



Third Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable George Hickes  
Speaker*



**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Seventh Legislature**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, November 19, 2001

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education):** I am pleased to table the following reports, copies of which have already been distributed: the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Annual Report for 2000-2001; the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation First Quarter Report for the period April-June, 2001; Manitoba Women's Advisory Council Annual Report 2000-2001; the Status of Women Annual Report 2000-2001; the Seniors Directorate Annual Report 2000-2001; the Council on Post-Secondary Education Annual Report 2000-2001; the University of Manitoba Annual Report 2000-2001; the University of Winnipeg Financial Statements for the year ending March 31, 2001; Brandon University Annual Report for the year ended March 31, 2001; the Assiniboine Community College Annual Report 2000-2001; Red River College Annual Report 2000-2001; and Keewatin Community College Annual Report 2000-2001.

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table under The Regulations Act a copy of each regulation registered with the Registrar of Regulations since the regulations were tabled in this House in December of 2000. The remaining six binders have been provided to the Journals Clerk.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 6—The Fortified Buildings Act

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I move, seconded by the Premier (Mr. Doer), that leave be given to

introduce Bill 6, The Fortified Buildings Act, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Administrator, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House, and I would like to table the Administrator's message.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, this bill establishes a scheme to deal with fortified buildings such as biker bunkers or other gang and crack houses that pose a risk to public safety.

*Motion agreed to.*

\* (13:35)

#### Bill 300—An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation

**Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), that leave be given to introduce Bill 300, An Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Portage District General Hospital Foundation (and that the same be now received and read a first time).

*Motion agreed to.*

#### Bill 200—The Elections Amendment Act

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire), that leave be given to introduce Bill 200, The Elections Amendment Act, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

*Motion agreed to.*

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us Mr. Jody Carr, who is a member of the Legislative Assembly for New Brunswick, who is also accompanied by his wife.

Also, in the public gallery we have from Linden Christian School, 75 Grade 5 students under the direction of Miss Brenda Klassen, Mrs. Rose Galston and Mrs. Hilda Bergen. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen).

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

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Minister of Education, Training and Youth Credibility

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) has directed Agassiz School Division to falsify their enrolment numbers. He has transmitted public funds in an underhanded manner. He has been caught by the Auditor, and he has not been open, honest and consistent. In all of this, the truth has been sacrificed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Reluctantly, on the first question I am compelled to rise because of the allegation of the member opposite directed to the Minister of Education. He clearly knows full well, and you ruled on the exact same wording last week, Mr. Speaker.

We are all honourable members. Would you please ask him to withdraw the phrase referring to the issue of being honest?

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

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Last week, on a number of occasions, the honourable minister was asked the question a number of times on whether he was open, honest and consistent. He falsified the information that he gave to this House.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, he does have a point of order.

All information that is brought to the House is treated as factual, and I would ask the honourable Member for Minnedosa to please withdraw the word of not being "honest."

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** I will withdraw it, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the honourable member.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable member, with his question.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Doer) and others have said they agree in totality with the Auditor's report. The Auditor's report is in stark contrast to what the Minister of Education has been saying. The truth has been sacrificed in many of his comments.

My question is: How can this minister have any credibility with education stakeholders, with the public, and indeed with his colleagues?

\* (13:40)

**Mr. Caldwell:** Mr. Speaker, I think this Government on each and every occasion since it has come to office, on matters to deal with education, whether it be the public school system or the post-secondary system, has taken a tack that is in support of public education excellence, in support of excellence in our post-secondary system. On areas of operating, on areas of capital, on areas of consultation, this Government has been unparalleled in its support of the public school system in the province.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table three copies of an article that was in the *Brokenhead River Review*, the paper that encompasses the Agassiz School Division. In this article, a spokesperson for Agassiz School Division indicates: We knew we went too far; we were instructed to do so.

This minister instructed that school division to falsify numbers—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, the member has had sufficient time, several months, to practise his *Beauchesne's* Citation 410. As he knows full well, a supplementary question should have no preamble. Would you please remind the member of that ruling that is well established in this Legislature?

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Minnedosa, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor's report indicates that these funds were inappropriately sent to that school division. They say they believe in the Auditor's report. What the people from Agassiz School Division are saying reflects the comments of the Auditor.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all honourable members that *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble. I would ask the honourable member to please put his question.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Mr. Speaker, given that information, how does this minister do his job? How can anyone believe him anymore? He had denied these circumstances that have now been repeated in the Auditor's report and in this newspaper.

**Mr. Caldwell:** I think we were quite consistent last week in asserting that we respect and

acknowledge the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor's report.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Mr. Speaker, this minister has been anything but consistent. The Auditor's report and this school division have indicated that they were instructed to do this by this minister. He has no credibility.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Mackintosh:** On the same point of order, the same substance, Citations 409 and 410, indeed our rules say that continuing to violate the rules can even constitute privilege. Mr. Speaker, would you please remind the honourable member that supplementary questions, he can go on a new question, but supplementary questions require no preamble. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Minnedosa, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** I am simply asking the minister whether he instructed Agassiz School Division to fudge the numbers.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble. I ask the honourable Member for Minnedosa to please put his question.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Will the minister confirm that he directed Agassiz School Division to fudge their numbers?

**Mr. Caldwell:** Mr. Speaker, the situation in Agassiz School Division obviously is very complex. It is a situation that we inherited from members opposite when they put into place an adult learning centre program that did not have any accountability guidelines, nor did it have any assurances that programs would be of any quality.

\* (13:45)

Obviously, since November '99, we have been working assiduously as a government to put into place some controls on fiscal responsibility and some assurances that programs are going to be ones of excellence, Mr. Speaker. We will be continuing that process in this session with legislation on adult learning centres.

#### **Minister of Education, Training and Youth Credibility**

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and Training. On seven separate occasions in this House, the minister was asked about his actions regarding his openness, his consistency and his honesty in dealing with school divisions. On Friday last, I asked in this House whether the minister had ever funnelled money to a school division knowing that it was wrong and that there was no transparency in the counting of that money. He denied that and yet his deputy minister contradicted him.

My question to the minister is this: How can this minister expect anyone to believe him or to trust his actions, and how can he ever expect to have the trust of Manitobans in anything he says or does?

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** Well, Mr. Speaker, again, the record of this Government on matters educational speak for themselves. There has not been a government that has been more supportive of our public school system, of our post-secondary system and the students, educators and managers of that system in this province.

Mr. Speaker, as I said last week and have said, the decision on Agassiz was through the department's delegated authority. I accept the Auditor's judgment. The reason in the main that this is to light is because of the comments and recommendations in the Auditor's report, incidentally, a report that my deputy referred to the Provincial Auditor's office some months ago for a full accounting on this situation.

We have said repeatedly in this House, we accept the Auditor's criticisms and recommendations. I support my deputy in bringing this matter to the Auditor. We are working to rectify a situation put in place by members opposite.

#### **Resignation Request**

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** This minister has admitted that he fudged the numbers. He hid the money. My question is:—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

#### **Point of Order**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Well reluctantly, Mr. Speaker, I have to get up. We did not waive the rules when we came into the House today. This issue has been raised twice already. Clearly *Beauchesne's* says, and it has been ruled in this House week after week: A supplementary question should need no preamble, in 409, and supplementary questions require no preambles in Citation 410.

Would you please ask for the co-operation of the Opposition and respect for our rules of proceeding.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Russell, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, I do have respect of you as the Speaker of this House, and I respect the rules of this House, but the statement that I made was that he fudged the numbers and he did it.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised—Order.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* Citation 409(2) advises that a

supplementary question should not require a preamble.

I would ask the honourable Member for Russell to please put his question.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, will this minister do the right thing now and resign since he has now forced the school division to go beyond the bounds of honesty and transparency? He has falsified documents and statements. We call on his resignation.

**Mr. Caldwell:** I was first asked to resign by members opposite within weeks of coming into this Chamber, something that I suppose all of us recognize in terms of partisan rhetoric inside this Chamber, but it does very little to advance issues of accuracy.

\* (13:50)

I have said in the House, and I say again right now, we do take responsibility for the department error, as identified in the Singleton audit. Mr. Speaker, referring back to page 99 of the audit, on pages 98 and 99 of the audit, this audit that was prepared at the urging of my deputy to get to the bottom of the system that provided for no accountability, and we accept the Auditor's report.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, will this minister retain whatever strand of integrity he has left and ask his Premier to relieve him of his duties as Minister of Education because he has falsely made statements in this House?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I think it would be helpful for members to read through the total Provincial Auditor's Report and reflect on some of the findings on page 91 that deal with the actions or inactions of the previous government.

We have, for our part, accepted the fact that the Auditor has said that improvements have been made under our watch but other improvements must also be made for the public funds in adult education.

Members opposite had their chance to deal with public accountability and public

responsibility. Perhaps they want to tell the people of Manitoba why they chose not to take these matters of accountability to the Provincial Auditor. At least this Minister of Education ensured that the deputy minister took this matter to the Provincial Auditor so the public good could be served.

#### **Minister of Education, Training and Youth Credibility**

**Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, the public good requires ministers of the Crown to be honest when they record the expenditure of public money. That is fundamental to our democracy. I want to ask that minister: When the Auditor, a servant of this Legislature, says that his department provided half a million dollars to a school division in adult learning funds that they knew would not be viewed for that purpose, how does he have any credibility to come back in this Chamber as a Minister of Education?

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** Mr. Speaker, I think the credibility of this Government on matters of public education speaks for itself, given the record of members opposite throughout the '90s.

We accept the Auditor's criticism and recommendations. The department previous to our ascension to office did not have an effective monitoring process in place for quality control in programs or in accountability, for fiscal accountability. The changes made by this Government in 2001-2002, to quote the Auditor: represent important improvements.

We have made and will continue to make improvements in adult education through legislation, something members opposite did not consider at all in putting in place these programs.

**Mr. Praznik:** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this minister if he has considered what the Auditor, a servant of this Legislature, had to say about his actions, and I quote from the *Free Press*: That they were totally unacceptable, and, I quote the Auditor, it is imperative that if the Legislature is going to vote money to be used for a specific purpose it should only be used for that specific purpose.

What does he say to the Auditor?

**Mr. Caldwell:** Mr. Speaker, as we have said repeatedly in the House, the Government and myself accept the Auditor's recommendations. *[interjection]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Prior to recognizing the honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all honourable members that questions and answers to questions should be put to the Speaker.

#### Resignation Request

**Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this minister if he is prepared to comply with what the Auditor said that what he did was unacceptable, if he will then accept the responsibility of a minister of the Crown and do what Francis Fox did, Jean Charest did, Alan Redman *[phonetic]* did and James Garner *[phonetic]* did in Saskatchewan when they were caught doing something wrong, including James Garner *[phonetic]*, who lied in the Legislature. Will he resign?

\* (13:55)

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** I think it is instructive that it is this Government that engaged the Provincial Auditor to do a review of the adult learning centre, as established by members opposite, that it was this Government that asked the Provincial Auditor to undertake an assessment of the accountability of the adult learning centres in the province, and it is this Government that is acting on the Provincial Auditor's recommendations.

#### Minister of Education, Training and Youth Resignation Request

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier (Mr. Doer). The Minister of Education forced a school division to falsify their enrolment numbers. He forced them to hide the payment of money. The Minister of Education has come into this Chamber and when asked what he knew, seven times he did not tell the truth. If a minister did that in my government, I

would fire that minister. Do you have the courage to do the right thing, or is that the difference between you and me?

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### Point of Order

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** I know the Opposition is getting exercised as if they had discovered some deep dark secret when in fact this was all in the Provincial Auditor's report at the behest of the Department of Education.

I raise the question about the words used by the Leader of the Opposition. He was not directing his remarks at the Speaker. He was not using the third person, and it is of course very important as we conduct our proceedings here in an orderly way that we not use words like "you" and "me." Instead, Mr. Speaker, it should be directed to you in order to ensure there is some balance, there is some decorum and that there are not personal vendettas that are played out in this Chamber.

Would you please remind the member of that?

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, all too often this House Leader stands in defence of his Leader and says it is leaders' latitude. Well, this is leaders' latitude, and this is not the first time this minister has been caught by the Auditor. The Auditor has referred to this minister on a number of occasions.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, I just remind all members that questions and answers are to be put through the Chair. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, with the greatest of respect to the theatrics of the Leader of the Opposition, he may want to pound his table, but if I had a critic in my group that

was as wrong as the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) on health care statistics and prostate cancer, I would take action as well in terms of the standards. So let not the member give us these theatrics.

In 1998-99, the Government was aware of serious shortcomings in the adult education area of government. There was a recommendation to go to the Provincial Auditor. Somebody over on the other side when they were in government stopped the movement to the Provincial Auditor to review the workings of the adult education branch. Look at page 91. It is referred to in that section of the audit.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor has stated that improvements have been made over the past practices. Many improvements have been made. Other improvements must be made, and this Government is making those improvements. We are making them for the benefit of Manitobans after having the intestinal fortitude to go to the Provincial Auditor to get some of these issues reviewed independently.

\* (14:00)

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, this is all about the integrity of this House and of this Government. I ask this Premier again: Will he show leadership and ask his minister to resign?

**Mr. Doer:** We showed leadership. We showed leadership by going to the Provincial Auditor. Your legacy of leadership is on page 91, when the former government did not have the integrity to take this matter to the Provincial Auditor. That is the difference between you and us. We went to the Provincial Auditor.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Doer:** I might remind members that are pointing and yelling and screaming from across the way that the Provincial Auditor determined that the last two years they were in office their total books did not represent accurately the total financial affairs of the total province. If the books do not tell the total picture of the total province, I would suggest to members opposite

that they are feigning indignation with a lot of hypocrisy in their soul.

**Mr. Murray:** The First Minister talks about leadership. If his idea of leadership is to have somebody falsify records, falsify and force them to hide the payments of money, that is not leadership. There is no trust in that. I ask him again: Will he do the right thing and ask his Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) to resign?

**Mr. Doer:** The Auditor's report has 100 pages of findings. In many pages there are weaknesses, failings, lack of accountability, lack of transparency, lack of service for the kids and youth that are responsible for receiving these programs. Page after page is a series of findings from the Provincial Auditor. Part of those findings were that, unfortunately, in 1998 when there was a recommendation to have the Provincial Auditor look at this matter, somebody stopped an audit from taking place.

I am pleased that this minister and this Department of Education did proceed to the Provincial Auditor. I am pleased that the report has been made public, including the findings on page 99 of the Auditor's report. I am pleased that the Auditor said that improvements have been made. I accept the fact that there were findings, were shortcomings, for our Government.

Unlike members opposite, we will take the shortcomings. We have already changed the manner in which block funding was delegated from the department to adult education centres. We have already changed before the Auditor's report the manner in which those funds are accounted for under the adult education branch. We took action in the year 2000. We took action in 2001. We are continuing to take action because we are going to bring in legislation for 2002.

#### **Adult Learning Centres—Funding Treasury Board/Cabinet Submissions**

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** On Friday the Minister of Education admitted in the hallway that this scheme to funnel money to Agassiz School Division was approved by Treasury Board. Did the minister knowingly sign a Treasury Board submission with these false

numbers in it? Is that the information he took to Treasury Board?

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** Of course not, Mr. Speaker. The decision on Agassiz was through the department's delegated authority. I accept all the Auditor's judgments and take responsibility for them, as any minister should. My deputy had the intestinal fortitude to see the adult education problem that we inherited and take it to the Auditor, something members opposite did not do when their deputy made the same recommendation a year before we came to office.

We have taken action at every step on this file. The Auditor has acknowledged in his final conclusion that important improvements have been made since this Government came to office, but further improvements will be required. We fully accept that. That is exactly right. We inherited a mess in adult education and are taking action to rectify it.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** In Saturday's *Free Press*, the Minister of Education acknowledged that this went to Treasury Board and to Cabinet. Does he stand by the comments he made to the reporter from the *Winnipeg Free Press* that this was discussed in Cabinet?

**Mr. Caldwell:** Mr. Speaker, I have been consistent all along in using the word "government," of which I am a part. This decision was through the department's delegated authority. I accept the Auditor's judgment in this regard. Again, the adult learning centre issue in this province has been one that has caused no end of grief for more than one school division.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I would ask for a little decorum in the House. We have the viewing public, we have school children in the galleries. I would ask for a little co-operation from all honourable members. This is a time for questions and a time for answers. We would all like to hear the questions, and we would all like to hear the answers. I would ask for some co-operation from all members, please. Order. The honourable Minister of Education and Training has the floor.

**Mr. Caldwell:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a consequence of this Government's actions in asking the Provincial Auditor to undertake a report in the review of the adult learning centre program as established by members opposite, we now have 45 recommendations from the Provincial Auditor. We have already implemented many of those recommendations, but I can assure this House that we will implement every one, including legislation which will become this session.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Member for Minnedosa, with his final supplementary question.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister is confirming his difficulty with the truth by dancing with his answer again. He indicated that Cabinet had full knowledge of this; now he is backing away from that. Which—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### Point of Order

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, once again would you please remind the member that supplementary questions, it is his final supplementary, require no preamble. It is the rule of this House.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne's* 409(2) advises that a supplementary question should not require a preamble. I would ask the honourable Member for Minnedosa to please put his question.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Can the minister confirm that this information about Agassiz's enrolments went to Treasury Board and to Cabinet? Can he confirm that?

