

**Second Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature**  
**of the**  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
**and**  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Ninth Legislature**

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<i>Vacant</i>	Elmwood	

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, September 30, 2008**

**The House met at 10 a.m.**

*PRAYER*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I think if you canvass the House that you will find that there's leave to move straight to Bill 208.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there agreement of the House to move directly to Bill 208, The Crown Appointment Review Act (Various Acts Amended)? [*Agreed*]

**SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 208—The Crown Appointment Review Act  
(Various Acts Amended)**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that Bill 208, The Crown Appointment Review Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur l'examen des nominations au sein des sociétés d'état (modification de diverses lois), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, Bill 208 requires that a person who's to be publicly appointed to the board of the Liquor Control Commission, the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation or the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation be publicly interviewed by a committee of the Legislative Assembly before being appointed to the board.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is about having a better framework for accountability in Manitoba. It is about having an interview for prospective board members, so that members of the Legislature can ask about the board member's vision for the Crown corporation, whether it be the Liquor Control Commission, the Lotteries Corporation or the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. It can be an opportunity to ask about the individual's credentials, background, in terms of what they will bring to the board.

I suggest that, as well as having this kind of accountability which I believe is necessary, it will bring a greater sense that the Crown corporations are there for all Manitobans and not just for members of

the NDP party. There is a growing sense, correct or not, that after nine years in power, the NDP are treating the Crown corporations as their prerogative and really these are Crown corporations which are for everybody in Manitoba.

It is disappointing, when I go round and meet people in Manitoba in the street or elsewhere, that people refer to MPIC as a slush fund for the NDP, or the Lotteries Corporation. These rumours should not be there. These organizations should be the best that they possibly can be, and the fact is that we want to make sure that we move to the next level in terms of accountability of MPIC, the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, and the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission.

Mr. Speaker, it is an opportunity also to address some problems, some inequities. Let me give you a couple of significant examples. Very frequently, I get comments from people who own or would like to own motorcycles that they are being treated very, very unfairly in Manitoba, that they are being charged more than twice the rates of people who own motorcycles in Saskatchewan. In an era where we are concerned about climate change, where we should be advocating the most not only economical but best use of fuel, most fuel-efficient vehicles on the road, in fact, in many circumstances, we should be promoting motorcycle use instead of dissuading people, going to large cost disadvantages to dissuade people from riding motorcycles in Manitoba.

Let me give you a couple of specific examples, Mr. Speaker. A Harley-Davidson touring model motorcycle from the year 2000, in Manitoba the cost for the insurance is \$2,117, and in Saskatchewan, for the similar vehicle, it is \$1,074, roughly double the cost. This is a touring vehicle to be travelling around the province, and very similar results for an American IronHorse Bandera touring model, 2008 year, cost in Manitoba, \$1,937, and the cost in Saskatchewan is approximately half that.

These two examples provide real basis for the complaint, and the concern of people who are riding motorcycles sometimes, they have a short two- or three- or four-month season that they can really be using. These are very high costs. There needs to be a look at why these costs are as high as they are.

Are Manitoba streets poorly designed? Are motorcycle riders in Manitoba much more careless than in Saskatchewan? From what I hear, there's not any real basis for that. Is it the fact that the way that the fault is assigned in Manitoba, so that when there is an accident where the car or other vehicle is 100 percent at fault, the motorcycle gets blamed 50 percent for a situation where the motorcyclist wasn't at fault at all? Certainly, when that happens, costs and allocation of damages and expenses to the motorcycle rider can add up very quickly.

But, certainly, having a board which is appointed and in which the members are interviewed by legislative committee can significantly help to address some of the real issues that Manitobans have in terms of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

\*(10:10)

Let me give you another example, Mr. Speaker. In an article hot off the press, in the *International Journal of Injury Control and Safety Promotion*, dealing with the use of child restraint seats in Manitoba, done by John Blair, Angeliki Perdios, Shelina Babul, Kevin Young, Janice Beckles, and quite a number of others, carefully done in Manitoba, showed strikingly, shockingly, that 70 percent of child restraint systems in Manitoba were not being used correctly. This is putting children at greater risk of injury and death.

Road crashes, Mr. Speaker, are the leading cause of death and injury in children under 14 years of age. So this is something that we should be paying a lot of attention to. This government, sadly, has not been and neglecting it. When we're talking about safety and keeping down costs related to road accidents and physical injury, this is one of the things that we should be addressing.

I would note to the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck) that Gimli, Steinbach, Carman, Altona, Morris, Ste. Agathe, Winkler and Morden were all included in this study. So it's very relevant to his constituency, as well as a number of other constituencies in Manitoba, including the Minister of Education's (Mr. Bjornson) constituency.

Clearly, the Minister of Education needs to be doing a better job if 70 percent of the people aren't learning how to use their child restraint systems properly. It's an education issue and, hopefully, the Minister of Education will get up and address this bill and support having reviews, interviews, of those

who are to be appointed to the boards of Crown corporations like the MPIC.

Mr. Speaker, Liberals have stood up in this Chamber for better child safety, for the mandatory use of bicycle helmets, for the mandatory use of booster seats, and the NDP have opposed these measures time and time again. We submit that having people who are appointed, interviewed by members of a legislative committee, will be able to ask about their concern for child safety, and make sure that the people who are appointed to the board of MPIC have child safety front and centre in their vision as they move forward and take up their board appointments.

