the volunteer organizations throughout the province whose contributions really do make Manitoba a great place to live, to work and to raise a family. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** I am pleased to rise in support of this motion proposed by my honourable friend opposite, and with the amendment that was agreed to by all parties. I think it is a strong recognition of the essence of voluntarism in our society.

The honourable member who just spoke and her colleague who spoke before her have listed a catalogue of volunteers, and there is not enough time in any short speech to recognize the breadth and depth of volunteerism. So I would like to turn to the issue of the role of civil society and what volunteers really mean in that context of a democratic state.

\* (1740)

The root of the word "volunteer" is a Latin word that talks about the will, that is, that it is people's will to do things as opposed to their being rewarded for doing them or their being forced to do them. The words "volunteer" and "voluntary" and "volens" refer back to the root word "for the will."

I think that we perhaps misunderstand the degree to which our entire civil society rests on the assumption that people have the will to take part voluntarily in its shaping. A couple of Lutheran sociologists, Peter Berger and Richard Neuhaus, wrote a treatise on voluntarism some 30 years ago when I was first involved as a staff member of the Anglican Church of Canada, and it has stayed with me ever since.

One of the lines in that little I think about 50-page book is that voluntary groups are the value-generating and value-maintaining level of society, and without such groups there is nothing left between the citizen and the state. Berger and Neuhaus go on to say that essentially that is the definition of totalitarianism. Where there are no voluntary activities, no acts of free will to pursue a citizen's sense of what their society ought to look like, then by definition we would be living in a totalitarian state.

So I think we have to look very carefully at our society from time to time and try and discern the degree to which we are moving away from or towards a more civil society. It seems to me there are lots of danger signals for us as a society in the latter stages of this century, some of which have been enunciated by my colleague for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), who pointed out that it has been the tendency of the government of Manitoba, strangely, I think, to devalue and dismiss volunteers from central roles, roles in which real values are formed, real decisions are made, real actions are taken.

I think of the Manitoba Arts Council, the advisory council, that was essentially disbanded by this government soon after it had taken power. My colleague has listed all the other groups. Whether it is foster parents or whether it is the boards of hospitals or whether it is RAG groups in the city of Winnipeg, there is a long, long list of very important organizations that have been either disbanded or taken over by this government. I have often chuckled with friends about what the members opposite would have said had a New Democratic Party government announced that it was abolishing hospital boards and putting them under the control of central, appointed, partisan boards, boards full of defeated candidates and people that clearly are partisan.

I can just hear the howls of derision that would have issued from the benches opposite had an NDP government done such a thing. We would have been ridiculed as being state socialists, centralists. Yet, this government does this and defends it as good policy to fire literally thousands of volunteers and to take away their capacity to act. Perhaps they might be able to make the case that they have created some levels of volunteer activity that have real authority and power, but for the life of me, I do not know where they are if they have done so because I do not see them in Manitoba today. What I see is a vibrant volunteer community of the arts and preservation of history and culture and sports, but I see volunteers being marginalized from decision making in the areas of life that are very important—education, health, other similar kinds of areas.

So I think that if we could step back and understand that the very nature of a civil society and a democratic society, its essence is volunteerism. Volunteerism is not an extra that preserves the Prairie Dog Central or makes Folklorama happen or the Festival du Voyageur. It is not an extra. It is not icing. It is the cake. It is the essence of society to have people coming forward to work on things that they deeply believe in and deeply value. It seems then to me that it follows, and Berger and Neuhaus said this in this little book they wrote, that public policy ought to do everything in its power to nurture and support the capacity of citizens to act for their own and society's betterment and not to put roadblocks in their way. When I think of the sheer pettiness of the elimination of supports to some 50 volunteer organizations in, I believe it was 1993-94, one of which I just cite, the friendship centres, for example, very low cost, very high involvement, very large numbers and, I think, in those communities that I know about anyway, a very significant impact on the quality of life.

I will close because I want to give members opposite an opportunity to speak before we have agreed to pass this resolution, if indeed they wish to do so, by simply pointing out that a little organization in my community, the Earl Grey Neighbourhood Safety Association, has made an enormous difference to the real and perceived safety of their community on a budget of less

than \$1,500 a year, all of which comes entirely from their own activities and efforts. That is laudable. This little group has made a simply staggering difference in the sense of that neighbourhood's ability to understand itself and act on its own behalf and in its own best interest.

So I commend to all members again the book by John Rolston Saul, *Reflections of a Siamese Twin*, as well as, *Unconscious Civilization*. In both of those books, he reflects powerfully and with a great understanding of Canadian history how the very essence of our society is a voluntary essence. It is not simply making things better by acting after hours as an extra. The nature of a democratic society is that people have a sense that they are voluntarily acting all the time to undergird and support their democratic state and to make their society a free one in which they live with dignity and have a full and rich life.