**Mr. Caldwell:** No, Mr. Speaker. For two years now we have been trying to put accountability back into the system while protecting the interests of students. We accept the Auditor's criticisms, as I have said repeatedly in this House, for any decisions we have made, and we accept all of his recommendations.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate.

I do believe the honourable minister has already answered the question. He said, no, it did not go to Cabinet. That is fine. I do not think he has to keep dancing.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Education and Training, on the same point of order.

\*(14:10)

**Mr. Caldwell:** Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to put on the record again that decisions on Agassiz were made through the department's delegated authority.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, he does have a point of order. It says *Beauchesne's* Citation 417: Answers to questions should deal with the matter raised.

### Adult Learning Centres Funding Formula

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, when the NDP were elected, funding of adult education was based on September 30 enrolment, the same method used to fund Grades 1 to 12, Senior 4 as Grade 12 is now referred to. This approach was totally inappropriate for adult learners, where learners often come and go during the year, sometimes in large numbers, and where learners may study for very variable periods of time, quite different from Grades 1 to 12.

My question to the Minister of Education: I ask the minister to acknowledge that the use of September 30 enrolment as the funding base for adult education was totally inappropriate, that indeed it was an absurd system for adult education.

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** Mr. Speaker, I will

acknowledge that the adult learning centre program as set up by members opposite was indeed an absurd situation. It had no accountability in terms of fiscal management or program quality.

I will also acknowledge that as a consequence of the Deloitte & Touche audit that was undertaken shortly after this Government came into office, we discovered in excess of a 100% overexpenditure in adult learning centre programs in the province of Manitoba. We will also acknowledge as a consequence of that massive overexpenditure, we began to review the adult learning centre programs in the province of Manitoba with a view, Mr. Speaker, to bring some accountability to this program.

**Mr. Gerrard:** My supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Education: Knowing that this approach to funding adult education was so inappropriate and ridiculous, why did the minister continue to use it for two years after he became the minister?

**Mr. Caldwell:** Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously we have been in this House for two years now or two years and a month. Obviously when you are making massive change to a system that did not have any safeguards brought in as part of its initial structure, there are changes that have to be made in a sensitive and cautious manner so as they do not jeopardize the stability of the public education system.

We believe in acting in a moderate and balanced fashion, Mr. Speaker, one that does not undermine public education or undermine adult learning centres that are functioning in the province.

### Minister of Education, Training and Youth Resignation Request

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** My supplementary to the Premier: I ask the Premier to act. His Minister of Education has persisted in using an absurd system for two years after he became minister. He has been caught instructing school divisions to fudge their books, to give them money under the table. Will the minister now ask for the resignation of his Minister of Education?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Members opposite are inventing terms with great liberal attitudes to the truth.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor's statement says: The department did not reduce the Agassiz School Division. They do not make all these other allegations or findings that members opposite have been liberally, liberally making and rhetorically making for the last half hour.

Secondly, the amount of money that was budgeted in '99-2000 was \$6 million. The amount of money that was spent in '99-2000, when we came into office, was at that point identified as \$17 million, \$11 million over budget. So no wonder members opposite yell very loud, because \$11 million over budget on a \$6-million item is not my definition of accountability of public money.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the amount of public money that has been allocated to this program that has some need in our society for adult education has been reduced from \$17 million to \$15 million, is budgeted this year for \$14 million.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor's report does not conclude, as the Member for River Heights concludes, that nothing has happened over two years. The Auditor says that improvements have been made. I know, for example, the way in which the programs are funded have gone from block fundings under The Public Finance Act, which is delegated to the authorities, including the deputy minister, which members opposite know, has been moved from block-funding allocations to specific allocations under another section of the Department of Education to get at these issues of accountability and proper accounting of numbers and public monies.

We reduced the money; we have improved the procedures; we accept the findings of the Auditor's report. We are going to improve it operationally and we are going to change the legislation to protect the people of Manitoba. That is a promise made in the Speech from the Throne in 2001, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Minister of Education, Training and Youth Credibility**

**Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet):** More hollow promises. I would like to ask the Premier

(Mr. Doer), then, despite all his good intentions today, how does he explain to Manitobans the words of the Secretary-Treasurer of the Agassiz School Division, who said last January in a report to her board, basically they, the Government, have found a way to funnel \$450,000 into the division without drawing attention to the gift and that they would accept numbers that they knew were wrong.

I want him to answer to that school division chair who said today in the newspaper that they went further than they should have, but were forced, instructed to do it, by his minister. Where is the accountability, Mr. Premier?

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate, as the Premier has mentioned earlier, that this does provide good theatre. The fact of the matter is that this Government engaged the Provincial Auditor to get to the bottom of an adult learning centre program for this province designed by members opposite that had no provisions for accountability, no provisions for program quality. It is this Government, the Government that asked the Provincial Auditor to undertake this review, that is accepting his recommendations and is acting to put some accountability into the adult learning centres around the province of Manitoba.

#### **Agassiz School Division Adult Learning Centres—Funding**

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** I would just ask the minister if he accepts this quotation in the paper today. It says: Caldwell acknowledged yesterday he and the NDP Cabinet knew Agassiz's enrolments were inflated, but decided to fund the entire enrolment anyway because the division was strapped for cash. Does he accept that as the truth?

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** I accept the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor's report. I accept that the Provincial Auditor undertook his report at our invitation, the deputy minister, in wanting to get to the bottom of a situation that was clearly out of control, a budgeted amount of \$6.6 million, which

translated to \$17 million in expenditures under the watch of the members opposite.

I think it is important that we do bring some coherence to the adult learning centre programs in the province of Manitoba. Indeed that is what we are engaged in.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** A second paragraph: Caldwell said the Government was right to give \$450,000 to Agassiz, even if doing it through enrolment—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I would like to remind all honourable members, whether quoting from the paper or a third party, that all members in the House are to be addressed by their constituencies, or ministers by their titles. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On a new question. Does the honourable minister stand by his statement that the Government was right to give \$450,000 to Agassiz, even if doing it through enrolment grants was questionable?

\*(14:20)

**Mr. Caldwell:** I would like to table at this time, November 16, 2001, released from the Agassiz School Division the document that I place credibility in and the document that is, I think, the salient one in this House, the Provincial Auditor's report, the conclusions of which and the recommendations of which we agree with. There are obviously many real challenges in this issue. There are financial challenges, which we accept and are taking action on. There are questions about the program quality, also issues we are taking action on and have been since coming to office.

The Provincial Auditor's recommendations and conclusions are accepted by this Government.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** On a new question, Mr. Speaker.

Does the honourable minister still stand by his statement that the Government was right to

give \$450,000 to Agassiz, even if doing it through enrolment grants was questionable?

**Mr. Caldwell:** Mr. Speaker, this is something that I have said in this House both this morning and late last week, that I accept the Auditor's judgment and take responsibility for any error that was made, as any minister should. The decision on Agassiz was made through the department's delegated authority.

My deputy had the intestinal fortitude to see the adult education problem that this Government inherited upon coming to office and take it to the Auditor, something members opposite had the opportunity to do and did not. This Government is trying to clean up a mess that is a legacy given to us by members opposite.

#### **Adult Learning Centres—Funding Minister's Statements**

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** Mr. Speaker, the *Free Press* called this a scandal. When the minister was answering a question on Friday, members in the gallery said: This is a lie. That is not a word I can use in this Chamber, but indeed it does reflect what Manitobans think this minister is doing in this House and outside the House.

I ask this Minister of Education why his statements in this House were contradicted by the Auditor, by his own deputy minister, and by himself when he spoke to the press hours later.

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth):** Mr. Speaker, there is no contradiction in my taking responsibility for the department's decision to exercise its delegated authority. We accept, and I accept the Auditor's judgments and take responsibility for that error. As the Auditor himself notes on page 99, the department did not reduce Agassiz School Division's ALC funding acknowledging that this school division needs the funds to mitigate their deficit situation.

This Government cares about children. This Government cares about stability in our public school system, in our adult learning centres and in our post-secondary system. The ALC's expenditures for overbudgeting were \$10 million

when this Government came to office, from a budgeted amount of \$6.6 million to an actual amount of \$17 million. That raised alarm bells in the department's office, as it should. As this issue progressed, the deputy brought the Provincial Auditor in, which is appropriate action to take.

### **Minister of Education, Training and Youth Resignation Request**

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** Mr. Speaker, on a new question. The Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) referenced the children of our province. The parents, the children, the students in our schools expect that a Minister of Education will tell the truth. We have not seen that in this House today. Children in this province expect more from a minister than him standing in the House here misleading this House and then going out of the Chamber—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I would just like to take this opportunity to remind all honourable members about dishonesties and misleadings, and I would ask members just to be a little careful in choosing your words. We are all honourable members in this House, and hopefully we will treat each other with utmost respect.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, I respect your ruling and I expect your caution, but the actions of this minister speak for themselves. If this minister has any shred of integrity, if he has any shred of decency, and if he has any shred of compassion for the students of this province and indeed the leadership that a Minister of Education should display, then he would resign. I ask him to do the honourable thing and tender his resignation.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, some of us might remember past incidents where individual ministers lost their hiring authority under the Civil Service Commission and will find it passing strange at the kind of theatrics in the House today.

Mr. Speaker, we will make our decisions not on the basis of theatre and comments but on the basis of the Auditor's report. The Auditor's report says that—well, you can go through the Auditor's report, page 91, on the fact that an audit should have taken place in 1991.

### **Point of Order**

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised, not provoke debate.

Mr. Speaker, I expect more from a Premier than to dump on somebody and use the words that he is using and the accusations. It is his minister who should be resigning, and it is his minister who has made the mistakes. Twice the Auditor has said that.

**An Honourable Member:** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Well, if you have new information. The honourable Member for Russell, on the same point of order with new information.

**Mr. Derkach:** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. I know very well the minister who lost his hiring authority, but that minister did not lose his position for lying, as this minister has done.

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** The phrase "over the top" comes to mind, Mr. Speaker. I believe the honourable member opposite just acknowledged your ruling and accepted it and then went on to use, I believe, as I recall, unparliamentary language. I ask that you check the record to determine that that indeed was the case and ask him to withdraw if it is determined he used the word "lying" as referring to the Minister of Education.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, I will take the matter under advisement to peruse Hansard and consult the procedural authorities, and I will report back to the House.

\* \* \*

\* (14:30)

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable First Minister, to conclude his comments.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, there are a number of sections in the Auditor's report that deal with serious shortcomings of financial and student outcomes prior to our coming into office. The Auditor then goes on to say that the Government made improvements to the system that they inherited in government. The Auditor correctly states that there were a couple of other difficulties—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Laurendeau:** Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate. The Premier has been dancing to protect his minister. The question was not even put to the Premier, so the leader's latitude does not apply.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, the question is dealing with an individual Cabinet minister, and the source of our reply to a very specific question is not the theatrical comments of members opposite but the factual comments contained within an Auditor's report.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition, I will take the matter under advisement and see if I can arrange a meeting with the House leaders to try and deal with this one issue that has been reoccurring session after session. I will see if I can organize a meeting with House leaders to address this.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable First Minister, to please conclude your comments.

**Mr. Doer:** As I was saying, the Auditor's report says, and I quote—members opposite have identified all kinds of sources for their authority. It says, and I quote: not the minister, not this, not that, not something else, the department did not reduce the Agassiz School branch.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has accepted more responsibility for the two negative comments in the Auditor's report than I have heard from the previous 11 years in this House. The minister is entitled to be evaluated on both the improvements that were made and the findings that were short. He has accepted responsibility, something that was foreign to this House for 11 years.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for Oral Questions has expired.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### University of Manitoba Bisons

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** This year the University of Manitoba Bisons Football Club completed their regular season with a record of seven wins and one loss in the Canada West Conference, a remarkable turnaround from the last number of years. Two weeks ago the Bisons defeated the University of Calgary Dinos 31 to 10 in the conference semi-final and went on to claim the Hardy Cup the next week by defeating the Regina Rams 23 to 17 in the western final.

It was 28 years ago that the Herd, as they are affectionately known, hoisted this Canada West Championship Cup. This past weekend the Bisons played McMaster University Marauders for the Churchill Bowl at Canad Inns Stadium. After a defensive struggle in the first half with the score 6 to 3, both teams went to the dressing rooms to regroup. Early in the third quarter, McMaster carried the play running the football deep into Manitoba territory only to have their only touchdown called back on a penalty. This seemed to be the turning point of the game. Realizing a lucky break, the Herd went on to make brilliant plays led by a stingy defence and by quarterback Shane Munson who carried the ball for Manitoba's first touchdown. The Herd never looked back, going to a 27 to 6 victory claiming the Churchill Bowl for the University of Manitoba.

The last time Manitoba won the Churchill Bowl, 31 years ago, Coach Dobie was a player for the Herd. I am especially proud of my nephew David Hewson who is a defensive back with the Herd. David made at least two

touchdown-saving plays and numerous tackles against a tough McMaster team. David is proud to be a part of the Bison team, a great Bison team. Now the Bisons are on to SkyDome in Toronto December 1 to play the University of St. Mary's Huskies for the Vanier Cup, the Canadian Collegiate Football Championship Trophy.

We wish Coach Dobie, the coaching staff, all the players and fans of the Herd every success in the championship game, which should be an exciting time for our Manitoba football heroes.

#### **Minister of Education, Training and Youth**

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield):** Mr. Speaker, I am astounded by the absolute contempt and utter lack of respect that the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) has shown toward the British parliamentary process and principles on which this Legislature is founded. On no less than seven different occasions in this House, the minister was asked if he had acted in a consistent, open and honest manner when dealing with the adult learning centre issue. Each and every time the minister stated he had. However, his actions prove otherwise.

The minister was asked in this House if he had sought Treasury Board approval. He refused to answer. Yet later, while talking to the media in the hallway, he confessed that the matter had indeed gone before Treasury Board and the Cabinet. The Minister of Education has repeatedly shown his disrespect for Manitobans and for our parliamentary process by failing to set the record straight on this important issue. The minister's arrogance and contempt, his complete disregard for the parliamentary process, set an extremely poor example for the young people with whose educational welfare he is charged. Manitobans deserve better. It is time for this minister to be removed.

#### **École Marie-Anne-Gaboury Walk-a-thon**

**Ms. Linda Asper (Riel):** Many Manitoba schools decided to support victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. Students were affected by the event and the possibility of war. The École

Marie-Anne-Gaboury parent council in my constituency was already planning a major fundraiser when the attacks took place. I joined the students and parents on September 27 for a 4.7 kilometre walk-a-thon to St. Vital Park and back, with proceeds to go for the cultural activities at the school. Participants also donated funds for the American Red Cross.

Julie Zilkie, Grade 6 student, and her friend Victoria Konidaris, felt the urge to help and decided to hold a bake sale at their school to raise money for the Red Cross. They spoke to their principal, their teacher and classmates, and soon 24 Grade 6 students were busy preparing cookies, muffins, brownies and other goodies. On September 25, the bake sale raised nearly \$300.

Wendy Zilkie, president of the parent committee, said her daughter Julie was deeply affected by the events of September 11. The organization of the bake sale enabled her and her peers to help with the rescue effort in New York. Congratulations to Julie, Victoria and their classmates for caring about the victims and their families. Congratulations to École Marie-Anne-Gaboury parent council for its efforts to raise money both for the victims and the schools enrichment program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Minister of Education, Training and Youth**

**Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, it should come as no surprise to Manitobans that this Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) and Premier (Mr. Doer) have not been open and honest with Manitobans when it comes to their lack of management skills. The adult education funding issue is a case in point, but there are other examples of this Government's inability to keep its word to organize the affairs of government.

Manitobans remember all too well that this Minister of Education tried unsuccessfully to raid Manitoba Public Insurance and provide a \$20-million gift to our universities. Once Manitobans caught them with their hands in the cookie jar, the Government quickly reversed their decision.

Unfortunately, Manitobans are not surprised when this Premier or one of his ministers do not

quite get their facts straight. Manitobans know that the Premier promised to end hallway medicine in six months yet has failed miserably. Manitobans did not misunderstand what the Premier promised, as he likes to tell them they did. Manitobans also remember the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) crying against frozen food. Now the minister is shipping in five-day-old sandwiches from Alberta. Manitobans remember.

\* (14:40)

Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute shame that Manitobans have come to expect such shady actions from this Minister of Education and this Premier. Thank you.

### September 11 Memorial

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Mr. Speaker, I want to speak today about the catastrophe of September 11 by highlighting a ceremony that took place in west Transcona on October 3. I want to give special recognition to the Tri-plex Tenants' Association in the Manitoba Housing complex on Plessis Road, who organized a heartfelt memorial in Transcona. This ceremony involved the Transcona Memorial United Church minister Carol Fletcher and the choir, the District 4 police, Gary Walker, the chief firefighter for District 4, Les Whal, and EMS staff inspector Rick Cieciva.

Members of the Transcona Pipe Band and residents were also there. Citizens felt they had to do something to make sense of this for themselves, and particularly the children in the area, who after watching television were asking many questions.

The community also felt a need to make a statement in the neighbourhood against racism and intolerance and for a free and democratic world. We came together as well to mourn as a community the loss of life and to recognize the EMS personnel who risked their own lives and died to save and assist others. Mr. Speaker, the local emergency response staff in Transcona appreciated the connection being made between September 11 in New York and Washington D.C. and the work that our emergency staff do every day here at home.