I will quote from this article: Child safety is one of the most important issues in society today. As motor vehicles crashes are the biggest killers of children, it's important to make sure that they are safe while travelling in a car.

We speak strongly for the safety of children, we speak for better accountability and we speak and urge that all other members in this Legislature will stand up and move in support of this measure to have those who are to be appointed to these important Crown corporations interviewed by members of the legislative committee so that they will be truly responsive, and seen to be responsive to all of Manitoba and not just to the government.

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** I rise to speak on Bill 208, The Crown Appointment Review Act. This bill requires that a person be publicly interviewed by a committee of the Legislative Assembly before being appointed to the board of the Liquor Control Commission, Manitoba Lotteries Corporation or Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

I think the intent of this bill is really to get rid of patronage appointments. However, I would point out that not all appointments are made of people by the same party as those in government. For example, one of my constituents, who was asked to run by the PC Party of Manitoba a number of times, was appointed by the previous Conservative government and re-appointed by our government because of her knowledge and experience. Now some people might say that's a mistake. How did we let that one through? But I would say it's not uncommon.

For example, I nominated a Liberal, of all people. I nominated her because of her expertise. I talked to the minister responsible for that board, who actually knew the individual and said, yes, that's a

good person, and that name went forward to Cabinet and she was appointed. After her three-year term expired, she was going to resign, and the board of directors said, no, we want you to be re-appointed because we value you on this board.

So, although in general the government of the day appoints their supporters, that's not always true. Good people are chosen frequently because of their knowledge or their expertise in a certain area and I think that's a good thing. I just gave two examples, one of a Liberal, one of a Conservative where that happened, two individuals that I know. I have a lot of respect for both of them, notwithstanding their party affiliation.

Now, one of the good things about being here for a long time—and some people may say that that's not always a good thing—but one of the positive things is that those of us who have been here a long time—and some may say we're getting kind of long in the tooth—although it's not really our choice, you know, when our name is on the ballot, we get re-elected. It's because people wanted us to be here and that's true whether we're on the opposition's side or on this side.

I note, for example, the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck), we're both from the class of—no, we're not both from the class of 1990; he came a little bit later than that, but not very much later—*[interjection]* Yes, but we remember the things that happened here many years ago. I think that's a good thing. For example, I was in this Chamber, a number of other people were here when the Liberal Party put forward a similar resolution and what they wanted to do was ban all patronage appointments. And who was the leader of the Liberal Party at that time? The leader of the Liberal Party was Sharon Carstairs, and she spoke in that debate and she wanted to get rid of all patronage appointments.

What happened to that member of the Legislature when she resigned and left here? Where did she go? She went to the Senate of Canada. Now, what would be the biggest, best-paying patronage appointment in Canada? It would be the Canadian Senate. So the media, they remembered that private member's bill from the Liberal caucus and they confronted Sharon Carstairs and they said, well, we thought you were opposed to patronage appointments because you spoke on that in the Manitoba Legislature. How come you accepted the biggest patronage appointment in Canada? And she said, well, this was a good one.

So she made a big exception for herself. She said one thing in the Legislature but then, when she got out of here, she did something totally different. So it's a little hard to take the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) seriously when he wants to get rid of patronage appointments when his former leader in the Legislature accepted the biggest patronage appointment in Canada and the best-paying.

In fact, my party federally is in favour of abolishing the Senate, and one of the reasons is that it would save \$50 million a year, not a small sum of money. *[interjection]* Well, I would commend Sharon Carstairs' book for everyone to read. It's a good read; having been here during part of her tenure here, I enjoyed reading her autobiography.

We believe that the current Crown appointment process is fair and balanced and that all of our Crown corporations operate in transparent and accountable manners. They issue detailed annual reports and adhere to high standards of corporate governance to ensure that their boards remain strong and responsible to the public. I would also point out that all Manitobans can apply for appointment to an agency, board or commission. All individuals who are interested in nominating themselves for consideration in a specific post are asked to send a résumé or an outline of their skills and interest to the government.

I actually didn't know that before, so I'm happy to know that this is such an open process and that anyone can apply. The selection criteria differ depending on the agency, board or commission in question as different areas require different sets of skills and experience.

It occurs to me that, if the government changes and I'm no longer here, I could apply to be on an agency, board or commission and say, it's sometimes to the advantage of the government to appoint somebody from a different political party because of their experience or their knowledge or maybe to make the government look good, make them look non-partisan, appoint people from another party. However, that's some time off in the future, the distant future.

So appointments are made based on skills, work, other experience and general suitability to a position based on a variety of factors. Decisions on appointments are ultimately made between the minister responsible for the board and Cabinet.

The previous speaker, the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), talked at length about Manitoba Public Insurance, so I would like to talk about Manitoba Public Insurance as well. I guess I should begin in a general way to say that because we have a Crown corporation, we have either the lowest or the second-lowest rates in Canada. We have one of the best Crown corporations—

\* (10:20)

**An Honourable Member:** Why are the rates low?

**Mr. Martindale:** Why are the rates low, I'm asked by the member opposite. I think the main reason is because they operate in a non-profit manner. They don't have to pay profit to their shareholders and because there's only one insurance company.