That is the tribute I would pay to volunteers: that they understand and are committed to that deep perception that a free society is a voluntary society and that we honour them for that sense and for their commitment to maintaining and strengthening our democratic society through their voluntary activities. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert):** Madam Speaker, I will be very brief. I would like to thank the honourable member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan) for bringing forward this motion today, this resolution that speaks to the very fabric of Manitoba and Canada, this fabric which holds our country together, our province together and helps us to be who we are as a nation.

Madam Speaker, I asked the question to the Grade 3 children the other day, I said: what is a volunteer? The answer was varied throughout the room, but there was one child who came back with: it is someone who cares; it is someone who shares. That was the part that really got to me, was the way they could understand in Grade 3 how it was someone who cared and shared.

Madam Speaker, they also said that volunteerism knew no boundaries. We saw that during the flood with us able to work with

members of all parties on one common goal as we were working toward success.

So as we have this motion toward us today, I would like to thank all the volunteers throughout Manitoba, throughout Canada, who have helped to make this nation a great nation, who have helped to make Manitoba and my community of St. Norbert a place where I want to raise my children. I want all members of this Chamber today to pass this resolution brought forward by the member for Gladstone and spoken of so highly by all members in this Chamber today and see that this motion goes forward.

So, Madam Speaker, thank you very much.

\* (1750)

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** I rise to speak briefly on this resolution in support of this resolution from the member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan), and we agreed to pass it at five to six, so I will be very brief.

It is interesting that we have a motion that has the support of the government and the opposition, and I am sure that probably all of us here have had a great deal of experience as MLAs or prior to becoming MLAs in the community as volunteers, and so all of us support volunteerism in our community and encourage our constituents to volunteer.

However, there have been some trends in recent years in terms of volunteerism. For example, when I was working at the North End Community Ministry in the 1980s, there were about 35 volunteers there who were involved in schools, and I am just going from memory here in terms of the numbers, but they were working one on one in five elementary schools in the inner city.

However, these people, most of whom were women in their fifties and sixties, were part of the sandwich generation. Many of them had children and grandchildren and they also had elderly parents that they had to look after, and the result was that every year had fewer of those volunteers until eventually that particular volunteer program disappeared because we were

not able to recruit new volunteers to replace them.

Now, interestingly, I was volunteering at the Old Spaghetti Factory a few years ago with one of my colleagues from the government side of the House, and we had lunch together after we volunteered, and we had a lengthy discussion about volunteerism. It was his contention that there are thousands of volunteers out there and that they are an untapped resource and there are lots of people that we could draw on.

I said, no, I respectfully disagree because the traditional source of volunteers were women who worked at home unpaid and volunteered in their spare time, and, now, because of changes in society, about 60 to 65 percent of women are in the paid workforce, and so that source of volunteers is no longer available or as available as it used to be.

Many organizations are having trouble recruiting and retaining volunteers. For example, I was recently talking to the executive director of Meals on Wheels in Winnipeg, and they have a great deal of trouble recruiting and retaining volunteers. They actually have a crisis every year in January and February when so many Manitobans go south for a holiday, and especially retirees. So it is actually getting, I think, increasingly hard to attract volunteers.

Now, that does not mean that we should not try, but I think we need to make horrendous efforts in order to recruit volunteers and train volunteers and show that they are appreciated so that they can continue to volunteer. I have certainly done this in my constituency. I sent out letters to almost my whole constituency to recruit volunteers for the adult literacy program at King Edward School, and I probably sent out, I do not know, 7,000 or 8,000 letters and got maybe two volunteers. Now, those individuals are very much appreciated by the adult literacy program, but it just shows how difficult it is to recruit volunteers.

So with those few remarks, I will let the member for Inkster put some remarks on the record. Thank you.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, we too want to see this particular resolution pass. It should be noted that whether it is the smallest micro of all communities or it is the larger community as a whole, that being all of Manitoba, it is the volunteers that will make or break it. We would ultimately suggest to you that Manitoba likely has if not the highest, I challenge anyone to find another jurisdiction where we have so many volunteers based on a per capita. I think we are all overwhelmed, whether they come out in the droves such as the great flood that we had a couple of years back, and that is for the province as a whole uniting together, to the local community clubs, the parent councils. It is virtually endless.

What we do know, Madam Speaker, is that our communities are successful when we get people volunteering to make life that much better for us. If the Pan Am Games is going to be a success, as I believe it will be, it will be because of the volunteers. We have seen huge successes in terms of the Grey Cup sponsoring. That, again, is because of volunteers. One could go endlessly at all levels.

We, on behalf of the Liberal Party, applaud all of those that commit so willingly their time and efforts to so many good causes. We pay special tribute to those individuals today in recognition of this particular resolution. Thank you.

**Madam Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to adopt the resolution? [agreed]

Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? [agreed]

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 19, 1999

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