The stone urn that was dedicated with candles and hymns was sited this last Friday, November 9 at the police and fire station at Pandora and Plessis in Transcona by Murray Rougeau, the fire paramedics staff, and Glen Stefanec, the local community police officer. The stone urn with flowers will be a permanent remembrance for the role that EMS staff play to keep us all safe and secure. Thank you.

\* (14:40)

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (Third Day of Debate)

**Mr. Speaker:** Resume debate on the amendment proposed by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, standing in the name of the honourable Member for River East who has 17 minutes remaining.

**Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East):** I had several issues that I had wanted to discuss when I last had the opportunity to speak and ran out of time. The short break between last week and this week has certainly given me no choice but to speak on the scandalous activity that has been happening as a result of decisions that have been made by this Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) that have come to light. I think it is absolutely despicable that we would have to stand in this House and ask questions and hear the Minister of Education fudge the truth and cover up the kinds of activities that have been ongoing under his watch and through his department.

I cannot help but have noticed the arrogant attitude of this minister with the smirk on his face as he has answered the questions and tried to toss them off as light questions, tossed them off as theatre. I might quote him. I heard him say today that the kinds of questions that we have asked provide for good theatre.

Well, if this Minister of Education believes that asking questions about his integrity and his telling the truth to Manitoba students and to Manitoba taxpayers is theatre, then I say shame

on him, shame on him for taking that kind of an arrogant attitude.

*Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I watched with interest when questions were asked. I watched ministers of the Crown, ministers that sat on Treasury Board smirking and laughing and making very light of a very serious situation, one that I have never seen in my 15 years as an elected member in this Legislature. We sat around a government table for 11 years in this Chamber. We were never in a position or a situation where we lied when asked a question.

Part of the process of being sworn in as a minister of the Crown and taking an oath, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is to tell the truth. Very often decisions got made that were questioned. Very often we were on the hot seat for issues of the day for things that the opposition of the day felt were inappropriate or not the kinds of decisions they would have made. Very often we were asked questions in this House and asked questions by the media as a result of questions in this House. We were told by our Premier that the most important thing for us to do was tell the truth. We were obligated under the oath of office that we took to be honest with the taxpayers and the people of Manitoba.

Our former premier would not have tolerated any minister not telling the truth, and we have seen this Minister of Education last week say certain things in this House that he contradicted when he walked out into the hall and talked to the media. We have seen this Minister of Education today come into this House and give contradictory statements to what he gave to the media last week and to what he answered in the House last week.

I believe that the truth escapes this Minister of Education. I believe that the Premier today has showed a lack of leadership and complete disregard for the parliamentary system that is in place in this country. I think that speaks volumes about this Government and their attitude. They do not believe that they have to be accountable to the taxpayers of Manitoba. Well, we can just tell a story. We do not have to tell the truth and

maybe we will get away with it. That is not good enough. I say that the scandal that we are seeing today is going to live to haunt this Premier (Mr. Doer), this Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) and his Government.

I heard the Minister of Education and the Premier today both blame the department for the circumstances that they find themselves in today and for the cover-up and the fudging of the books and the fudging of the numbers. Well, who is in charge? Is it the Minister of Education who has responsibility for the expenditure lines within his department? Is the Premier in charge of his Cabinet and the Government of Manitoba?

The last time I looked, the bureaucracy was there to serve the ministers and the Cabinet of the Province of Manitoba. I see nowhere the arrogant kind of attitude and comments that we have heard from this Premier and this Minister of Education, who would deflect to the bureaucracy and blame them when ultimately the decision rests on the elected officials who are in charge of operating the affairs on behalf of the taxpayers of Manitoba. But it is this kind of arrogance that will ensure that this Government is brought to its knees.

I say shame. Shame on the Premier. I heard him in Question Period, one of the first times the Premier (Mr. Doer) got up to answer a question, try to deflect away from the real issues by making personal attacks on the credibility of members on this side of the House. I have heard not only the Premier, but I have heard the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) from time to time attack the credibility of my colleague the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger). Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it always seems to happen when they do not have the answers. When they are trying to skirt around the issues, they take great delight in personally attacking members on our side of the House.

\* (14:50)

Well, that certainly shows the kind of arrogance that we are seeing just two years into this Government's mandate, and that kind of arrogance shows very clearly that this Government is on its way on a very slippery slope. We have seen the first chink in this

Government's armour. It is the lack of credibility, the lack of accountability, the lack of the ability to tell the truth to Manitoba taxpayers and blame everyone else for the circumstances that they find themselves in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I find it unconscionable. I find the arrogance—and I repeat that word because I have seen it day after day. We have seen it since this Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) was appointed to the ministry. His answers are very flippant. It reflects very poorly on all members on the government side of the House when you have the arrogance that the Minister of Education displays. It also reflects very poorly on the decision making and the leadership that this Premier (Mr. Doer) shows to Manitobans. There is a clear lack of leadership. There is a clear lack of taking responsibility for the actions of his ministers and making the appropriate changes that need to be made.

In my mind, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government has stooped to an all-time low, something that I have never seen in my 15 years being elected in this Legislature. I would venture to guess that as much as the Premier (Mr. Doer) would like to see this issue go away, would like to see this issue swept under the carpet, the end is nowhere near.

He will find out over the next weeks and months—*[interjection]* Mr. Deputy Speaker, the arrogance of the Premier of the Province of Manitoba has just been shown as he sits in his place in the Legislature. If he has something to say, he should stand to his feet, be a man and put on the record the kinds of comments that he has just been putting on the record.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the lack of leadership on behalf of this Premier, as he sits in his seat and smirks, is disrespectful to the taxpayers of Manitoba that elected him to govern this province. The arrogance speaks much about the attitude of this Government. Manitobans will not forget easily the attitude and the lack of truth that permeates that side of the Legislature. They will know, and we will not let them forget what we are seeing today.

I just want to close my remarks by saying it is unfortunate. There are many other issues that

should have been discussed as we debated the Throne Speech, but this Government has shown us over the last week that the kinds of issues, the kinds of activities, the kinds of decisions and the lack of responsibility that the Minister of Education has shown, the lack of respect for the taxpayers of Manitoba is one that needs to be put on the record. Manitobans need to know the kind of government that we have in the province Manitoba.

I say shame on the Government. We will not let this issue go. We know that there is much that the public of Manitoba needs to know, and they will find out over the next short period of time. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** I would like to begin my comments by welcoming the new pages who are here for their first weeks of working with us in the House. They perform very important functions, and I hope they enjoy their time here, and also the interns who were introduced to the House last week, three interns for the Official Opposition and three interns for the government caucus.

I had the honour and privilege of sitting on the hiring committee for a number of years, along with the member for Gladstone, and hiring the interns. They are and have been—I think it has been 15 years now—a remarkable set of young people, many of whom have gone on to work in government. We are very pleased with the calibre of the interns for this year. I know that they have already done great service for the respective caucuses.

Before I get on to the Speech from the Throne, I would like to compliment two of our sports teams. I think it is a wonderful thing that the Bisons are going to the Vanier Cup on December 1 and that the Blue Bombers are going to the Grey Cup this next Sunday in Montreal. For those of us who enjoy sports, this is a great time to be from Winnipeg and from Manitoba. I think that the two teams have shown their courage and their determination. They have overcome years of adversity, years of losing teams, of losing seasons. Anyone who has followed sports teams over the years knows how difficult it is to have teams that are not doing

well and how wonderful it is to be able to support teams when they do well, as both the Bisons and the Blue Bombers have done this season. I wish them all the best in this next week and little bit more for the Bisons.

A couple of areas I would like to speak on in the Speech from the Throne in areas that are particularly of interest to me as Minister of Labour and Immigration, one is the Workplace Safety and Health process that is underway. As members may recall on September 10, I believe, we announced a six-point strategy for Workplace Safety and Health Injury Prevention.

I would like to read into the record those six points. First, is setting a target for workplace injury reduction of 15 percent over four years through a major joint effort between the Manitoba Labour and Immigration and the Workers Compensation Board. Reaching the 15% reduction target would mean approximately 3000 fewer workers suffering from a time-loss injury over a course of a year, 3000 families that would not have to deal with the loss of earnings, the injury or, in some cases, unfortunately, the death of a loved one.

Second, targeting young worker injury, young and inexperienced workers suffer an excessive number of workplace injuries. Ideas for improvement include adequate safety instruction in apprenticeship and industrial training programs and delivering health and safety instruction in high schools.

Third, we are looking at areas to strengthen occupational disease prevention to address the problem of chemical, mould and other contaminants in workplaces through improved enforcement of the workplace hazardous materials information system and the workplace health hazard regulations. The health hazard regulations will also be reviewed to assess their adequacies in today's workplaces. Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we all know, workplaces are very different today than they were in the past, and we need to look at, particularly in these troubling times, issues of contamination and issues of occupational disease and illness.

Fourth, we are going to look at improving the enforcement of current workplace safety

legislation and codes with more effective workplace inspections and investigations with particular attention paid to high-risk workplaces.

Fifth, we think it is important to improve agricultural safety and health by working with stakeholders in the agricultural sector to improve education and strengthen safety measures. Nearly half of Manitoba's traumatic workplace fatalities are in the agricultural sector, and many of those fatalities are young people, people five and six and seven years of age, and older individuals who unfortunately have succumbed to injuries and fatalities in the agricultural sector.

We are also, as part of this six-point plan, undertaking a legislative review of The Workplace Safety and Health Act which was first enacted in 1977, almost a quarter of a century ago, which has not been subject to a major review since 1983, 18 years ago. The act will be reviewed with a view towards developing a made-in-Manitoba solution based on public and stakeholder input and best practices to modernize the act and improve prevention of workplace illness and injury.

\* (15:00)

I was very pleased to announce this six-point strategy and to have in place and available to everyone who is interested a public discussion paper that was presented in September, as well, called *Improving Workplace Safety and Health in Manitoba, Education Prevention and Enforcement*, a document that was prepared, outlining many of the issues that I have spoken about here and others, giving a sense of the current situation in Manitoba's workplaces and asking some questions of the public, not exhaustive questions but questions that were designed to elicit responses, to elicit suggestions, concerns and ideas for improving workplace safety and health through things that the Department of Labour can do itself, through interdepartmental activities that can be done by a number of departments within government and how other organizations, labour movement, labour organizations, employer organizations, how the education system, how everyone can have an input into making our workplaces safer and healthier.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we know, every single person in the province of Manitoba either

is a worker or is related to a worker either as a member of the family, as a brother, a sister, a mother, a father, a grandparent, cousins, nephews. We all are linked to the workplace in one way or another, and we need to ensure that those workplaces, today's modern workplaces in the year 2001, are as safe and as healthy as we possibly can make it, because no one wants to have a workplace injury or illness and no one certainly wants to have a workplace fatality. Not a single person in this province, whether they are an employee, a worker or a family member wants to have unsafe workplaces.

In light of the six-point plan, the Government has put together a series of public meetings and a very extensive consultation process. A review committee is holding 18 different public hearings in a number of different communities. Those communities include Brandon, Winnipeg, Lac du Bonnet, Steinbach, Flin Flon, Thompson, Swan River, Winkler, Gimli, and, as I said, Winnipeg. There will be four sessions in Winnipeg. There has been one session in each of the other communities.

The response to these public meetings has been outstanding. To date there have been 288 people attending the public hearings and 87 submissions. Now, I think what is interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that people would come to the public hearing. They would not have signed up to speak at the public hearing for making an official presentation, but when they got to the public hearing and they heard other people's suggestions, other people's concerns, other people's stories, whether they were workers, members of a union or an employer, it motivated people in virtually every single public hearing to ask to speak and to share their stories, their concerns and their suggestions at the public hearings.

As you can tell from the list of locations that I have read out that by the end of the process early next month, the public hearing process, we will have literally covered the province. We will have visited every region of the province and spoken to literally hundreds of people. To date, as I have stated, almost 300 people have attended so far. My figures show that almost 450 people will have signed up or spoken by the end of the meetings in Winnipeg early in December.

Now, I expect that number to increase because people are calling up asking to have their names put on every day, and people will come to the public hearing and make presentations there.

This public hearing process is being put forward. The group that is hearing it, the review committee, I would like to speak about them. There are four individuals on this review committee. Wally Fox-Decent is the chairperson. Mr. Fox-Decent, as we know, is the chair of the Workers Compensation Board, but he is also a man who has had approximately 30 years experience as a mediator, an arbitrator in labour-management disputes. He has been a professor of political studies at the University of Manitoba. He has chaired a number of province-wide committees such as the commission on pay pension and allowances for members of the Legislature, three Manitoba constitutional task forces, and he chairs the advisory council on workplace safety and health and chairs the Labour Management Review Committee. So, as you can see, the chair of this review committee has an enormous amount of experience for decades in Manitoba dealing not only with labour-management issues and workers compensation issues but a broad range of issues. I dare say that there is no one more respected in this area than Professor Fox-Decent.

We also have three other representatives on this review committee. Chris Lorenc is the designate from the management portion of the workplace safety and health advisory council, and he represents the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association. He was also a former city councillor and is well respected. The Heavy Construction Association has, I believe, a monthly newsletter that they send out to all of their members. In every single one of those issues is an article or ideas on workplace safety and health. As you can understand, heavy construction is an area where the potential for workplace injury is quite good, or bad. Mr. Lorenc's group has done an enormous amount of work in giving workplace safety and health a very high priority for his association and by extension the industry as a whole.

The designate from Labour is Pete Walker, who is the occupational health safety and environmental representative from the Manitoba

Federation of Labour on the advisory council. He has got extensive experience in the whole area of workplace safety and health for a number of years. If I read the number of committees he has chaired or been on we would be here for another hour.

The final representative is Ilana Warner. She is a technical representative from the advisory council on workplace safety and health. She represents the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses. She has had a 36-year career in the nursing field, in the health care field, and brings an enormous amount of experience to this task force. As members may or may not know, the health care field is one of the fields that is growing in health and safety issues, and it is one that we wanted to have reflected in the task force.

So, as I have said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we believe that we have a very good process underway to look at the entire issue of workplace safety and health. It is taking a good portion of time. We are travelling the province. We are listening to literally hundreds of people. We also have agreed to meet and I have actually met with several organizations and will continue to do so. On a personal level, anyone who wants to speak to me about these issues is more than welcome to speak with me.

So I think we have done a very good job, and I am quite looking forward to the report that will be coming to me and Government shortly after the end of public hearings on the workplace safety and health area.

The other area that I would like to spend some time on, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the area of immigration. I am very proud of the work that this Government has done in the area of immigration. We all know that there are very severe labour shortages in the province of Manitoba, and one of the areas, although only one portion of it, that we are working to facilitate and assist in this labour shortage area is through the area of immigration.

To give the former government its due, the former government initiated a program called the Provincial Nominee Program with the federal government in October of 1998 at which

point the federal government agreed that the province could select immigrants to come to Manitoba who had skills that were in short supply in the province and could do everything to select these immigrants with the exception of a security check and a health care check which would still be done by the federal government. This would mean that instead of it taking years in many cases to come to Manitoba as an immigrant, the time could be reduced substantially, and we could have people here who were providing services that we were unable to find here in Manitoba.

\* (15:10)

As I have stated, the first agreement was for 200 families a year. We now currently have increased that to 500 families a year and are negotiating with the federal government to increase that number still more. I am hopeful that we will have an announcement shortly. Of those 500 families, I must say that we have also in conjunction with the Department of Industry, Trade and Mines put in a business immigration category, where the Department of Industry, Trade and Mines looks at an application for a family or an individual to come to Manitoba to not only invest but to stay here and bring their entrepreneurial skills to the province of Manitoba. They are opening jobs and creating jobs in that regard. We are well on our way to achieving that 50 goal of immigrants for the business category for this year.

Our goal, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in immigration is to have the same number of immigrants every year into Manitoba through the independent class, the Provincial Nominee Program and refugees that is our percentage of the population of Canada. Currently, that would be approximately 3.8 percent. Now, we are not there yet, but our numbers have steadily increased. Last year, in 2000, we had over 4500 people come into Manitoba as immigrants. That is a 24% increase over the numbers who came in 1999. We are very happy and pleased that that has been successful. We continue to work and will continue to work with all the stakeholders, with our department, with the federal government, with various immigration groups, with people who are interested in credentials and with the business community to ensure that our

made-in-Manitoba immigration solution is successful. As I stated, this is only one small part of our labour shortage strategy, but it is a critical part.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to speak about the Manitoba Ethnocultural Advisory and Advocacy Council that we have been discussing in this House for a fairly lengthy period of time. I am pleased to say that we are very close to announcing the 21-person council that will provide advice and advocacy to government on all issues relating to the ethnocultural community here in the province of Manitoba. This was an election commitment that we made in 1995 and that we reiterated in 1999. We recognize the importance of this council to provide advice and advocacy on behalf of the ethnocultural community in this province.

I might state that the former government chose not to see the importance of a process whereby they could get advice and particularly advocacy on issues of importance to the ethnocultural community. They, in effect, tore apart the former Manitoba Intercultural Council. The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) might remember that, in I believe it was 1992 or 1993, myself when I was the Opposition critic for Multiculturalism, spoke in the House about Bill 5, I believe the number was, for eight hours over a period of several days. I am sure that the Member for Lakeside was paying attention to every single word I said in the House at that time.