One of the reasons why health insurance is so expensive in the United States is that there are 2,000 providers, so think of the administrative costs of having 2,000 providers as opposed to, say, Manitoba Health Services Commission where there's one provider for the Canadian system in general. We save a lot of money on administration.

The American health-care system costs about 13 percent or more of the GDP. The Canadian system costs about 9 percent. So I think there are great administrative savings in having a Crown corporation sell public insurance.

The universal program of Manitoba Public Insurance is reviewed annually by the Public Utilities Board. They are accountable to the Manitoba Legislature, to the minister and to the government, and also the rates are set independently by the PUB. In fact, this was a change that the former Filmon government made, and I think it's a good change because previously they were set by Cabinet. Now, when people complain or they have concerns, we can say the government didn't set the rates; the Public Utilities Board set the rates based on the information that they are provided and the research that they do to see if those rates are justified or not.

Manitoba Public Insurance's record of cost-effective provision of insurance is outstanding, the best in Canada. Manitoba Public Insurance values their customers' interest and is committed to the highest ethical standards and excellence in service.

MPI holds the funds of its policyholders in trust to meet their needs into the future. They operate in a

fiscally responsible and cost-effective manner, using investment income to reduce rates and provide long-term benefits to Manitobans.

I think that provides the corporation with a lot of stability. They have a very large investment fund and they hope to get a certain rate of return and reinvest that money so that, in case there's a year when there's a hailstorm or a bad winter with a lot of ice and snow and they have a lot of claims, then they can rely on their reserve funds to make up for any losses in the current year, which is a good thing.

Manitoba Public Insurance holds the funds of its policyholders in trust to meet their needs into the future. They operate in a fiscally responsible and cost-effective manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to speak to Bill 208. I look at this bill—it says the bill requires a person to be publicly interviewed by a committee of the Legislative Assembly before being appointed to the board of the Liquor Control Commission, the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation or Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

When you look through this bill, it seems to make a lot of sense to me that you would want some public accountability when you're looking at people who are representing Manitobans on the Crown corporation boards. It was interesting to note though, when the Member for Burrows spoke, he seems to be admitting that his government does do patronage appointments. So that's, I think, something that he's brought to the table here. He's put it out and said his government does operate that way, with providing patronage appointments to government Crown corporations.

I think that it just speaks to the NDP's government. They're more concerned with putting their friends in high places for political pay back rather than being accountable to all Manitobans. He's just actually put that on the record, Mr. Speaker.

The idea of interviewing prospective board appointees by a committee of all parties of the Legislature seems to be a reasonable thing, where people who are suggested for appointments can come and be interviewed, and the members of all parties have an ability or an opportunity to ask questions to find out about their credentials and the background of people that have been nominated for appointment to a board, Mr. Speaker.

I think what we're looking for is accountability, accountability to all Manitobans, and I think the government should never forget they are accountable to all Manitobans and not just to the NDP government and government supporters.

Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, don't belong to the NDP. They belong to all Manitobans, so all Manitobans need to be assured that there's transparency in terms of the people that are appointed to the boards.

When you're looking at putting people on boards, you need to look at the skill sets that these people will bring. Certainly you look at, if someone is leaving the board and you need to appoint a new person to the board, what kind of skill sets are needed in the mix of the other people that are on the board. So we look to the skill sets that people would bring to a board, their credentials, the experience that they do have.

Mr. Speaker, we saw that, even through the recommendations that came out with the review of the Workers Compensation Board, they look very specifically at the skill sets that are needed for people that are on the board and also that there be a rotation, so that people were not always being removed from a board and re-appointed to a board at the same time, to allow some continuity in board activities, because how the boards manage the Crown corporations is vital. It's vital to all Manitobans, not specifically to the NDP government, but specifically to all Manitobans.

So they need to be accountable in terms of management decisions they make, how they run the boards and certainly about decisions that they make with the money that these boards hold.

Now it wasn't too long ago where Manitoba Public Insurance corporation had decided that they had some surpluses and were going to give it to the University of Winnipeg. Of course, the University of Winnipeg is a great cause—my alma mater, I should say—but, Mr. Speaker, MPI belongs to Manitobans and, if there are surpluses there, Manitobans spoke very loudly to say, no, we'd like to have those surpluses back; it's our money.

So there needs to be some accountability in the management of funds and that speaks to the transparency and accountability of the board members. Certainly around the recent decision by the Crown corporations—Manitoba Lotteries Commission, Manitoba Liquor Commission and

Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation—to donate a million dollars each to the Human Rights Museum—again a very worthy cause—but again, when you're speaking of organizations that are Crown corporations that belong to Manitobans, then Manitobans need to have a say in that, through their board and through the accountability of their board members.

I think that the concept of the bill here is to have members that provide a good mix on boards, where they have different skill sets. They bring different experiences, different credentials and different backgrounds to a board which will actually make that board function in a better way rather than being politically skewed and motivated by a government such as the NDP—what we see here today—that they can actually have some authority to make decisions and they're not dictated to by the NDP because there's a very close relationship between them and their board members.

It serves the people of Manitoba to have accountability and transparency and, to do that, I think it's a reasonable suggestion that the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) has, that board members come before an all-party committee of the Legislature, so that they can be asked some questions and interviewed, if you like.

It's not unheard of for people to be interviewed for a job. It's not always necessary that people be appointed to jobs; they may be interviewed for these positions. Certainly that happens with other appointments that we see, like the Children's Advocate and the Provincial Ombudsman, Mr. Speaker.

So I think the whole idea of ensuring that there is transparency and accountability with the appointment of board members, that they be selected by a process through an all-party committee has merit, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

\* (10:30)

**Ms. Jennifer Howard (Fort Rouge):** I'm glad to take the opportunity today to speak a little bit about our Crown corporations, how they're run and what they do for all Manitobans. I think it was interesting to hear the Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu) speak about how the Crowns belong to all Manitobans, and that's certainly the case.

I never thought I'd say that I wish she was elected a little earlier so she could have brought that philosophy to bear on her government when they

sold the telephone system because that philosophy seemed to be missing at the time. But I do believe that the Crowns belong to all Manitobans and, as such, we all have a stake in seeing that they're well run and seeing that they provide good public services to the people that own them—ultimately, the citizens of this province.

I think, when you look at the Crowns, you see many, many kinds of accountability. They all issue annual reports, and there's also a committee of this Legislature that meets with the Crowns, that receives those annual reports, that can ask questions of the management and the president of the board. I've attended that committee, and I've learned a great deal about the operations of the Crown corporations. I take that responsibility seriously when I sit at that committee, that my role, as a representative of my constituents, is to make sure that their companies are being well run and they're being run in their best interests.

I also wanted to speak for a moment about the appointment process. I think we heard the Member for River Heights claim that only New Democrats get appointed to boards, and that is patently, patently false. I know there are members in this Chamber that can tell stories of when this government took office in '99 and getting phone calls from nervous members of other parties who were on boards wondering when the axe was going to fall because that was certainly the culture that they were used to.

That didn't happen. If people were competent, if people were serving those boards well, in many cases those appointments stayed in place. In many cases, as my colleague from Burrows pointed out, we've continued to appoint and hire people from all parties who do good work in our communities. I can speak to one of those hirings in Brandon where Marty Snelling was hired, who had run for the Progressive Conservatives in one of the provincial elections, and was hired to head up a community initiative in that city. From what I hear, he's doing a very fine job of that.

So all of us I think, on this side of the House anyway, can tell stories of working with members of all parties in our communities to make our communities a better place and that is the philosophy that I believe is brought when we're looking at appointments to boards and commissions.

I also wanted to just speak for a moment about what the Crowns do contribute to life in Manitoba. I'm going to talk first about the Manitoba Liquor

Control Commission and that, of course, I think that board is very ably chaired by a woman, by Carmen Neufeld. That Liquor Control Commission is one of the most efficient Liquor Commissions in the country, has one of the lowest administrative expenses, and it brings in record profits. In fact in 2007, the record was broken with a 6 percent increase to profits of \$207.9 million, and those profits go into the provincial Treasury. They pay for things like hospitals. They pay for things like education. In fact, that profit could fund the annual operating costs of four community hospitals in this province.

It's always interesting to me to hear the members on the other side of the House think that we should give away some of those profits. We should expand the private share of liquor sales in this province, and we should just open the doors and let those profits fly out. I do not understand how a party, who claims to be the party of business, who claims to have all of the economic knowledge, could think it's a good idea to give up your market share of a profitable corporation. That, to me, defies any claim that they are the party with the economic best interests of Manitobans at heart.

I also want to discuss a bit the Member for River Heights' (Mr. Gerrard) claim that the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation is a slush fund. I think that is extremely offensive to the board of men, of women, who run that organization, to the administration of that organization, to the people that work for that organization.

I was at a very moving ceremony during the Manito Ahbee Festival where Winston Hodgins, who is the CEO of Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, was honoured for his contributions to Aboriginal culture, for their sponsorship of that festival. It was a very moving ceremony. The Minister for Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Mr. Robinson) was also there, where he was presented with a star blanket, I believe, and people honoured him for the contribution of that corporation.

I was proud at that moment to know that, as a Manitoban, I was one of the owners of that corporation, and that corporation was taking its social responsibility seriously and supporting things in the community that I believe in and that make our communities better places to live. So I think those remarks are extremely offensive, and I would encourage him to apologize to the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation for calling them a slush fund.



I also find it odd that continually the contributions of these corporations to the Manitoba human rights museum are brought into question by members of this House. I'm not sure what a better cause could be than a national human rights museum that's going to be built here in our city. So to continue to question that these corporations, that are owned by all of us, and who do have a social responsibility, perhaps more so than privately owned corporations may have, that they should contribute to those causes that are important to Manitobans. I find it unusual that that continues to be called into question.

I'd also like to speak for a minute about MPI. That is also, in fact, headed by two women, very capable women, at both the board level and the senior administration level. The Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) gave us a very detailed lesson about motorcycle rates in his comments, and I want to assure him that there are people, at least one person on that board, who does own and enjoy a motorcycle.