**An Honourable Member:** Remind me what Bill 5 was.

**Ms. Barrett:** Bill 5 was the piece of legislation that in effect killed Manitoba Intercultural Council. Our campaign pledge in the last two elections was to reinvigorate the multicultural, ethnocultural community through the institution of this new council. I am pleased to say that very shortly that council will be announced. The composition will be announced. I think everyone will agree that it is a wonderful council. It is a council made up of 16 individuals selected through ballot by the ethnocultural community, and five individuals selected by government.

I am looking very much forward to meeting with this council and hearing their advice and their advocacy on issues of importance to the community that they represent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those few words, I commend the Speech from the Throne to the House and would like very much to see unanimous support for it. Thank you.

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** It gives me pleasure to rise today to put a few words on record regarding the Throne Speech that we have seen. I believe it is the third one of this administration, yet it is in my view a repetition of the first two.

I think it is unfortunate that this Government has identified itself as a government without vision, a government without a plan, and a government without consistent direction. I think that will become the model that people will identify this new NDP government with. I think it is unfortunate for the people of Manitoba that they have not been able to get this Government to come forward with a visionary approach to change, to keep pace with all other levels of government in this country. I think it is also unfortunate that this Premier (Mr. Doer) has demonstrated a weakness that we have not seen for a long time in the Premier's office in this province. That weakness is simply to direct the affairs of his Cabinet in such a way that people will have consistent faith in his ability to lead properly.

I want to speak a bit about that during my comments. I want to also address the issue of the lack of initiative that should have been identified in this Budget and in this Throne Speech by the Premier when he directed his Cabinet to bring forward suggestions and ideas for a Throne Speech, as is normally the practice. There is virtually no mention about agriculture and the economic contribution that the agricultural community makes to the province of Manitoba. I want to address that one.

The third one I want to address is the perception that this Government has left with the general public about its trustworthiness.

Before I do that, I would like to personally welcome the new pages to this forum. I believe it will be a tremendous learning experience for them. I believe it will present an opportunity for them to not only learn what Parliament and parliamentary procedure is all about, but it will demonstrate to them the need for a democratic debate on policies, on issues, on legislation and regulation development that is constantly the responsibility of the Government and this Chamber and the Opposition's responsibility to guard closely that the interests of the general public are protected and that it is done with integrity and ensure that the best interests of the general public and the citizens of Manitoba are in fact maintained.

I think that opportunity, that learning curve, our young people serving as pages here, will not leave them and will be a great benefit to them in their future endeavours. I also want to welcome the new interns. These are young people that are attending university that have applied for the Internship Program in this province. Again, I believe it will serve them well to in future enhance their ability to make sure that their talents are broadened by the experience that they are going to have serving in the various caucuses that they are serving and will serve over the next 10 months or so.

\* (15:20)

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we should also welcome you back and hope that your term, this term, will be as satisfying to you as it will be to us and that hopefully we can work together to enhance the opportunities of Manitoba and Manitobans, that we can make their life better in the future.

I also want to say to the Speaker of this House that I believe he has done a good job of directing the affairs of this Chamber during the last couple of years that I have known him. I know that he does that with integrity. We certainly welcome him back as Speaker of this House.

I believe we have today an opportunity. I think we have an opportunity to demonstrate to Manitobans the sincerity which they would like us to address the issues in this House with. I

think we have an opportunity to demonstrate to all Manitobans that we do that with integrity and that we do that in response to their request.

I believe that we have an opportunity and a responsibility to demonstrate to all people of Manitoba that the opportunities they have must be provided and that the involvement that government has must be provided to them in an equitable base and from an equitable standpoint, whether it is the education system, whether it is our health care system, whether it is our social services system or indeed the agricultural community or the industrial community or the business community at large, because if we have not got and if we do not encourage and maintain the ability to derive commerce and encourage commerce in this province, our incomes and our revenues, the tax revenues that this Government so depends on, will decrease.

I think we have, from that standpoint, a responsibility to Manitoba. I want to spend a little bit of time talking about the impact. I think we so often forget how much of an economic impact the agricultural community has to this province. Did you know that roughly about 35 percent of our total product for export is derived from primary renewable resources, mainly the agricultural sector? Did you know that one out of every seven jobs in this province is agricultural based? Think about that. One out of every seven jobs is agricultural based and related. The agricultural industries that depend on the primary source for processing and deriving a finished product for export and/or for domestic consumption is the basis of 35 percent of our total revenues in this province of Manitoba.

Have you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, looked at the Budget? Have you looked at the Budget that your Premier (Mr. Doer) presented or your Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) presented in this House, the last Budget? Tell me how much revenue, what percentage of your Budget is dedicated to agriculture. Can you tell me that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Do you know? It is less than 2 percent. Less than 2 percent of the total revenues generated by 35 percent of the economy is directed back into that industry. Is that equity? Is it equity?

I want to indicate to you—[interjection] Well, I hear the Minister of Industry (Ms.

Mihychuk) commenting from her chair, and I do not blame her for commenting because this must be a bit of a sensitive issue to her as well as her colleague in the Minister of Agriculture's (Ms. Wowchuk) chair. I would indeed believe that the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin) might, as well, want to object to their Premier when their financial statement is drafted.

I want to say this to you. This is a document that came into my possession on the 29th of October, which was just a few days ago, a few short days ago, and this is a reflection of what the U.S. government is doing for agriculture. They are going to designate, they have passed a bill in the House in their House of Commons and in their Senate that will provide \$170 billion over the next 10 years to agricultural support, \$170 billion. Do you know how much that would be if we did a similar type of budget in this country? *[interjection]* I know the minister now says: Did you hear about the WTO? Yes, I did. Did I see our Minister of Agriculture travelling to take part in the discussions to ensure that the agenda would be adopted, that agriculture could actually be discussed at the WTO? No, she hid. She hid. Did our Premier (Mr. Doer), as the Premier of Saskatchewan did, make the trip to go to the summit that dealt with whether the budget or the agriculture issue would in fact be—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. The honourable Minister of Industry Trade and Mines, on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines):** On a point of order, the member across the way is misleading the public in his comments. Manitoba took a leadership role in being present at the WTO. In fact, Manitoba was the first to sign up to defend the rights and future income of agricultural producers in the Prairies.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Disputes over the facts are not points of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It does not surprise me that the

honourable Minister of Industry and Trade is somewhat sensitive in this area, because I would be sensitive, too, if I was her. I would be sensitive, too, that my Premier had totally ignored the discussion on one of the most fundamental and most important issues at the Qatar meeting that has just concluded. I would be sensitive too if I was the Minister of Industry and Trade that her involvement or her comment had not even been solicited on this very important matter. Need I say to you that if we in this province paid as much attention to agriculture as most other nations and countries and states in the world do, we would have a different economy in this province than we have today?

Let me say this to you, that only a few short years ago, in 1999, there was a severe flooding problem in western Manitoba. What did the then-government do under the leadership of our former Premier, Gary Filmon? What did they do? They said: We will not leave you hanging out to drown. We will support you. They paid those farmers \$50 an acre for every acre that was not seeded.

I know the minister here will say, well, we put a crop insurance system in place that will now take care of that. That is not true. That crop insurance system was always there for many, many years. Any one of us that farm had the opportunity to buy non-seeded-acres crop insurance. Yet we realized that farmers had not seen the kind of catastrophe that happened in western Manitoba before. Therefore we pitched in and we helped and we paid farmers \$50 an acre.

What have we done for southeast Manitoba under the watch of the NDP government, under Gary Doer's watch? What have we done? All we have said so far is they can buy crop insurance if they choose. If they do not, they are on their own.

\*(15:30)

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. When referring to a member of the Assembly, the members are encouraged to refer to their position as MLAs or as minister of a particular department.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Well, thank you very much for reminding me. I will then refer to the Premier, Mr. Gary Doer, who, under his watch—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Honourable Member for Emerson, you can address him as the First Minister or as Premier.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I will then address him as the Premier of the province, and his name, I believe, is registered in all our documents as Mr. Gary Doer. Is that correct?

I will say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that he has failed the people of Manitoba. I say to you that he has failed in negotiations. One of the first matters that he attended to when he was elected was taking a trip to Washington.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The convention in the House is to refer to the position being held, but not with specific names. Thank you.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am sorry to hear that the Deputy Speaker is so sensitive to this. I will then refer to Mr. Doer as the Premier of the Province and ensure that I will recognize him as the Premier and call him the Premier, because he is after all the Premier and has taken on that responsibility.

I will say this to you, that he took a trip to Washington. Did he mention agriculture once when he was on his way to Washington? No. He came back and he left the people of Manitoba with the impression that he had come to an agreement that Devils Lake water would not run into the Red River before he would put his signature, that is the impression, before he would put his signature on a document, and that he would get Minnesota's, that he would get North Dakota's and South Dakota's and indeed the federal government of the United States, to agree to this before and they would have his signature before this would happen.

Well, events in North Dakota have come to the point where the engineering is being done on a Devils Lake outlet. I would venture to say to you that, before the new term of office in North

Dakota is up, they will have an outlet based on studies that they have done.

So I say to you that I do not think that our Premier (Mr. Doer) was quite forthright with the people of Manitoba, as our Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) has not been forthright with the people of Manitoba, and it reflects on the integrity of this New Democratic government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It surprises me no end that the members opposite, especially those sitting in the back bench, will sit there quietly and condone the actions of their Premier and their Minister of Education and if they will not stand and be counted when it comes to credibility, because that is what this is all about, the integrity of people that serve here, the integrity of the Premier and the integrity of all his ministers. That is what is being called into question here. It is a dark day in Manitoba when ministers can stand in their place and cast the shadow of doubt on their position and positions that they have held and responses that they have brought to this House.

I think that that needs to be recognized, and that is fast becoming a trade mark of this Government. I need only reflect on the first few days that this New Democratic government was elected. I need only reflect on that. You remember that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You remember that the Premier came along and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) came along and said there was a \$400-million deficit and that they had asked for a complete audit of the books of this Province. When the truth became known, it became apparent that it was not an audit. It was a review by a financial firm of the operations of the previous government till that time.

What was the result of that review? The review indicated clearly that the Premier (Mr. Doer) had not been correct, that the Minister of Finance had not been correct in telling the people that there was a total audit. That was mistake No. 1, and I believe it was a mistake on their part, but the people are telling us now, they are asking me the question, can we trust them?

Then the second one was, was there a \$400-million deficit? As a matter of fact, the Minister of Finance and the Premier referred to it just a

few short weeks ago. Why would they leave the impression that that was the case when it was not. All the people of Manitoba want is a government that has integrity, and they are not getting it today.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), when he stood in his place today, clearly gave us that indication as to why the people of Manitoba will doubt the integrity of this Government.

It is a sad, dark day for Manitoba. This is what leads the people to question the integrity of politicians in general because it cast a shadow of doubt on you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on myself and everybody that serves in this place. Why would we want to subject ourselves to that kind of questionable credibility? Why? Is it not sad when your Premier (Mr. Doer) says to the people of Manitoba there is a \$400-million deficit when it is not in fact so? Is that not sad? Is it not sad when your Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) still tells people that there was a \$400-million deficit when it was not so? Why do we want to do that? Why would we not be straightforward with our people? Why would we not want to be as you have often referred to, the book says, the good book says, be honest. Why would we not want to do that?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said before, the agricultural community is a very large contributor to the economic base of this province, and yet when I look at the Throne Speech and how many lines were accredited to agriculture or the supporting industry, it saddens me. It saddens me when mosquitoes get more play, more print in a Throne Speech from this Government. When they get more print than agriculture does, that saddens me. I think it saddens everybody in this province when you do not give the recognition due to an industry that is very important to this province.

I also want to reflect a little bit on the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin), when just about a short year ago I think he stood proudly and announced a million-dollar donation or support to an organization called the Eco-Network, a million dollars I believe he said he would designate to them. Right? The interesting thing is that the member organizations of the Eco-Network are members such as Hog Watch

and a number of other very questionable organizations. Really, what their intent is, is to draw to the attention of the general public questionable statements that would cast a shadow of doubt on the ability of an industry to survive and grow and prosper and provide jobs in this province.

\* (15:40)

I believe the Eco-Network through its process designated some \$50,000 to Hog Watch to oppose the development of the hog industry in this province. When one listened to the program on CBC just a short week ago, on Sunday evening, Counterspin I think was the name of the program, one can only reflect on what was being said by members of Hog Watch in their opposition or the vice-president of the National Farmers Union in their opposition.

I gave a lot of credit to one of the people at the forum when he said to the person representing Hog Watch on the panel—sir, he said, you have your information all wrong. He said what you just put on record is not correct. I believe the person representing Hog Watch is a very close friend of the NDP government and the NDP party, a very close friend. I believe he is a second vice-president of the Farmers Union. He was told definitely he had his facts all wrong by a participant at that forum.

Now, does that reflect on what we have seen this last week in this House, questionable information being brought to cast doubt and shadow on an industry that has done nothing but ensure the protection of the environment, the agricultural industry?

We have heard so many things that have cast doubt about the ability of farmers to run their farms in a responsible manner. I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is time we gave credit to the farm community and their efforts to maintain our water quality, our land quality, our air quality. Yet every chance we get we fund those organizations that would cast doubt and cast shadows on the farm community.

Why would governments support financially those kinds of organizations? Why would the minister give any money to organizations that

put questionable information on the record and call into question the actual operations of our farms when those very farms—and I want to speak a bit about what has happened to those farms.

All of us remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what great importance the now-Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) had placed prior to her being elected in this House on the family farm. Do you remember that, remember the many words she said about protecting the family farm? Do you remember the NDP party's position at their annual meetings on protecting the family farm?

Let me put some Statistics Canada figures on the record. Statistics Canada says the hemorrhaging of workers out of the agricultural sector escalated last year with 52 000 Canadians reclassifying themselves, getting jobs, in other words, elsewhere than in the farm community, 52 000 jobs last year. As many as 33 000 of those were on the Prairies, 33 000. Federal officials caution it does not mean that 52 000 abandoned their farms, but it is a very great sign of great weakness in western Canada. What does that mean in Manitoba? Manitoba last year lost 3000 farm labour pool workers in this province. Do you know that day in and day out when I travel this province I hear young farmers say: We are throwing in the towel; we are quitting farming. There is no future in Manitoba in farming. That is what young farmers tell me.

I was at a meeting in Franklin municipality less than two weeks ago. The Minister of Agriculture toured Franklin municipality and saw the huge devastation that had taken place this year. Did she comment at all? She said: I will get back to you. To this day she has not got back to them. She has not even responded since last July. I think that is deplorable that a Minister of Agriculture will absolutely not care about her industry. There were three farmers at the meeting, young farmers. These are the cream of the crop. They are well-educated, university-educated farmers that said our land is for sale. They said that most of the young farmers in Franklin had their land up for sale this year or for rent because they could not make a living based on the policies that this NDP government had put in place.

Remember when the Minister of Agriculture came back from Ottawa and lauded her new CFIP program? It was going to be the program that would save all of the farmers in Manitoba, CFIP, the Canadian Farm Income Protection plan. Do you know what they are doing? They know now that CFIP does not work. The minister knows it. I am sure the minister has related that to Cabinet, that CFIP cannot work. We all knew it when she came back with the program.

Remember what I said in Question Period about CFIP? CFIP cannot work for one simple reason, because it is designed to get farmers off the land, to draw down their income because of the 30% drop in income that you have to have in order to qualify for anything. If you have three years of 30% drop, you are at zero. If you have three years at 29 percent, you do not qualify, and you are at just about zero income, gross income. The minister is telling us how great the farm community is doing under her new program.

There are a number of other areas that the minister should have paid attention to but has not. She has put in place, instead, doubt through the establishment of the review that Mr. Tyrchniewicz and his committee did. Mr. Tyrchniewicz did not take very long to come back with a report on the livestock industry, made 40-some-odd recommendations. Has the minister acted on many of them? The minister has acted on 3 of them, largely those 3 areas that the previous government had already developed policy on. What has happened to the rest of them? Nothing has happened. It cast a shadow of doubt on the livestock industry and how they were supposed to proceed.

\* (15:50)

Yesterday, I got a phone call, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from a farmer in the Woodridge area. He said, I guess, the new inspectors that the Government has put in place to inspect hog lagoons and those kind of facilities have not got much to do. I said: Why would that be? He said, well, they came down to my farm. He said I have 29 head of cattle. He said they came down to my farm, and he said I am composting my manure. Remember? Remember composting is the way to go? Right? He said I am composting

my manure. He said the inspector came into my yard, and he said you have two days to get rid of that pile of manure. So he said I hired a tractor and a loader and a spreader, and he said I put it out on my forage field. He said I was very lucky that we did not have a pile of snow on the field because next spring it would have all run into the river. He said it might still, but he said I was forced to by the new rules that we do not know about that these new inspectors operate under.

You see we hired a bunch of people without direction to satisfy the political pundits that now there is a bunch of inspectors out there. Who are they going after? The small family farm. Who are we putting impediments in place for? The small family farm. Every rule and every regulation that you add make it more difficult for that small family farm to exist. What are we doing about it? Nothing, absolutely nothing. This Government, all they do is sit here and devise schemes on how to make it more difficult for the agriculture producer in Manitoba that actually contributes up to 35 percent of the total economic income to this province in one form or another.

Why would we want to make it that difficult for them? Why would we want to cast the uncertainty on the livestock industry by asking a group to go and study and make recommendations to government and then take two years before we do anything? Well, they have not done anything yet, and it is better than two years. What kind of government have we got?

I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important to recognize inaction because inaction is far more dangerous than taking action that is not always in compliance with everybody's wishes. That is what the problem is with this Government. They talk a blue mile. They talked. They ridiculed the previous government for wanting to put in a plan which would indicate that the revenues over the next four years would have increased a billion dollars over the next four years. Every year a billion dollars by the end of four years would be new revenues generated. Well, this Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) knows that it did not take four years to generate a billion dollars of new revenue. It only took two years. Now next year, he is again

assuming that there will be additional billion-dollar revenues. He knows that his incomes are on a sharp downslide. He knows that.

How is he going to make up the revenue? How? I guarantee you increased taxes, increased fees, increased sales of Crown lands, which we see on a daily basis now to generate revenue, to make up the shortfall that they are already seeing because of the downturn in the economy. The downturn will become sharper as we go along because this Government refuses to take action. This Government has cast a shadow of doubt amongst the people of Manitoba about what they say and how they do things.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important for the people of Manitoba to realize that this Government cannot be trusted, that you cannot trust them because what they do and what they say are two very different things. What they say can very, very often be demonstrated to be not factual, and I think that is sad. I have yet to see a Speech from the Throne that lacks more substance than this last Speech from the Throne. I have yet to see a speech during the 13 years I have been here that has been more repetitious than what we saw this last Throne Speech, and I have yet to see a Throne Speech that is emptier of substance than what we saw here.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would encourage all members of this Legislature to sharply take a look, to really take a sharp look at the Throne Speech and vote reality, vote reality, and that is vote against the adoption of this Throne Speech, vote against the mandate of this Government to continue the deception that we have seen in this House continually by the Premier (Mr. Doer), by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) and now the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), and it will continue. I think it is a sad day for Manitoba. It is a dark day for Manitoba.

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am happy to join in this Throne Speech debate, listened carefully to the Member for Emerson, and I want to, like many have, start off by giving my thanks to a number of people. First of all, I want to thank the residents in Radisson who continue to impress me in many ways. One of the things that was done recently I spoke of today in my member's statement and

that was organizing a memorial for September 11. This was a very heartfelt and spontaneous event that occurred, because some of the residents were faced with questions and confusion by children in the neighbourhood.

This is a neighbourhood that has a lot of children, and the Tenants' Association at the Triplex, a housing complex, on Plessis Road invited the local firefighter chief, the local police officer and the paramedics EMS responders to a ceremony to try to not only put the events of September 11 into some kind of context or perspective for not only kids in the neighbourhood but themselves, but as I said earlier also to make a statement against racism in our own home neighbourhood and to come together to mourn as a community.

It was I think one of the most meaningful events in my constituency that I have ever attended, and I know the emergency staff really appreciated that they were recognized in view of what happened on September 11 for the work that they do in our home community. They said that to me, and they also said that they have seen a difference in the way that police officers and firefighters are treated ever since September 11. With all the aftermath with the anthrax scares and what we are continuing to deal with, I think if there are some small things that are positive that come out of such a tragedy it is that recognition of the role that those people play in our community and the risks that they take on our behalf.

I also want to recognize Linda Regey who has been the president of the Tri-plex Tenants' Association for spearheading that memorial and bringing together a number of members of the community, a choir from the United Church and the pipe band and the minister, Carol Fletcher from the United Church and giving people a chance to do something in our community that will be a lasting monument. So I was happy to contribute to that.

I also want to say thanks to the staff in the Chamber for the work that they do here. I want to recognize Rachel, who has already shown herself to be an exemplary page by anticipating our need for water. I think that the Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) and I are going to float

away if this keeps up, but we appreciate the special attention that we get from the pages. It makes you feel a little bit spoiled when you work in an atmosphere like this where people bring you water.

I also want to recognize our interns, who already this year have shown themselves to be very bright and capable, good writers, quick study. They also work closely with those of us in caucus and we really appreciate the work that they do. Similarly, the caucus staff, some of them have been here going on 12 years or more, as I have, and we have gotten to know each other quite well and become good friends. I appreciate the staff very much that work in our caucus.

I also want to thank the members opposite. I enjoy sitting here and listening to the members opposite, particularly in Question Period. It really strikes me that all we have done sometimes is switch roles. When you hear them sitting across in Question Period saying things like, oh, you always stoop so low whenever you do not have an answer, you just resort to personal attacks or calling the Government arrogant or saying we have no vision or no plan, it all sounds very familiar, does it not?

\* (16:00)

It concerns me that this Chamber sometimes seems like it is just a role play and is not very meaningful to the members of the public. Of course, then there is the whole issue of decorum. There are not many jobs or positions you can hold where the kind of yelling and name calling and carrying on that goes on this Chamber is allowed or tolerated. People would not contemplate conducting themselves that way in other places of business.

So I would encourage the members opposite to think about that and to try to not just play gotcha politics and talk about policy and questions about policy even in Question Period. That happens occasionally, but more often than not it is about calling somebody a liar or trying to say that you said this, not that. I do not think that the general public appreciate that. Every time that we do that we make this place less meaningful. I think people tune out.

I think for the most part the general public thinks that this Government is doing a good job.

I think for the last two years they would often say that they know that members of this Government work very hard, that members of this Government are following the agenda that they laid out in the election. I think that when you look at some of the evidence of that, I think what one of the main issues that we got elected on was health care. I have with me five and a half pages of things in the last two years that the Minister of Health and his department have accomplished. It is no small feat. I am going to get into some of those accomplishments.

I first of all want to talk about some of the kinds of things that I have been involved with. Just today, it really is an opportunity, as a member of the Government, to start getting a little bit better understanding and detailed understanding of the costs in many of the government departments, the activities and the challenges that face many government departments.

We look at what is happening in health care and really try to understand the pressure that is on our health care system. Our Government did get elected based on a very strong concern about maintaining our public health care. The general public know that we believe very strongly in our medicare system and maintaining a public and accessible and universal health care system. But we have to look at what is happening in Canadian society and in our communities with the increase in an aging population, with huge increases in drug costs and costs for medication. Similarly, the increase in technology and the reliance on very expensive testing and diagnostic testing and even treatments that rely on very expensive technology. Then we know that in professions like health care that the costs to remunerate health care professionals are also going to go up.

But all of this pressure on health care is happening at a time when we have an increasingly unhealthy population. We have a 40% or 50% incidence of obesity in children. We have a very sharp increase in heart disease and other illnesses related to stress. We have, as I said earlier, an aging population. In some ways people are living longer, but those last years often are accompanied with a large range of health care concerns.

All of these things converging at one time are creating what I think is going to come to an incredible amount of pressure on our health care system. I think people recognize it, but what I would like to see is more of a public debate about that. I think that we have to engage the public in really understanding what is required of our health care system, what is reasonable to expect, and to understand how much it costs for things, to understand how much it costs when you go to the doctor, to understand how much it costs to provide the kind of services that people expect with all the kinds of tests that we are using. We also, I think, then have to find a way not just in talking about health care in terms of organizing the system and reorganizing the system, but get back down to how are we going to ensure that people are more healthy. That gets us into talking about health in terms of nutrition and fitness and lifestyle and workplace conditions and environmental conditions and the kind of ways that we organize our city, so that you cannot possibly even walk to and from your workplace.

I would hope that we could engage the public in those kind of discussions. One of the events that the Government hosted a few weeks ago was a physical activity summit, which included people from across the province, all regions of the province, to talk about these kinds of issues. It focused more on the whole area of preventative health in terms of getting people to live a more active lifestyle. I was really encouraged by the kind of discussion that took place and the planning that took place, and I looked forward to getting that report from the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship and hoping that will help us to map out the kind of direction that we need in Manitoba so that we can truly start talking about health care in terms of improving people's quality of life and their status of health and not the medical treatment that, as I said earlier, is often the focus and is so very costly.

When we look at health care and we look at some of the things that this Government has accomplished in only two years, that we have doubled the number of nurses in training, that we have reversed the reduction by the former government in the medical college so we are training 15 more doctors a year, so we can

reinstate the two-year diploma program for nurses. Those are the kind of things that are going to be a legacy for this Government, that will start to reap benefits in the next couple of years when those nurses are graduating, and we can start to do some of the kind of things that we also want to accomplish. We are expanding the program for nurses in schools and those kind of things, allowing more of other technicians to be trained like training programs for ultrasound technicians and a new diploma program for lab and image technicians, special training for rural X-ray technologists, all these kinds of initiatives that are focused on the staffing and the development of our expertise and body of trained people to be on the front line of our health care system in Manitoba.

One of the other meetings that we had today was with the Manitoba Child Care Coalition. Again, this is an area where I think the Government is being recognized as having done a lot. We have increased by 25 percent the budget for child care in Manitoba. There was money available for child care centres to increase wages by \$2 an hour. Under the former government, there were 10 years of cuts and reductions in child care that meant the training programs in our colleges and even at the high school level were not full. People were not choosing to go into child care, because they did not see that it was respected. They did not see that there were any opportunities there. The wages had been stuck for so long.

So this Government has had a real challenge in trying to provide some incentive and encouragement for people to take an interest in child care again, and I think that is happening. Over the last two years, we have brought back the level of funding in child care to what it took the former government ten years to cut. So in two years we have reinvested the ten years of cuts by the former government.

We have instituted the unit funding model into child care which has really encouraged the development of new infant child care spaces, 3000 more child care spaces available in the province. But when you look at it in the big picture, that sounds great, but there are still only 23 700 spaces, approximately, that are licensed in Manitoba, and this is for approximately

132 000 children who are under the age of 12 from families where it is likely that both parents are working. So when you put it into that context, you can see that in child care we are facing a similar situation as in health care, where we are doing a lot but still the demand and the needs are so great.

\* (16:10)

The common denominator in both of these is the federal government. The federal government year after year and election after election in their election platform, they have said that they were going to develop a national child care program. They promised that in red book one; they promised that in red book two. They said it was going to be when the economy was improving. They said it was going to be when the deficit was under control and they were balancing their books. Well, that is happening. That has happened and we are now potentially going back into a recession, and the federal government has abrogated its responsibility and its commitment on child care. They have done the same thing on health care, and they have done the same thing with the changes in the social union framework with the health transfer money, where their contribution in health care has dropped to less than 15 percent.

So these kinds of problems I think cannot continue to be dumped on a provincial government. The other thing that is happening more and more in Canada is this competition between provincial governments then to reduce tax revenues and reduce taxes so that they are seen to compete with their neighbouring provinces to create this business friendly environment. You add that dynamic to these cuts from the federal government, and I am very concerned about what is going to be happening in our province in the future, especially as we move out of the economic situation we have been in over the last couple of years and backslide a bit into an economic downturn.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

So I think that our Government can be said to have a very strong commitment to children and to developing programs that will benefit children and their families. I think that the

Healthy Child program is being recognized across the country as a good way to do that, focussing on preventative programs like the Prenatal Nutrition Program. That is a program where I must say I have received some letters where people have expressed concern that we are increasing by \$81 a month the money available to assist moms when they are pregnant, not only so that they eat better themselves, but then when their kids are born, they will also be able to have the kinds of supports necessary so that they can give their kids the best chance possible. This is an income-based program, but I think that even the Government has been surprised at how successful it has been, that there has been a huge uptake in the program.

I think those are the kinds of things that in the long term are really going to see a benefit, and it is hard to measure. It is hard to measure in a concrete way how much that small amount of money per month is really going to have an impact. But we know from the research that putting money into prevention, funding programs for young children and parents in the early years, is going to pay off in huge dividends.

Similarly with the program that we are involved in with FAS and FAE, that there has to be something done to stop the increase in incidents of fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effect, and I think that our Government is doing a good job in that area, as well.

Similarly, another exciting program is the parent-child centres, and 25 community-based parent-child centres will be developed across the province. Not only are we trying to offer a place where parents can go either with their kids or without them to get information and support, but we are doing it in such a way that is going to facilitate the community in doing some community development, that those sites are going to be selected by community agencies, schools, child care centres, community clubs, other organizations coming together to plan as a group, as a community, where those parent-child centres are going to go. That is a good thing. Not only will it benefit the parent-child centre, but having that kind of networking in a community is I think going to lead to a lot of other spin-off positive results.

One of the things that I think is going to be a legacy of this Government is the initiatives that we have undertaken on post-secondary education. We ran on a commitment to giving hope to young people, and I think that the results in this area are very encouraging. When you see a 12% increase in post-secondary education, that is results that you can not only say are going to ensure that young people are going to be more likely to stay and work in Manitoba once they get their post-secondary education, but to see that that many more young people see education as an option for them is very exciting. The 10% tuition fee reduction, the tuition fee freeze, really has translated into a very tangible result I think for the province of Manitoba that is going to be felt for a very long time. Having an expansion in the number of community college spaces, bringing more of those students downtown with the expansion of Red River in the Exchange District, I think all of these are going to come together to be one of the things that this Government is going to be recognized for, for a very long time.

In terms of education, one of the other things that we will be talking a lot about this session I imagine is school board amalgamation. This is going to have a very dramatic effect on my constituency. Currently, I have three school divisions in my constituency—Transcona-Springfield, some of River East and some of St. Boniface. So there will be changes in the entire division. I have been meeting with parent groups, teacher associations, principals, the boards from all those school divisions, and I think that people are realizing that this will have a long-term benefit, that it is going to be a challenge in the short term. It is going to be some work, it is going to take some effort, and it is going to be a challenge for us to work together with the new configuration of school divisions.

I think everywhere I go people are saying that they see that there is a benefit in the long term. They recognize that the economies of scale in a larger division by amassing a larger assessment base are going to be able to provide more opportunities for young people who go to school in that division. They also recognize that the proposal by this Government is not going to one large division for the City, as other people have suggested. It is not going to the four

divisions that the Norrie Commission recommended, but it is going to retain the sense of a community division so the collegiality and the sense of community that many of the school divisions in our province have is going to be retained to a large extent.

\* (16:20)

One of the other issues that the Government is undertaking that is affecting my constituency in a very positive way is the firefighter presumptive legislation for health benefits. This is something that we committed to in opposition and during the election. I can tell you that firefighters and their families and friends are very appreciative, and I am very proud that our Government is going to bring in this legislation to ensure that firefighters are recognized for the risks that they take, that firefighters can be guaranteed that their families will be protected if they should become ill or pass away, and that we are recognizing that the work that they do has dangers and hazards that are specific to fighting fires.

One of the other issues that we are dealing with, and I could have mentioned this under health, that I think will also be viewed very positively in my constituency, is to develop a new registry to make it easier to find a family doctor. In a community like Transcona, in particular, many people, particularly seniors, still view having to travel downtown as something that they would rather not do. If they can know where they can access a doctor close to their community or if they know that they have to travel, anything like that can provide a sense of security that I think will be of great benefit in helping people feel a little bit more secure about what is out there, to get past the myth and provide some good information to the general public.

Some of the other activities that I have been involved with recently are on behalf of the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr. Sale). I was recently able to attend an announcement, that was last Friday, from the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative. This is another area where our Government has taken, head on, the challenge of the decline in the quality of housing, the risk of homelessness,

the decline in older neighbourhoods. The negotiations that have gone on with the federal government and the City to develop programs like the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative were a difficult challenge, but I think that they are now resulting in some very good projects.

I was pleased to see the behavioural health association organization develop these five housing units in St. Norbert that are going to become transitional housing for people with addictions. I appreciated the chance to tour the facility there and to learn more about the work that they are doing, and I want to recognize all levels of government being involved in this kind of initiative. There are small projects like that that are going on throughout the province. Often they all do not make the newspaper. They are not all on the six o'clock news, but this Government is working co-operatively, not only with the federal government but all municipalities and a variety of agencies, to develop those kinds of very local projects that are going to have a long and lasting impact.

One of the other activities that I was involved in on behalf of the Department of Family Services and Housing has been the disability task force on full citizenship. The main objective of this action plan, and now our report has been released, was to try to reduce the likelihood that people with a disability will live a life of poverty. It is trying to again take a cross-government view of how across government we can develop programs and services and, in some cases, get out of the way of people with disabilities so that they can live a full life as full citizens of our province. So there will be a number of initiatives resulting from that.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I am just going to summarize that there are a number of exciting things that are going on in the constituency of Radisson. A few of them have to do with the Ministry of Conservation, such as the licensing of New Flyer Industries and the successful mediation that occurred with Rothsay Rendering. We opened one of the first Lighthouse schools at École Regent Park in Radisson. We are working towards developing the health centre. We are developing a proposal for a parent-child centre, and there are a number

of community clubs that are developing plans for new programming and services.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I hope that we have a good session, and I thank you for your consideration.

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in my place to respond to the Throne Speech. Let me first begin by bringing congratulations and best wishes to our new pages who are going to be working with us through this session and wish them well. I hope that this becomes a learning experience for them, and indeed I look forward to chatting with them as the session goes on.

Secondly, I would like to also congratulate and welcome to the Legislature the interns who have been appointed for this session. I know that their work is going to be challenging, regardless of which party it is that they are working with.

Mr. Speaker, to you I want to say best wishes as you preside once again over this House. You have done so in the past in a very capable manner, and I look forward to working with you. Indeed I hope this House is not too much as we deliberate and debate the many issues that are before us.

I might also mention the table officers who serve us so well and wish them the best in this session. As the session goes on, I am sure they are going to find some very challenging moments and some very interesting ones throughout the session.