He was also talking in great length about how do we know that the people on that board care about safety. Well, I want to assure him that there is someone on that board who spent most of his career as a driving instructor. I don't know who could be more concerned about the safety of drivers and young drivers on the road than someone who spent their career teaching those drivers how to be safe and how to operate their vehicles responsibly.

So when appointments are looked at for these boards, there's a mix of skills that's looked at. There is a mix of community representation. It's been very important to this government to make sure that those boards represent all Manitobans, that we have women in place, that we have people of colour in place, that we have Aboriginal people, who are running those corporations for the benefit of all Manitobans. That's a value that we take very seriously and have worked very hard to achieve. There's lots more work to do on that front, but we will continue to take the value of diversity seriously as well as the value of making sure that there are skilled people in charge of these corporations so that they can benefit all of us.

We look at MPI for example. They've made very important changes to serve customers more efficiently. Anybody now who has to go renew their driver license, gone are the days when you had to show up between specific hours and only in the

month of your birthday and renew your driver's license. Now you can renew your driver's license and your Autopac at the same time. I think that's been a tremendous convenience for people.

I also want to speak for a moment about MPI and how unique it is, unique perhaps to a publicly owned corporation, that when MPI has made too big a surplus, they send that money back to their customers. I have never yet heard from a family member or friend in Ontario who got a cheque from their auto insurance company because it made too much money.

These Crowns are well run. They're accountable. They contribute profits to the bottom line in this province and they support our communities and they offer good service to Manitobans. I think that all of us should be supporting those Crown corporations in their mission. Thank you.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I find it somewhat interesting that the government speaks on the bill, yet what I don't hear is a rationale as to why it is that what's being proposed is not in Manitoba's best interest. Instead, we hear of how wonderful things are within the corporations. The member just spoke, talked about, well, MPI gave a rebate, and we should be grateful that MPI gave a rebate. After all, in the private sector no rebates are ever issued. Well, that has absolutely nothing to do with the bill. If MPI overcharges, then it should be giving the money back. It's not like MPI was dying to give the money back. Public Utilities Board told them to give the money back.

\*(10:40)

The issue before us is in regard to the boards of the different corporations, whether it's Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, Manitoba Lotteries Corporation and the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. It's the way in which those Crown corporations govern their responsibilities, and how do we ensure that we get good solid individuals with a background that is going to ensure that Manitobans will benefit in the long run to maximize the potential of these boards?

What this bill is talking about, it's saying that we want a legislative committee to be able to have the opportunity to interview the individuals that the Premier (Mr. Doer) of the province, through his ministers, is actually appointing to the boards. What's wrong with that? Why should the government fear an individual that they're going to be appointing going

before a legislative committee and that committee being able to ask questions?

If someone's going to be appointed to the MPIC board, I think it would be a wonderful opportunity as a member of this Legislature to be able to find out the background of that appointment to see whether or not that individual has any appreciation of the unique situations that are here in Manitoba and get some insight maybe as to what they believe about Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

How does that take away from the value of good governance at that local level in that corporation? I don't hear arguments from the government of the day saying, well, geez, if you have someone coming before a legislative committee, at the end of the day there's going to be worse governance of that corporation.

The closest argument that I had was from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) the other day when we were talking about Manitoba Hydro, and his concern was who's going to want these appointments if they have to come before the legislative committee. The Minister of Finance should be asking himself, well, why would someone with credibility oppose coming before a legislative committee? Unless, of course, they have something to hide, or maybe they are not an appropriate appointment to a board. Maybe that's why they would be in fear of coming before a legislative committee.

Is that really what it's about? Is it because maybe the government of the day wants to be able to say, we want to appoint our people, the people that support the New Democratic Party, and we don't want to hold those individuals accountable, and if we had those individuals come before a legislative committee, it might not make us look good as a government, but it's in our political party's best interest to make sure that there's less scrutiny, that there's less transparency in the appointments that we make to these very important boards?

The Manitoba government, as all governments, plays a critical role in certain sectors of our economy. These corporations are given monopolies in certain areas of the economy. MPI is the only agency that has the authority and the economic means to be able to provide insurance for every vehicle in the province of Manitoba, every motorized vehicle, motorcycle, ATV, you name it. MPI has that responsibility, the only insurer that has that responsibility.

What are we doing in order to protect the interests of the people, the ratepayers, the people that are requiring that insurance? Technically, MPI is supposed to be coming to committee of this Legislature where we can ask questions of a committee of the corporation and, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, as all members know, it is very difficult to get MPI before committee—once a year or twice a year and it's only because of pressure. Yes, the Premier (Mr. Doer) has finally conceded and, yes, maybe I have to bring him and allow MPI or these Crown corporations to go to committee. But two hours or four hours a year, given the hundreds of millions of dollars of money flowing through these companies, is just not good enough.

Every member of this Legislature should be afforded the opportunity to hold Manitoba Public Insurance to account for what it is doing, or the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, or the Liquor Control Commission. All members should be afforded the opportunity to ask those critical questions that they feel are important, that their constituents, that Manitobans have asked their elected officials about. We should be afforded that opportunity to pose those questions. We're the vehicle of communications, that our constituents want us to hold these corporations accountable.