The session having been called in mid-November offers us the opportunity to look at what the Government's agenda is for the next fiscal year and for the next year of their mandate and to assess how the Government is truly going to carry out the mandate that this Government was given.

When I look at the Throne Speech that was read to us by His Honour, I am struck by the fact that there is very little in it that would give us any positive hope for the rebuilding of our province and for dealing with the many issues that are lurking on the horizon.

One might say, well, what are those issues. I think, if you look around, whether it is at North America as a whole, to our friends to the south, to Canada, there is a significant amount of debate about the fact that our economy in total is slowing down. No entity, no province, is immune to that fact because that slowing-down of the economy is going to impact on us, whether it is sooner or later.

In our case, it appears that our economy, because of the work that was done by the previous administration, has been able to do a fairly good job in generating the kind of activity and income that has provided for us in government, if you like, in the Legislature, the ability to deal with issues because of the increased amounts of monies that were flowing.

Sadly, I have to say that this administration has not carried out its mandate in a very practical way. Indeed, during the campaign, when we heard that it was a ridiculous thing to suppose that we would have an economy grow by a billion dollars over a period of five years, this administration has been the recipient of that good news in less than two years. Our economy has grown by something in the neighbourhood of \$800 million in the course of two short years.

If anybody with any practical sense would have that kind of revenue growth, you would want to make sure that the priorities that have been identified for you by the public of this province would be addressed. But that did not happen. To a large extent, that money was squandered. That money was spent in places where it should not have been. That money was spent in ways which Manitobans will be asking questions about whether or not priorities of society were addressed.

I would submit that those priorities were not addressed and that those priorities have gone lacking and that those priorities are before this Government in larger measure than they were prior to the election.

We hear about the health care issues. We hear about the education issues. We hear about issues as they relate to the economy. Probably the most important issue that is before us today is the issue of health care. I recall very vividly what the now-Premier of our province said

through the election campaign, what his members said through the campaign, that they would be able to fix health care and they would be able to fix the issue of hallway medicine in a short period, that in a period of six months there would be no hallway medicine, that with \$15 million they would address that issue.

Let me say to the members opposite, we had a tour of our hospitals in this city, because they are the ones that feel the pressure of hallway medicine. I can tell you quite honestly, Mr. Speaker, that regardless which hospital I went to, hallway medicine is alive and well. As a matter of fact, we were told time and time again there is more hallway medicine today than there has ever been in the past three, four and five years, that as a matter of fact there are more people in hallways today than there were in 1999. That is a fact. That is not disputed, because that is recorded. You can say, well, that is not true, but check your facts. Check the issues and you will find that there are more people in the hallways in our hospitals today than there ever were back before 1999. I am discounting the flu epidemic at times as well. But today when we have no flu in this province that is causing hallway medicine, there are more people in hallways now than there were when we went to the polls. That is not disputed.

\* (16:30)

The other issue, remember the issue of the frozen food fiasco? Remember the way that the then-opposition went at us about the fact that we were serving frozen food to our citizens, food that was coming from Ontario, food that was coming from other places. But I have to say a lot of that food was prepared right here in Manitoba. As a matter of fact, some of that food was prepared by small businesses that were starting in our province. Well, what do we have today? Well, we have the food coming from the same places it did prior to the campaign. But do we hear anything about it? No, we do not hear anything about it. What about the sandwiches that are prepared? Well, we do not prepare them in Manitoba anymore. I mean, Manitobans do not have the ability to prepare sandwiches for our hospitals. We have to take them to Edmonton, to Alberta. We now give Albertans the opportunity to create a business environment,

to create employment by having them prepare sandwiches for the patients in our hospitals in Manitoba.

Now, one can say, well, okay, so what. Well, the so-what is the hypocrisy of this new government now has shown itself up in such things as the frozen food issue, hallway medicine and now in the sandwiches that are being prepared in Edmonton for the patients of the province of Manitoba. Interesting, is it not?

It goes on and on. The latest issue in this House that I have to point to is the fact of the Provincial Auditor's report on the Morris-Macdonald School Division and the ALC programs that are being conducted across the province. What is interesting to note is the fact that, yes, Morris-Macdonald School Division should have been under an internal audit of some sort and perhaps the Provincial Auditor should have stepped in and done his job as he did, but nobody is protecting the actions of what happened in Morris-Macdonald, because indeed if in fact there was wrongdoing, if enrolments were inflated, that should be brought to the light of people in Manitoba and indeed to the Government of this province.

There is an interesting little chart in this Auditor's report. This chart demonstrates very clearly—the chart is on page 90, Mr. Speaker. On page 90 of the Auditor's report it shows a chart, a bar graph of when the funding to ALC was inflated and when the full-time-equivalent students were inflated. It is curious to know that in the school years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 the bar graph goes off the scale.

Well, Mr. Speaker, who was in charge of this particular project during that time? Which department was in charge? It was the Department of Education and Training, under the direction of the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell). That is who was in charge.

The Auditor's report also starts out talking about the reason for the audit. The audit says very clearly that the Auditor was requested by the Deputy Minister of Education, Training and Youth to investigate allegations regarding an adult learning centre, not Morris-Macdonald School Division, but an adult learning centre

called the African Immigrant Program, later known as Classroom 56, operating as a program within the Morris-Macdonald School Division, and throughout the report, the ALC will be referred to as the program.

But, Mr. Speaker, it later says that the program commenced in September 2000. It did not start in 1998 or 1999; it started in September 2000 as an ALC operated by Higher Opportunities for People through Education; i.e. HOPE. Who are the principals of HOPE? Who else but Mr. Lionel and Mr. John Orlikow.

So what prompted the audit? What prompted the audit? The audit was prompted, as the Auditor lays out here—Mr. Speaker, let me read again for the edification of members opposite, that the program, which was the program here, began operation in the year 2000, not 1998, not 1999, not under a Conservative administration but indeed under an NDP administration. They have to shoulder the blame. No one is defending Morris-Macdonald School Division because indeed the money flowed through the division from the department to the Orlikows. *[interjection]* I do not know if the Orlikows are here or not. I do not see them.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me continue. This is not the first time. This is not the first time that the Auditor has caught this minister in a trap. I refer again to another report done in March 2001 on compliance and special audits, where the Auditor says, and I want to read this into the record. The conclusion says this: The minister—talking about the Minister of Education and Training—did not have legislative authority to request that TRAF accept his letter of January 31, 2001, as authority to transfer \$15.6 million from account A to the PAA and to request that his letter be accepted as authority to immediately commence paying the agreed COLA to retired teachers. The minister should not have provided direction to this board to contravene the enabling legislation. Here is a minister who has contravened legislation again.

The last conclusion of the Auditor says: Public monies, i.e. provincial portion of the July 2000 retroactive COLA, have been disbursed without proper authority.

What does this say about our Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Caldwell)? I recall

in this House when he stood up in the House very early in the mandate and said: We are the Government; we will do what we want. Well, there are checks and balances in our system, and, thank you, Mr. Auditor, for making sure that the checks and balances are, in fact, in place.

This is not an attack on the character of the individual who is the Minister of Education and Training. I want to make that clear, Mr. Speaker. But he has a responsibility. *[interjection]* The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says let me make that perfectly clear. I go back a few years, and so does he, when he sat in this very chair. The Member for Thompson sat right here. He said to me, when I was under some heat in this House, he said, Len, please do not take it personally. Well, I say to the Minister of Education, please do not take it personally. But he has a responsibility. He has to be accountable to this House. He has to be accountable to the people of Manitoba.

\* (16:40)

Mr. Speaker, precedent has been set. Precedent has been set about ministers of the Crown not being honest, not telling the truth to either a reporter, to the people of Manitoba or to the people here in this Chamber. When one does not tell the truth in a parliamentary system like we have, in a democracy like we have, you hold this Legislature in contempt, and that cannot happen in a democracy. We cannot allow it to happen in a democracy. We have to make sure, when we stand in our places, especially as ministers who have responsibility for the direction of a particular department or a particular portfolio, that what we say is our word. Our word is our bond.

Mr. Speaker, that did not happen in this case. When the minister says one thing in this House, when he says in this House, no, I did not flow any money to any school division without it being transparent, without it being hidden in any way, and then goes out into the hallway and says, yes, Cabinet was aware that I did that. He said that Cabinet was aware that he did it. *[interjection]* No, no, he said Cabinet. He did not say government. He said Cabinet. So what are we to say? What are we to say to someone who says one thing in the hallway to the

reporters but says another thing here in the Chamber? Seven different occasions were given to this minister to come forward with the facts. He did not know, of course, at the time that we had in our possession a document written by a secretary-treasurer of a school division warning her school division that indeed this was not proper, but she was being forced by the department acting under the authority of the minister to fudge the books and hide the numbers, hide the money.

Mr. Speaker, on one hand we have the RCMP going into Morris-Macdonald, and rightly so perhaps, to investigate what really went on with Morris-Macdonald School Division and the ALCs. It is just not Morris-Macdonald School Division. It has to include the adult learning centres. What about Agassiz School Division? Do we have that same treatment of Agassiz School Division? We know there was an impropriety committed. The minister is responsible for it. He has involved himself as part of it, but is he now or his Premier (Mr. Doer) now saying what is good for Peter is good for Paul, we are going to put the RCMP to investigate the situation as it relates to Agassiz School Division?

We will get to that down the road, Mr. Speaker, because indeed I think, if you are going to treat somebody in one way who has committed what seems to be an impropriety, then you had better have the same rules for anybody else who commits that impropriety. We see that there are two standards set here by this Government and by this minister.

This goes right to the top, right to the First Minister, because you recall when the Government changed hands, what the first order of business for this First Minister was, was to appoint Deloitte & Touche. I believe it was to do a review of the books of the Province. But did he call it a review? The reviewers, the financial firm that was hired called it a review. They made it very clear that this was not an audit, but this First Minister went out to the people of Manitoba, and he started waving this around. He said: Look what the audit said. "Audit," he used that term over and over again. It was brought to his attention by not only the members of this House but indeed members outside of government that this was not an audit.

Every time he saw the opportunity in front of the camera or in front of a mike he used the term "audit." He has finally acknowledged that it was not an audit, but what impression did he leave with the people of Manitoba? He left the impression that this was a full-blown honest-to-goodness audit that was done on the books of the previous administration. That is the impression he left. The truth did not matter. I have to question the Premier on this. I have to say to him: Is this the way that you really want to conduct your affairs as First Minister of this Province?

I go to another issue, an MPI issue. Mr. Speaker, remember the transfer of money, of some \$30 million intended from MPI, for ratepayers, people who paid rates. There was a bit of a surplus in that. The ratepayers had built up a surplus by the rates that they were paying, and all of a sudden this Government thought: Ha, we are going to make ourselves look good; we are going to scoop this \$30 million out of MPI, and we are going to give it to the higher learning institutions of this province.

Now are the universities going to say: No, no, do not do it, do not give us this money, because it is not really meant for us? They are going to say: Oh, is that not wonderful. Well, what do the ratepayers of this province say? They say that is not right. So, when we put the pressure on the Government, what did they do? Well, they backed away. They put their tails between their legs, and they went home and said: No, we cannot do that anymore, because I guess maybe this is a bit wrong. Maybe it was just a little bit wrong. Well, Mr. Speaker, time and again we see this thing happening.

Now the Provincial Auditor has come in to show how badly this administration runs its affairs. When the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Caldwell) by letter says that \$15.6 million are to be transferred from account A to pay for retired teachers, Mr. Speaker, to pay the COLA for retired teachers, and the Provincial Auditor says: You had no authority to do that. The Premier (Mr. Doer) says: Well, that is okay, it has been done. The right way to do that was to change the act. Then the minister has the authority to do that and nobody would have objected, but this minister, this Premier, are so

susceptible to mismanagement. They cannot manage affairs. The mismanagement is evident in the condemnations of the Auditor of our Province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on, but the most damning of all is when a minister stands in his place and is asked repeatedly whether he has been open, whether he has been honest with the school divisions and the treatment or whether he has been open and honest with members of the Legislature and he says yes, he has. Then he goes out in the hallway and he says: Well, yes, we gave them money because they were different, and yes, Cabinet knew about it. But he did not come clean in the House. What are we supposed to say as opposition? Are we supposed to say: Well, that is okay; I guess that is fine. I do not think so.

Our job as members of this Legislature in opposition is to make sure that government is held accountable, and so we are not doing anything but our job, as you have to do yours in this House, to make sure that Government is accountable for its actions, that every minister is accountable for his or her actions. That is all we are doing is ensuring that indeed there is some accountability on the part of Manitobans, that our democracy is protected, that it is respected, because if we do not have that, what do we have? We have anarchy, and that is not the way that this Province can conduct its affairs.

You know, Mr. Speaker, in all the times that you can go back through the history books of this Legislature, and I do not know a time when a minister has lied in the House and has gotten away with it by not resigning. I do not know that.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Minister of—

**Mr. Derkach:** I withdraw the term. I know I have used a term that is not supposed to be used in the House. I apologize for it, and I withdraw it.

#### Point of Order

**Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Family Services and Housing):** Mr. Speaker, this member has

skated close to the mark for the last five minutes in regard to his use of language. It is intemperate, it is inappropriate, it is unparliamentary, and it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that you have cautioned people today a number of times in regard to their choice of words. It may be time to consider more stringent action on those who continue to push the boundaries and use words like he has just used and then, having successfully put them on the record, successfully having them included in Hansard, he then stands up and with this oh, yes, gosh-I-should-not-have-said-it tone withdraws, but he has the record now saying what he said.

It is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. I would ask you to consider stronger action than simply cautioning him.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Emerson, on the same point of order.

\* (16:50)

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** On the same point of order. I think the honourable Minister of Family Services should pay attention to his own Premier (Mr. Doer), should pay attention to his own Finance Minister (Mr. Selinger), should pay attention to his own Education Minister (Mr. Caldwell), and he should chastise them for what they have done to the integrity of this House and the integrity of every member in this Legislature. It is unthinkable that actions that have been demonstrated by the Minister of Education, the Minister of Finance and the Premier would be condoned by this House, and I think it is deplorable that the Minister of Family Services would get up and try to defend them.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Minister of Family Services, I would like to take this opportunity just to remind all honourable members that all honourable members in this House are to be treated in an honourable fashion. I was listening very, very carefully to the honourable Member for Russell's (Mr. Derkach) comments. He was making reference to ministers, not an individual person. I listened very carefully, and I have been listening very carefully. It has been coming very close to but it has not really come to where it has been directed to an individual. So I would just like to take this opportunity to caution all members.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, I think it should be acknowledged that I did withdraw that phrase. I understand the importance of the protocol of this House and indeed the language that should or should not be used here. But I want to say to the Minister of Family Services, you know, I recall when he sat in that third row in opposition. Very few members of this Legislature had to get up and withdraw the number of statements that they had to withdraw, that the Minister of Family Services now had to withdraw in his time in opposition. So he does not need to give us a history lesson, because he is just as guilty as any member of this House in terms of the language and the actions that he has used in the past.

I will continue. I do not know what minister of the Crown in the province of Manitoba has ever been able to get away in this House with speaking an untruth and then going out into the public and doing the same. I do not know of a case when that has happened. There may be but I have not found it. So we come back to the present situation and where we are.

**An Honourable Member:** Which minister?

**Mr. Derkach:** Any minister. I come back to the situation where we are today. We have a minister who is now caught. He is caught on the horns of a dilemma. He has made one statement in the House and then contradicted it outside, and then his own deputy minister, the Provincial Auditor, the press have indicated that it is not the same statement that he made in this House. So what are we saying? Are we saying that the media, the person who wrote the story in the media is inaccurate? Is it the author of that article in the *Free Press* who has fabricated this now? Is that what the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) is saying? Is that not the kind of implication that we heard in the House today from the Minister of Education and Training, that he has been consistent in what he has been saying but somebody else has misconstrued his statements and that is pointing to the article that was written in the *Free Press* and the author of that article?

If I have my druthers on this instance, I know where I can verify that story, because

when I talked to the school board at Agassiz they told us very directly that the monies they received they knew were not legitimate because they were advised by the department to keep their enrolment numbers inflated. Now, who is accountable for that? Well, somebody says it is the department. Well, who is responsible for the department? It must be the minister. Who has to answer to the people of Manitoba? It must be the minister.

Mr. Speaker, where does the buck stop? It has to stop at the minister's steps, at the feet of the minister. If the Premier (Mr. Doer) is going to condone this kind of action, then that blame has to fall at the feet of the Premier, nobody else but at the feet of the Premier. But they are saying, no, this is the department. Now we are going to have civil servants who work hard for government, who work hard for Manitobans, who are going to take the fall for this. They become the sacrificial lambs because this minister now says: It was the department, not me.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we will not accept that. We cannot accept that. The people of Manitoba cannot accept that. So therefore there has to be some sanction. What is the sanction going to be? What should the sanction be for that kind of action? Well, I think the precedent has been set. My colleague the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) illustrated very well where the precedents are. You look at former minister Fox, former minister Charest, former minister Garner [*phonetic*], who were guilty of things of that nature, perhaps in different ways. They did the honourable thing. They resigned. When Mr. James Garner [*phonetic*], a member of the Progressive Conservative caucus in Saskatchewan, told an untruth in the House, what did he do? He resigned. He resigned immediately because that was against every principle that you have in a democratic, parliamentary system that we so dearly hold near in our province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, you are going out to visit schools in the next while. I want to know, and I will be asking you this privately, what you are going to say to students when they ask the question? Our Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) was misleading the House perhaps or

was not being truthful in the House or perhaps was not telling the facts the way they should be in the House. What position does that put our Speaker in when he is asked that question in a school, whether it is in the city or in a rural community or northern Manitoba? It puts our Speaker in a very precarious situation, because he has to say that I am responsible to ensure that the principles of democracy are followed in the Chamber of this Legislature. One of those principles is to ensure that the facts are laid before the members of this Assembly in the way in which they truly are. So it applies to every single member of this Legislature, every single member of this House, every single member who walks into this Chamber.

The question is: Am I being fair and accurate in my assessment of this? I have to answer for that as well, Mr. Speaker, because indeed if I am embellishing an issue which causes a member of this Legislature to somehow be punished for actions that perhaps he or she did not take, then I have some guilt to bear for that as well. So it is very important for us in this House to bring the facts forward as they are presented to us. That is why we ask the questions, because sometimes we do not have the answers. Sometimes we need to ask the question for clarification and we have to take members opposite at their word.

Now, the Member for Wellington (Mr. Santos) often gives us a lesson on why it is that we must preserve the principles of democracy. If you listen to his words, Mr. Speaker, he has a great respect for the democracy of this nation and the rules and the protocols that are followed in this Chamber. Sometimes we lightheartedly listen to his comments, but, if you listen very carefully, he does have a message for all of us in this Chamber.

\*(17:00)

So when we pose a question, whether it is to the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Sale), the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), the Minister of Lotteries (Ms. McGifford), the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), we expect that the facts will be laid out for us as they are, because those are the people who have that information. That information should not be

hidden in any way from the people of Manitoba. It must be transparent and there must be openness and there must be a complete sharing of that information. Tragically, in this instance, it is not happening. So it makes us very uncomfortable. It makes us very annoyed and indeed perhaps angry at the fact that this kind of a situation is allowed to occur.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to dwell on this issue for my entire time that I was allotted for response to the Throne Speech, but this is such a grave matter that I think we must take it to heart. We must talk about it. We must ensure that the right thing happens at the end of the day. Mr. Speaker, that is our job. As opposition, we must ensure that every action of a minister, the Premier (Mr. Doer) or the Government, is accountable and, indeed, that we are the voice of the people of Manitoba, if you like, in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech addressed the issue of security. It was the first issue that was addressed to the Throne Speech, but it is one that I would like to talk about as well. On the second day of the opening of the House, because there was no desire to disrupt the Speech from the Throne by His Honour, we waited for the Government to come forward with a resolution, as has been the case in other jurisdictions, to send to Ottawa, to send to the President of the United States and the Allies that are now in a situation which is less than what we would like to see but a situation which is causing a lot of anxiety in the world.

That resolution was brought forward by my Leader who put on the floor of this Legislature a resolution that could be sent which said we support the actions that are being taken in a military way, in a humanitarian way and in a way in which will bring the terrorists to account for their actions. The terrorists have to be brought to account for their actions, and we must ensure that the safety of people who work, who live in our cities, who work in our cities, who go about their daily lives without being involved in any way in affecting negatively the lives of other people, that they can go about their lives in safety and knowing that they can go to work and come back home to their families without fearing a loss of life or some destruction as was faced on September 11.

Mr. Speaker, September 11 will be embedded in all of our minds forever. This was a tragic day for not only the families of the people who died there but for all of us, because we had come to know freedom in a very different way in this part of the world, where we went about our business without being afraid for our lives when we went to work, but September 11 changed all of that.

So we put this resolution before the House so that it could be passed and sent on to the people to make them know that we support them and we support the actions that were taken.

Mr. Speaker, we have to look at security. That is an important issue in our province, but indeed we have to be careful that we do not trample the freedoms and the rights of people within our province. So there has to be a balance in the way in which that is looked at.

Other than that particular issue in the Throne Speech, I would have to say that the Throne Speech was largely hollow and did not address some of the very important issues that lie before Manitobans today. So it is with some regret that I have to say these words, but indeed I will not be able to support the Throne Speech because it lacks in the vision and in the direction that should be set for our province.

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism):** It is a pleasure to rise today to be able to speak on the Speech from the Throne, but often it is very difficult to follow the member from Russell because he certainly raises a lot of issues that I would certainly want to respond to and would care to.

Prior to making my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to welcome to the Chamber our new pages and certainly as well as yourself and congratulate the new pages on their selection, and I hope that they will find their experience here very interesting and certainly rewarding as well.

I want to take this opportunity to go through a number of different issues that have certainly come up in the last number of days when people have been debating and talking about the Throne Speech. I want to certainly talk a little about the

new reality which the member from Russell was speaking to prior to his concluding remarks. I want to say that as of September 11 everything has changed. I certainly know that in Manitoba we are experiencing the results of that particular attack, the terrorist attack on the United States. All countries in a democratically free society certainly have been the brunt of many changes that have taken place.

I know, personally speaking, that in my own community there is a person I know, a home care person who does a tremendous job. She is an individual who has a daughter and a son-in-law who are in the Armed Forces, and they have small children. They are going to be going to Afghanistan in the very near future as part of that deployment, and here is a grandmother who is going to have to be looking after those grandchildren because the two parents are in the Armed Forces and are going to be going off to Afghanistan. So I think for a lot of us this hits close to home in many different ways. Certainly with regard to security and the impact it has had shaking the economy and the economic and social climate is well documented by many members in this Legislature, as well as many from without.

To talk about this new reality, certainly the Throne Speech attempted to address some of this new reality in trying to address some of the security issues. I know that, even though Manitoba is positioned well because of our economy, we have a diversified economy, and so we are positioned well to address the economic downfall. We are still going to be hard hit in many different areas.

I know that the Premier (Mr. Doer), upon these attacks, determined that an all-party committee should be struck of this Legislature to address a number of these issues with regard to security in Manitoba and the broader issues about security in Canada. I think that when I took a look at the Leader of the Opposition's remarks with regard to the importance of having strong leadership, the importance of one making decisive actions on issues of safety and security, it is important that we do have that kind of direction. This Premier has provided that leadership, has provided that leadership in many different ways but primarily with regard to the

incident on September 11. His decision to make an all-party committee to address the security issues related to the province of Manitoba is very, very important.

I believe that shows strong decisive leadership, which I believe was really important, and the people of Manitoba have a clear understanding that it took his leadership to be able to do this. I want to say that our economy is going to be able to withstand to a larger degree the impact of September 11, because I mention about our diversified economy, our highly skilled workforce, the agricultural sector that we have and the business sector that we have as well.

I know that we hopefully will not be as negatively affected as others, and I believe we will not be. I know that a number of comments that were made by members opposite with regard to the new reality that we are in, I know that I believe we have met the challenge and we are continuing to meet this challenge. There are a lot of comments that were made by members opposite about the Throne Speech and about where we have been as a government—*[interjection]* The member opposite says: Where have you been?

I would like to make some comments with regard to where we have been. I want to compliment as members of my constituency have complimented the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) through me for a lot of the actions that he has taken. Granted it is a very difficult portfolio. I think all members of this Chamber would probably agree that if there is one area of number one importance to Manitobans, it is health care, but not only that, to be the person responsible for health care and all of its challenges, I believe that takes a very special person. The person trying to address these challenges, I believe it takes a toll on them personally, and I believe it takes a toll on the people surrounding them.

\* (17:10)

So I will really want to credit and give congratulations to the Minister of Health for a lot of things that he has done. What has he done, as the member opposite has pointed out? Well,

within the last couple of years, there are more nurses being trained than any other time in the last decade, twice as many as just five years ago, over 1400 nursing students in 2001, triple the number of nurses to graduate in 2002 as it was in '99. I am not even going to start addressing the business of firing. I know it is an issue that the opposition members—it certainly raises their blood pressure. So I am not even going to touch upon the firing of a thousand nurses. I am going to be as positive as I possibly can with regard to what this Minister of Health is trying to do and has attempted to do, I believe, successfully, over a short two years, fifteen additional spaces in medical schools, nine for rural and northern family medicine. These were spaces that were cut prior. Over 150 medical students received grants on condition that they set up practice in Manitoba. Two-thirds are specialists. These might seem small things to a lot of members in this Legislature, but when you go to the doorstep and you start hearing from the people that elect members to this Chamber, those are the kinds of things that they raise because it affects them and their families directly and they want their governments, in attempting to want them to attempt to address some of these issues.

I note that, within the Throne Speech, our Government, certainly, has expressed, and we made our commitment and recommitted ourselves to the election promises we made. I know that when I was talking about health care, we tried to address health care in a way that was not slip shot or haphazard in trying to bring in a quick fix. We knew that that was not going to address it. It is certainly in the area that deserves a lot of thoughtful consideration, something that is a reasonable and a logical approach to health care. It is not always easy, but as I mentioned, we are training more nurses than any other time in the last decade.

To have nurses at the bedside, for most of us, and, hopefully, most of us will not have to have surgery or will not become ill in any way to be able to use the health care system, but I think for most of us, when health care is to be used, we want to be able to know and to be secure in the thought that there are nurses there and that we are getting the best health care possible, not only in the province, of course, wherever hospital you go to, but in the country or in North America.

I just want to say that throughout Manitoba, not only have we had more nursing graduates than we expect ever than before, but we are looking at also upgrading capital equipment. We are looking at a bilingual nursing program, for example the LPN program in St. Malo for Métis candidates, which is something that is innovative, something a little bit different that gives other people an opportunity to become involved in the health care system, which they did not have a chance before.

I mentioned about the family doctor registry briefly, not only having doctors staying in rural Manitoba, but also the fact that a family doctor registry, where you know where there are doctors available that are still taking patients. Right now it is very difficult. There are a lot of doctors who have a full slate with regard to patient load. I believe that those are the small things that really help the average person in Manitoba.

I know that there are many, many issues. I know that looking at a document I have in front of me, the number of different things that I have jotted down that have been done in health care the last couple of years was certainly too extensive in the opportunity that I have here and the time I am allotted to go through the many issues. I had wanted to point out a number of them, which I have done already. I know that a number of issues, something very, very—may seem small to most—but I think very important, when we brought the Pan Am Clinic into a not-for-profit health care system and doubled the surgeries performed there, something that most people may not even realize has happened, but that is something that really is trying to address the average person of Manitoba, trying to improve their ability to receive surgery that is delivered at that particular establishment.

I know that when we talk about investing in regional hospitals, certainly, the Brandon Hospital, after more than a decade, we are looking at \$25 million in construction, I believe, and so on. That is really important. We are talking about rural Manitoba, hospitals outside of Manitoba, that that is a promise that was made and that is a promise that is kept. Maybe we do not say it enough, but sometimes I think we are caught up in the day-to-day hustle and

bustle of this particular Legislature. Yet we often forget about the types of things that have been brought forward by the Minister of Health and other members of this Government.

I know that another promise we talked about was Hydro. Members opposite might say: Well, Hydro, who in their right mind is going to sell Hydro? That is an easy promise. But you know, there are a lot of other things related. It was not that many years ago that somebody said: Well, who in their right mind would sell MTS? So now what we see is that, well, you know, Mr. Speaker, with regard to Hydro, the idea about the selling of Hydro is not all the issues we talked about related to Hydro. We had members opposite when we were talking about equalizing rates and how much they mean to Manitobans—rural and northern residents are going to save \$14 million a year by Hydro equalization. The members opposite said: You know, we voted for that. We are in favour of that.

The point I want to make, though, is that they had 11 years to do something about it and nothing was done. Now, members opposite may think that is unfair, but when people are making criticisms about what have you done, what have you done lately, well, we are trying to tell you. I am attempting to tell you what we have done. Again, it might seem a small step, but it saves rural and northern Manitobans \$14 million a year by equalizing Hydro rates. *[interjection]* I know. You know, Mr. Speaker, again, I am trying to paint a picture. I am painting a canvas here of what this Government has done over two years when some members opposite yelled: Well, what have you done?

Well, I am trying to show that, yes, in our Throne Speech, we also said we are going to keep our commitments to our election promises, but also there is a vision in that Throne Speech of where we are going with regard to the Province of Manitoba, and that will be reflected also in the Budget. I know that no selling of the Crown corporations without a referendum is something that members opposite would probably agree to, and yet, I believe, we have to ensure that Manitobans will have a voice with regard to their assets like Hydro and other Crowns.

I know that with regard to safe communities and the activities that are involved in making

communities safe, we have many, many different initiatives. We have this Lighthouse Project, our Neighbourhoods Alive! and different opportunities through recreation that children have, not only in the inner city of Winnipeg, but elsewhere, where you have this Government attempting to provide, I believe, strong leadership in many areas that may not have been addressed over 11 years prior.

We talk about the parent-child centres province-wide. There are 25 new ones to promote nutrition, literacy and positive parenting. I think there is a larger picture to paint when we talk about Neighbourhoods Alive! It is also dealing with young children, children, and parents, for that matter, who have not had an opportunity necessarily to address their well-being in the way that they would want it to. I believe we have given them an opportunity to do so, and, I think, a lot of thanks should go to the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr. Sale) for initiating this. I believe that it is being well-received and, certainly, I have received comments from individuals in my constituency that would have wanted me to thank the minister for putting forward such a program.

I know that Canada, when we talk about prenatal benefits, Manitoba being, I believe, the introduction of Canada's No. 1 prenatal benefit. I believe we were the first ones to do such a thing, and, I think, that again addresses the day-to-day work that the Government is doing to benefit all Manitobans that sometimes does not receive the accolades, sometimes does not receive the theatrics and the rah, rah, rah, and the pounding of desks and the name calling that often takes place, but those are the small things that for the average person really amounts to a lot for most families in Manitoba.

I know that there was a lot of brouhaha and a lot of yelling and ranting and raving has taken place with regard to the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell). Now we have heard members say: Well, you know, do not take it personally. You know, do not take it personally. He has to resign. He has to resign. Well, we have heard the members opposite say the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) has to resign, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Mr. Lemieux) should resign, the Minister of Finance

(Mr. Selinger) should resign, the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) should resign, but do not take it personally.

\* (17:20)

Well, Mr. Speaker, when members opposite start talking about individuals and about their lack of forthcoming on different issues, I mean, you are being very personal in your attacks. It did not take me very long to see this and to look through this, because I went through a similar situation a year ago where comments were made about my spouse and her involvement somehow in some gaming. *[interjection]* Well, we received a legal opinion back that said there was no conflict whatsoever, and yet, we still had members opposite making comments, saying, now, do not take it seriously; do not take it personally.

Well, Mr. Speaker, when you have a culture of members opposite picking out members on this side of the House and going after them personally, it is personal.

Mr. Speaker, if you want a raise, it is not just a job of the Opposition. We are just doing our job, and that is where I disagree with the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach). You are not just doing your job when you pick a person out and you personally attack them, a personal attack when you are telling someone that you are not forthcoming, they are not being honest in other comments, that you are skirting the whole issue of parliamentary language in this House.

From the time we came into this Legislature, there were many of us that were new. We said and many of us said when we went through our in-service, if you call it, as new members, many of us made a commitment to try to be diplomatic, but try to use some decorum and attempt to change the culture of a Legislature. Now, we all know that Question Period is show time and that you have 40 minutes to get your message in the media. Granted, I understand that. I was never on the Opposition and I never had to face that or how you get your message there.

Mr. Speaker, over the last two years, some of the attacks that have taken place and some of

the language that is used, well, if it is skirting parliamentary language it really is coming close because when you have to get up and you have to apologize for using language and so on, you are getting pretty close, I believe, to not being professional in the profession that we have all chosen, and one that, I believe, many members opposite try as hard as they can to do the best that they can to work for their constituents. There is a goal there as serving the better public or serving the public better and how we get there.

We may choose different paths, but I believe the majority of members do not come into this Legislature for other than that. The only part that I found most disturbing over the last little while and especially today and last week where it is almost like a gang mentality, where you gang up on someone. Yet, the minister responds forthrightly and is telling you that, yes, he agrees with the criticisms that are in there and criticisms that are made by the Auditor, and yet, sure, you have made your point, thank you very much. We have made some changes. There are a lot more to make and that has been said, but I would want people to look in the mirror at the end of the day, and say: Where is the fine line between going after someone personally and attacking them and being a politician, being someone who is being proactive for their constituents and proactive for people that may disagree with the direction that this Government is going?

I truly believe that it is a fine line and, I believe, many members are getting close to crossing it. I would want them to take a deep breath and think about what is happening and what is happening to this Legislature and what is happening when you have to stand up. I am saying this in a broad way to all members of the Legislature, not just to members opposite. I am saying it to all of us. I think we seriously have to think of where we are going when we start to get on issues and start to go down that path.

So, having said that, Mr. Speaker, I will move onto other comments with regard to the Throne Speech, but I wanted to say that because I had a taste of it, a small taste of it about a year ago. I know that at a point when you get a legal opinion expressing whether you are totally

correct, there are people that will not let it go, nevertheless. That is something that was really disturbing for a member of the Legislature to see.

I just want to talk about some of the things that we have done just briefly, if I might, over the last couple of years and more recently. I know that the Throne Speech is, certainly, setting the table, setting the situation for what we are going to address in the upcoming months. I know that members opposite, you may agree or disagree, but I would hope that they agree that there are some key elements to that Throne Speech that Manitobans are certainly looking forward to in the months to come.