What this particular bill does, Mr. Speaker, is it even raises the bar that much higher, that we're saying it's not good enough to allow a Premier to say, I want this person, that person and this person to make up the board—end of story—then maybe, just maybe, I'll call that corporation once a year to a standing committee of the Manitoba Legislature where maybe two and a half hours might be given where you will be fortunate, if you are just an individual MLA, to be able to ask 10 minutes of questions.

Mr. Speaker, that's not good enough. There needs to be better accountability on our Crown corporations. We're talking hundreds of millions of dollars, and the buck stops at the Premier's office. He's the individual who has the ability to ensure accountability.

We call upon the Premier to do and to act on what's in the public's best interest. I would argue what's in the public's best interest is to start seeing MPI and our Crown corporations come before our committees more frequently, at least afford MLAs the opportunity to hold them to account in our standing committees.

I would suggest to you that this particular bill, the bill that's being proposed by the Liberal Party, raises the bar even higher. We should have individuals who are being appointed to these important boards, coming before this Legislature in the form of a standing committee, so that we can have a sense of who these individuals are and we're afforded the opportunity to be able to ask questions.

If the Premier (Mr. Doer) is that confident in the individuals that he is appointing, that he's appointing them for the right reasons—the right reasons being in the best interest of Manitobans as opposed to a political party—he should have nothing to fear by having this bill passed.

I would encourage the government of the day to do the right thing and at least allow this bill to go to committee where, I believe, a vast majority of Manitobans would support the principal of this bill and want to see board appointments reviewed by a standing committee in order to try to depoliticize the whole process.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to be able to speak.

**Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Water Stewardship):** Ten minutes just won't be enough to set the record straight here.

We know that the real agenda of this bill is to create a public circus. We've seen public circuses in the House brought forward by the members of the Liberal Party—all kinds of games, all kinds of tricks in this House. They just want to take that further in the public arena and create a circus which would be designed to humiliate people who don't follow their own particular political leanings.

I think that Manitobans can see right through that, Mr. Speaker. They should be ashamed of themselves. We have the Member for Inkster right now, jumping up and down in his seat, wanting his own little circus to happen. We all listened to what he had to say but, of course, he doesn't want to listen to what anyone else had to say.

There was an attack on the public insurance company, Manitoba Public Insurance company. This, of course, was brought in by Ed Schreyer, one of the greatest Manitobans as voted by the people by Manitoba. What was the real focus of creating a public insurance corporation here in the province? The real reason to create that is that millions of dollars were going down east to the private-for-profit insurance companies down in southern Ontario. The

real focus of the Schreyer government was to keep those monies in the province of Manitoba so that the people of Manitoba would benefit from that.

\* (10:50)

Now the fact that we have the lowest rates in Manitoba—pardon me—in North America, around insurance of our automobiles is just really a result of good management, is a result of an organization that said, let's do the best by the people of Manitoba. We've seen rebates, Mr. Speaker. We've seen all kinds of positive changes around this.

Again, we all know that the real agenda of the members opposite is to privatize public insurance, just like they gave away MTS. This was something for the people of Manitoba to benefit and not only did they give away MTS—you want to talk about outrageous appointments—the former premier, Gary Filmon, now sits on the board of MTS. So not only did they give it away to their friends and to themselves, they've also appointed the former premier who orchestrated all of this.

So, if you want to see an example of how a good public corporation can fall into the hands of private-for-profit—also MTS, I think, is on the verge of leaving Manitoba altogether, being scooped up in the private-for-profit world even further, and then everything will be gone from Manitoba, including the good paying jobs that remain here. So we've already seen what members opposite want to do.

When we talk about outrageous appointments, when we look at, again, the Sharon Carstairs example is, of course, very good, going to the Senate. We know that the Member for River Heights sits in this House simply because that phone call never came for him, Mr. Speaker, and that's why he's sitting here today waiting for the call that never came.

I think we've also seen some pretty awful attacks on the integrity of the people who are chairing the boards, Mr. Speaker. People who have brought tremendous skills. We see the boards running very well. We see very good skills in these people. We see a professionalism that is not being questioned, except by those who have ulterior motives to destroy the boards. We see that a lot of women are chairing these boards. So I don't know if it's not only an attack on the integrity of the people, maybe it's an attack on women having positions of power right here in Manitoba.

When we talk about rates, Mr. Speaker, my friend, the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) was letting me know that a family he knows in Toronto is trying to insure a Pontiac, not a big sports car type vehicle, for one of their sons in Toronto, and the rate there is \$6,300 a year. So when we talk about the comparison of rates, I know someone on the other side of the House, I think it was the Member for Carman (Mr. Pedersen), called out about how good rates are in Ontario and how there's no need for rebates from private-for-profit, I think he should understand what the rates are when he actually makes statements like that.

When we talk about the integrity of the boards, again, they have to appear before the Public Utilities Board once a year. There are annual reports which are made public, Mr. Speaker. There are all sorts of ways for individuals to get any information that they need about the boards. Also, when changes are made in rates, when changes are made in services, et cetera, they again go before the Public Utilities Board.

So I don't know if the PUB is just something that members opposite forgot to attack today, but it's very important to know that these boards do report to the people of Manitoba on a daily basis by the services that they provide. They report on an annual basis, do their annual report. They go in front of the PUB to talk about the annual report. They go in front of the PUB to talk about any changes that they may be making. So, again, there's no need for the public circus that the members of the Liberal Party want to create here.

When we look at Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, the commission provides exceptional values to Manitobans through operational efficiencies that make it one of the most efficient liquor jurisdictions in the country. At 10.3 percent, the commission's administrative expenses are the lowest in Canada, that's the lowest in Canada, Mr. Speaker. Now maybe members opposite don't like to have those stats put on the record, but they are important to put on the record for people to understand.

The mission of the Liquor Control Commission is to regulate, distribute, sell beverage alcohol, generating revenue for Manitobans within a framework of social responsibility. That's social responsibility, Mr. Speaker. So, profit is not the biggest thing that happens there, but rather acting in a socially responsible way to make sure that people

will be safe. We've seen lots of good ads about not drinking and driving. They have on their bags the importance of pregnant women not drinking while they are pregnant. So, those are two examples of the social responsibility that we see. As well, we see them giving to many charities. We see them giving to many good organizations throughout our province.

When we look at their corporate values, again, social responsibility is No. 1; importance of people fostering a positive workplace by working together as a team toward common goals; integrity and fairness; develop respectful and ethical relationships—and the Member for Inkster is attacking Carmen Neufeld, Mr. Speaker, even as I am speaking now. Shame on him. They have service excellence where they provide superior service to our customers, partners and co-workers; change, they embrace change and encourage our employees to be innovative and creative.

When we talk about the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, again, they report annually to the PUB. Any changes are reported to the PUB. They are guided by the following governing principles: leadership and stewardship; overseas business conduct; provide strategic leadership and direction to management; empowerment and accountability—I know I'm using words members opposite don't understand—delegate authority levels to ensure the corporation is operated effectively.

When we talk about Manitoba Public Insurance, the universal program of MPI, again is reviewed by the PUB. We know that Manitoba Public Insurance's record of cost-effective provision of insurance is outstanding. It, again, is the best in Canada. We know that they are committed to customers' interests and, again, we use the example of the announcement made a few weeks ago about renewing your driver's licence every five years instead of every one year. There's electronic renewal, Mr. Speaker, so, reaching out to the people who need their services. They operate in a fiscally responsible and cost-effective manner. They conduct their affairs responsibly and professionally.

There's no need to privatize the corporations as all members opposite would like, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud of the way that the corporations are serving Manitobans, not only through providing good service but also providing all sorts of support for very, very worthy and needy causes throughout our province. I think that Manitobans understand the good job that's being done, respect the good job that's

being done, appreciate the good job that's being done, and that's why we have so many Manitobans working at these corporations, often making their contribution through the work that they do, a lifelong contribution. We know many people begin and work their entire working lives in one of these corporations, and hats off to them for the good work they do.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden):** You know, the present member just started off her presentation by saying that—I think the first thing I heard come out of her mouth was: I don't understand. And she would have maintained a great deal of credibility if she had quit and sat down right there.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is about dealing with appointments in Crown corporations, and a number of the issues and comments that I've heard from across the floor have got nothing to do with the bill that's before the House right now.

Mr. Speaker, there are many Manitobans leaving Manitoba, as the member pointed out from the government side. Socially responsible ads in regard to the Liquor Commission of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When this matter is again before the House, the debate will remain open.

\* (11:00)

## RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 24—Increased Aboriginal Involvement in the Economy

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being 11 a.m., we will move on to resolutions and we'll deal with Resolution 24, Increased Aboriginal Involvement in the Economy.

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen),

WHEREAS there are over 150,000 Aboriginal people living in the Province of Manitoba, making up in excess of 14 percent of the total population; and

WHEREAS with the medium age of Aboriginal people is less than 25, a full decade younger than the medium age of all Manitobans which represents a valuable opportunity for the Aboriginal population in Manitoba and the Manitoba economy; and

WHEREAS everyone should have the opportunity to take advantage of Manitoba's prosperity and economic growth; and

WHEREAS Aboriginal economic initiatives encouraged by the provincial government are wide and highly diverse; and

WHEREAS training initiatives are key to developing employment and local economic initiatives among Manitoba Aboriginal people; and

WHEREAS the Province has shown its commitment to training opportunities for Aboriginal people through initiatives like the University College of the North, the Manitoba Strategic Plan on Strengthening Aboriginal Participation in the Economy, Spirit Fire, and training for health-care professionals; and

WHEREAS projects like Aboriginal Set-Aside for the Red River floodway expansion and Manitoba Hydro's Pre Project training have been important for Aboriginal people in accessing training and job experience; and

WHEREAS the provincial government's commitment to First Nations people through the First Nations Economic Development Fund will provide an excellent opportunity to continue developing First Nations economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS the Métis economic development initiative discussed in the 2007 Speech from the Throne will be a further commitment to establishing sustainable Aboriginal economies in Manitoba;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba supports the efforts of the Provincial Government in continuing to support the development of Aboriginal people's economies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the efforts of the Provincial Government in continuing to develop additional training initiatives focussed on Aboriginal people to provide Aboriginal people with the skills needed to take full advantage of Manitoba's prosperity.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there agreement of the House to bring forward this resolution as printed? *[Agreed]*