I want to say that, with regard to the Minister of Education and amalgamation of school divisions, in my corner of the province of Manitoba, in the *Carillon* newspaper, if I might quote the *Carillon* newspaper, they feel that there was a good balance made. Some people feel that the Minister of Education did not go far enough, or the Government of Manitoba did not go far enough. Some feel we have gone too far. I believe the *Carillon* newspaper, in the editorial, sums it up by saying that the Minister of Education in the province of Manitoba has taken a real balanced approach to taking a look at the amalgamation of school divisions and what will be in many ways, hopefully, cost-saving. I would think most members here would think that there are some cost savings to be met and that will happen in amalgamations. I know that this particular issue we will certainly be discussing in days to come, and I do not want to spend too much time on that particular issue at this time.

In rural Manitoba, many comments. Within the Throne Speech we talked about a Rural Development Strategy. That is not to say that there has not been anything done in agriculture in rural Manitoba over the last two years since our coming to government. What I would like to say is that there are some fundamental things that have taken place. One, we know that many, many farmers and many individuals who farm land in rural Manitoba have been hard hit by excessive moisture. When we talk about excessive moisture, we talk about, for example, that this year Crop Insurance paid 12.9 million to producers in its Excessive Moisture Insurance

program, which compensated 2100 Manitoba producers who are able to seed approximately 250 000 acres or so. Those are the kinds of things, small example of how Manitoba farmers are being helped through agriculture.

I know that there are property tax savings for farmers. We put about \$7 million in the hands of farmers by reducing a portion of their property tax assessment from 30 percent to 26 percent. Once again it appears like a small issue, something that does not maybe mean a lot to individuals in Winnipeg, but it should. A lot of those people that are outside, in my constituency of La Verendrye many of them come to Winnipeg. They spend a lot of money in Winnipeg, and that \$7 million that is in the hands of the farmers not only will help them on their own farms, but that money is cycled through the economy and so on. So I think that is just, again, a small example of what we have done with regard to property tax savings for farmers.

I know that the improved crop insurance we talked about, how we reduced crop insurance rates by an average of 19 percent from the year 2001, is really important for a lot of people. I know we have introduced new pedigree seed coverage, as well as continued the successful high dollar value option introduced last year. I know that for many, many farmers the emergency assistance for farmers that was provided, the 92 million in emergency assistance to grain and oilseeds producers, was welcome.

\* (17:30)

We know that a lot could be said about companies like Bombardier and other companies that receive healthy sums of money from the federal government. Many farmers are certainly looking to the federal government to come to the table and to be, well, it is not even being generous, it is able to assist farmers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan when they need it. That is all the farmers are asking for. They are not asking for more money than anyone else. They are just asking to be treated fairly.

I believe that this Minister of Agriculture has moved in that direction. I know that any time this Minister of Agriculture for this Government

gets an opportunity to speak to anyone from the federal government, she will certainly raise agricultural issues with them in trying to get those issues addressed more fairly, if I can put it that way.

This is a time that, when we see a potential downturn in the economy, agriculture is no different. That farm and rural stress line, for example, that we reinstated for the rural areas and farmers of this province, a stress line that was removed by previous administration. I know they were going through tough times, and I am having some appreciation for what that is all about, but this is one that I truly believe not only will pay dividends but has.

Many, many farmers in the province are feeling the burden, and will feel the burden, of a downturn in the economy. I believe that this stress line is there for those who need to talk to someone and who need to be able to pass on the stress that they are feeling with regard to what it is like nowadays to have the family farm, because members opposite, whether it is the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and others, have commented about how people at one time used to pass on the farm. My uncle and aunt looked forward to passing their farm on to their sons or daughters, in my particular case. But now, they want to try to sell the family farm, and they want to just give them the money and say go to university and get a career because it is so difficult to farm.

So we understand how stressful it is. I know the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) on this side of the House is doing everything she can to meet with different groups throughout the province to get input as to how we should conduct ourselves as a government, the issues that are relative to the farming community.

I know that on occasion, members opposite will raise: Well, why are you not here? Why are you not there? Why are you not talking to people? The Minister of Agriculture is talking on a daily basis with Manitobans all over Manitoba where farming is taking place, so I would not want this issue to be propagated or, somehow, the thought be left in Manitobans' heads that she is not meeting, I would say, talking and dealing with issues on a daily basis that are relevant to

all Manitobans from different parts of the province. I just want to make sure when I talk about agriculture and our vision in the Throne Speech and the rural development strategy that that be made quite clear that this is not something that is just starting the day the Throne Speech came out, but this has been going on for two years from the time we became Government on October 5, '99.

Mr. Speaker, I have not had the opportunity to talk about drainage and things that have taken place for rural Manitoba, but I just want to comment about how we put a million dollars into it. We know that is not enough, but, more importantly, I believe as well that the previous administration reduced funding with regard to drainage in Manitoba. Sure, a million dollars may seem a drop in the bucket, but it is on the road to getting back to assisting rural Manitoba in drainage. We know it may not be sufficient but, once again, things have changed since September 11. The economy has changed and, regrettably, a lot of difficult decisions are going to have to take place as a result.

There are many different subject areas that I could touch on in my comments today. I heard a comment made from a member opposite, and I thank him for raising this. Maybe I will conclude on this because one of the largest highway projects in all of Manitoba was Highway 59 and Highway 59 south from the Perimeter. A big thanks should go out, and I know it does, from communities like Grande Pointe, Ile des Chênes, Niverville, St. Adolphe, St. Pierre, St. Malo. All those people that use Highway 59 are really thankful to the Minister of Transportation and Government Services (Mr. Ashton) for taking a look at this project and putting a priority on this project, because for three elections in a row, we saw a lot of stakes go up and no action. So, what are we doing? We are attempting to build Manitoba. We are attempting to move forward, whether it be the True North Project on Portage Avenue, whether it be Highway 59, whether it be the capital project in Brandon, their hospital in Brandon. A number of different projects seem to be stalled some place but this Government is moving ahead. We are moving ahead. We are building Manitobans. Manitobans support us in that move. They see what we are doing. They

believe in what we are doing, and they are telling us we are on the right path.

So, I just want to conclude that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) and the Premier (Mr. Doer) should be congratulated for the direction that this Government and the elected members on this side of the House are taking.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** I want to put a few comments on the record on the Government's Throne Speech. Let me begin by giving the Government some positive marks for recognizing right at the beginning of the Throne Speech that September 11 was an important date. We have all been affected by the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. One result has been a more clearly focused concern with security issues. In the aftermath of September 11, the all-party committee on security issues has been meeting weekly to look at the situation in our province and to provide input from all parties to assist in making Manitoba a safe and a secure place as possible. During this legislative session, we will consider a bill that will address several issues that have arisen from the discussions to date, and while we must move to address potential weaknesses in the present procedures, we must also look carefully at the implications that these measures may have in terms of human rights. It is, therefore, quite important that Manitoba citizens have the opportunity to put forward their views, and that the concerns raised by citizens are carefully considered.

While the response from a security standpoint provided in the Throne Speech has been by and large reasonable, the response to the changed economic circumstances after September 11 has fallen far short of what is needed. The major changes in economic outlook at the present time should have led the Government to bring forth a much more detailed economic analysis. I believe almost a mini-budget statement was necessary. Indeed, Paul Thomas, among others, has recognized the need for this, but the Government has provided little more than fairly vague generalities in its discussions of the economic environment and its view of how to proceed in the next little while.

The approach of the Government is not good enough. For many years, this province suffered through Tory times when the government cut

back across the board. Now, there is a critical need, not just to imitate the Tories, but to do things in new ways, to take new directions and make sure that we have a government which is a higher performing government, one, in fact, that cannot just follow the traditional approaches and get mired in the sorts of problems and needs of yesterday, rather than thinking for the future.

\* (17:40)

One of the positive aspects in contrast to the economic area of the Throne Speech dealt with the response to the Axworthy report. Let me first congratulate Lloyd Axworthy for heading up the task force on the environment and climate change and producing a whole series of recommendations. It was good to see the Government devote a considerable amount of attention in the Throne Speech to the Climate Change Task Force report.

However, in agriculture, the Throne Speech was terrible. There is no other word for it. We have had the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Mr. Lemieux) getting up just a few minutes ago, cheering on and shouting about how much he was putting into crop insurance, but when you look at it, that money was going into crop insurance because of excess moisture. Well, that is all very well, but you know, you would have saved having to spend a lot of that if there had been a decent drainage system in place in a lot of places. You would have been far better off to make sure the provincial drains were in good shape instead of having to pay people afterwards to compensate for them. Think how much happier the farmers would have been getting a great crop. I can give you a good example from a farmer near a farm at Carman. A farmer who had a good drainage system in place was, as a result, able to get a good crop of potatoes, 350 bags hundredweight per acre. Next door, on the same land, except for the drainage, there was virtually no crop. Yes, this is near Carman. That is the difference that looking adequately at provincial and local farmer drainage issues can make. The reality is, in fact, that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism probably understated by quite a margin the money going through crop insurance and other safety net programs because of inadequate

provincial drainage and provincial approaches to drainage in this province.

*Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

When you look at the crop losses as well as the unseeded acres, the amounts of crop losses, the amounts of crop insurance and other safety nets that had to come from government as a result of the inadequate attention to basic details by this Government are certainly in the tens of millions and perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars. It is too bad that there was not a little preventative action taken so that the farmers could have got a better crop and so that indeed government could have benefited from tax revenues instead of having to pay out because the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) and the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin) did not do their job adequately.

I think it is too bad as well that there was not in the Throne Speech much more in there that came out of the material that was presented by farmers to the all-party task force last year. There was a real opportunity missed, and it is too bad for Manitobans that the Government missed the boat.

In education we have seen over the last week increasing evidence of the poor management of adult education by the present Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell). Day by day by day there has been more evidence emerging of management problems. In this circumstance I think that, rather than go further at the moment, I will speak further on this issue at other times.

I do want to put a few comments on the record about the Throne Speech and the lack of the Government's adequate approach to heritage buildings, including that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Sport (Mr. Lemieux), who spoke just a few minutes ago, has turned to become, instead of the saviour of heritage in this province and heritage buildings, the leader of the government demolition derby. He is bound and determined to demolish the Eaton's building. He received a report from his Manitoba Heritage Council and promptly chucked it in the wastebasket, paid no attention to the learned advice that he received and so upset the chair of

his council that this chair resigned in absolute disgust at the behaviour of his minister. The minister has been inadequate in having any meaningful public consultation from the provincial level and heritage aspects of this important building. Indeed, he has refused to look at potential alternatives. I repeat the Minister of Culture and Heritage, instead of doing his job as he should be in standing up for heritage, has turned out to be the chief of the Government's demolition derby.

I now want to move to talk a little bit about health care. This is an area where the NDP government has turned out to be remarkably deficient. From an opposition which campaigned on improving the food quality in our hospitals and for those who are not well, it has turned out that we have a government which now imports five-day-old sandwiches from Edmonton.

What a turnaround. From a government which campaigned on its promise to abolish hallway medicine, to make sure that there were never people in the hallways again, we have a government which the very week of the Throne Speech when you looked at the Government's own statistics it was quite apparent that the situation this year was worse than the situation last year and the situation last year was worse than the situation before. So, instead of there being fewer patients in hallways and fewer people waiting for medical beds to be admitted, you have more.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

What a turnaround. What a disgrace to have this kind of performance from a government which campaigned so strongly on trying to do something better. There is a broad issue, in fact several broad issues, in terms of health care and the lack of adequate attention to health care by this Government.

I want to talk for a few minutes about preventive health care strategy, that is, a strategy to make sure that we are improving health, building wellness, preventing health problems. Last year, we saw that health care was almost absent from the Throne Speech. This year was hardly any better, for although health care was

mentioned, there was a woefully inadequate approach to preventing health problems.

Let me talk about diabetes, to begin with. Greg Selinger quoted on air the day after—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. I would just like to remind the honourable member when making a reference to members in the House that they be referred to by constituency, or ministers, by their portfolio. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members. Thank you.

**Mr. Gerrard:** I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. I refer to the Member for St. Boniface, the Minister of Finance, who, when discussing on air the day after the Throne Speech, proud of his Government's prevention strategy, pointed with pride to the fact that in the Throne Speech there was a reference to a new dialysis centre, preventive help program of the Government in northern Manitoba.

\* (17:50)

Not to take anything away from the dialysis, but I would like to point out that this is an example of relatively late care for people with diabetes, what many have referred to as expensive, near-end-of-light care, often. So what is needed and what was absent from the Throne Speech was any meaningful approach to preventing diabetes to begin with. It is a preventable condition. There is no approach to being able to treat diabetes very early on. Some in the health care area would argue that, in fact, you can, by aggressive early intervention, delay the need for dialysis for 10 years, on average. This is where one needs to be in terms of prevention, not being proud that dialysis is your Government's preventive strategy. Indeed, those who have looked at this had guessed that if your preventive strategy for diabetes is dialysis, you are going to break the bank. You are going to have a totally irrational approach to health care, because what you are doing is acting far too late to make the real difference that we need to make in this province, in terms of decreasing the incidence of diabetes, decreasing the sickness, and, indeed, reducing the cost of health care because we have people who are healthier.

When we are talking for those who are elderly, and one of the problems among the elderly is blindness, we have a drug that is found to be effective and useful for preventing blindness due to acute macular degeneration in elderly people. This drug was approved in June of the year 2000, but it is not yet available in Manitoba. It is available across the rest of the country except, perhaps, for Prince Edward Island. Curiously, this drug Visudine is available to Manitobans if you travel to Saskatchewan or Edmonton or Ontario, but you cannot get it here. Visudine is what it is called.

This is an expensive way and not an effective way to operate a health care system—not even to have in place preventive approaches which are now standard, accepted care in other jurisdictions across Canada. The Government is indeed paying not only for the drug given in Saskatchewan or Alberta, but paying for the transportation to go there and paying for the extra eye examination tests and all sorts of things in the process.

The result is paying about twice as much to have this done elsewhere. This is not a positive service for elderly people in Manitoba. Elderly people in Manitoba should be able to get preventive care for blindness here in this province.

It is a callous lack of understanding by the Government of what is happening in health care. Let us look at preventive care and approaches in the area of HIV and AIDS. The current government does not have any provincial plan of any real meaning. Yes, on the Web site if you go there, there was one from the time of Jim McCrae with the data which have never been updated and which have never been implemented. Some would argue that the Tories' approach to a provincial plan was to produce a report and then not do anything else. The report was the plan. Well, the NDP are no better.

**An Honourable Member:** The Nine Circles, Jon.

**Mr. Gerrard:** The Nine Circles, if you talked with the people who work in grassroots there, what you will very quickly learn is that the overall approach to preventing HIV and AIDS is

inadequate; that we have a considerable increase among women of the incidence of HIV positive; that we have no really good approach to making sure that we do not end up in the core area of Winnipeg and in other, often First Nations communities, for example—but in the core area of Winnipeg particularly, the sort of situation which has happened in New York, where the incidence in the core area of central New York becomes very high. There is not an adequate approach by this Government to prevention, and there should be.

When we come to prevention as it applies to mental health conditions, we again find that the Government and the Throne Speech are very deficient. I have talked on a number of occasions about the need to make sure that Manitoba has an adequate centre for aggressively looking at, following, being involved with people who are adolescents and young adults who have a first-time psychosis, because here in fact you can make a difference and carry these people through to the point where they can do very well. But, if you do not, if you have what is in Manitoba at the moment, which is an ad-hoc approach, some good, some bad, but too many people falling through the cracks, you have problems with increased suicide. You have problems with increased lifelong mental problems because it would appear that the brain progressively fries. You have problems with increased crime because many of these people, because of their health problem, end up with associated drug addiction, criminal activity, et cetera. Here is an area where you can prevent and make a big difference. Yet Manitoba and PEI are the only two provinces without a centre for the treatment and following and close attention to those who come in with the first episode of psychosis.

This is not the only area of mental health, of preventive approaches, where the government strategy is deficient. This area was not even in the Throne Speech, and it appears that it is not in the Government's plan, even though the Minister of Health knows full well that this needs to be done. It is not his priority, so he says. It is not the Government's priority to get involved in these kinds of areas. Why not?

These are very, very important to making sure we have a strong health care system and

that we can afford it, because it can prevent all the health problems down the road. We can have a much better, or manage a higher quality, health care system.

I had talked a couple of weeks ago about the high incidence of suicide in Cross Lake. Here is a crisis intervention centre which is not being adequately supported, and the Government of this province is saying that it is not any of our business. We do not care about those suicides. There is a problem here with this Government, and there are alternative approaches that this NDP government should be looking at.

The reality is that there is a responsibility in Cross Lake because of what happened with the Northern Flood Agreement. There is a potential for this Government to be getting involved in a crisis approach which looks at all of the North and, yet, the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Robinson) has said: No, that is none of our affair, none of our business,

even though there has been a very high incidence of suicide.

**Smoking:** Where is the Government's anti-smoking strategy or smoking reduction strategy that was promised? But it is not there. It is not in the Throne Speech. It falls short again. Again and again, there could be much more done, but there has not been. We have a government which is deficient in areas of preventive health, and it is causing a lot of problems. It will cause a lot of problems in the future for people in this province and for the health care system in this province.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) will have 16 minutes remaining.

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, November 19, 2001

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