*WHEREAS there are over 150,000 Aboriginal people living in the Province of Manitoba, making up in excess of 14 percent of the total population; and*

*WHEREAS with the median age of Aboriginal people is less than 25, a full decade younger than the median age of all Manitobans which represents a valuable opportunity for the Aboriginal population in Manitoba and the Manitoba economy; and*

*WHEREAS everyone should have the opportunity to take advantage of Manitoba's prosperity and economic growth; and*

*WHEREAS Aboriginal economic initiatives encouraged by the provincial government are wide and highly diverse; and*

*WHEREAS training initiatives are key to developing employment and local economic initiatives among Manitoba Aboriginal peoples; and*

*WHEREAS the Province has shown its commitment to training opportunities for Aboriginal people through initiatives like the University College of the North, the Manitoba Strategic Plan on Strengthening Aboriginal Participation in the Economy, Fire Spirit, and training for health-care professionals; and*

*WHEREAS projects like Aboriginal Set-Aside for the Red River floodway expansion and Manitoba Hydro's Pre Project Training, have been important for Aboriginal people in accessing training and job experience; and*

*WHEREAS the provincial government's commitment to First Nations people through the First Nations Economic Development Fund will provide an excellent opportunity to continue developing First Nations economic opportunity; and*

*WHEREAS the Métis economic development initiative discussed in the 2007 Speech from the Throne will be a further commitment to establishing sustainable Aboriginal economies in Manitoba;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the efforts of the provincial government in continuing to support the development of Aboriginal people's economies; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the efforts of the provincial government in continuing to develop additional training initiatives focussed on Aboriginal people to help provide Aboriginal people with the skills needed to take full advantage of Manitoba's prosperity.*

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable Member for Selkirk, seconded by the honourable Member for Flin Flon,

WHEREAS there are—dispense? Dispense.

**Mr. Dewar:** Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise to speak to this resolution. I think it is an important one. I look forward to all-party support on this important resolution, calling for and supporting our government's initiatives on increasing Aboriginal involvement in our economy. It was in January 2007 I attended an Aboriginal economic development conference in Saskatoon, along with the Minister of Culture (Mr. Robinson) and with Aboriginal people from across the nation, there to talk about ways to improve Aboriginal economic opportunities, involvement in the economy, to talk about current successes, to talk about where governments could go, what role governments could play in improving and increasing involvement in the economy by Aboriginal people.

I had the pleasure to listen to a very powerful, I think a very important speaker and that was Chief Clarence Louie, who is the chief of the Osoyoos Indian band in British Columbia. Now, Chief Clarence Louie, he's been recognized for his work and received many honours. For example, *The Economist* magazine, *PROFIT* magazine, *Maclean's* magazine recognize him as one of the 50 Canadians to watch, Mr. Speaker. He's an individual who understands economic development is the way of the future for Aboriginal people and, under his direction, the band has become a multifaceted corporation that owns and manages numerous successful businesses.

In addition to the businesses, the band is currently enjoying social economic development that is improving the community's social, educational and health needs.

There is virtually no employment, Mr. Speaker. The band every year increases its revenue and decreases its need for social assistance. He created and manages over eight businesses. One is the golf course, a construction company, a forestry company, the largest vineyard in Canada, a convenience store and a residential and agricultural leasing company.

He made a very important point that the federal government, when they provide assistance to Aboriginal people in this nation, 95 percent of the financial assistance that they provide goes to social programs and only 6 percent, Mr. Speaker, goes to economic development. He would like to see that number reversed. It's his opinion that successful businesses are the way to improve the lives of Aboriginal people.

Now he's kind of a—he definitely is a controversial figure if you've ever heard him speak, and I encourage people to just google him and go on some of the Web pages that he has that are highlighting his career. There was a very interesting story on CBC a number of years ago—I think it was last year, and I was actually just watching it again last night. You'll see what I mean about this individual, that he's very tough-talking and controversial, but clearly, clearly, Mr. Speaker, incredible success story.

He believes that the economic future is in the hands of Aboriginal people, but granted he does have certain advantages there than you would find, say, in the northern reserves in Manitoba. Of course, you could not build a golf course on Red Sucker Lake, but there are other things. I want to speak of some of the things perhaps that we're doing. Mr. Speaker, I had the chance to participate just on Friday, October 29, at the ribbon cutting and the grand re-opening of the redevelopment and expansion of the South Beach Casino and Resort.

As members will know, the Filmon government in the mid-90s formed a committee led by Harvey Bostrom, and his job at that time was to investigate the possibility of increased Aboriginal gaming opportunities in the province. His main recommendation was that there could be up to five casinos, Aboriginal casinos licensed in Manitoba. Well the Filmon government, as we know, did nothing with that report. They did absolutely nothing with that report, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very pleased, when our government came to power, that we started to move on that.

There is currently, as members will know, a casino operating in The Pas and there's one operating in the South Beach area on the Brokenhead Ojibway First Nation, which I'm proud to say, Mr. Speaker, is in my constituency. I heard the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) just about two weeks ago saying that the Doer government built a casino on the east side of the lake, and I'm assuming he's talking about this casino.

Well, it was not the Doer government that built this casino. It was a consortium of Aboriginal bands in that area. He couldn't even give the Aboriginal people credit for building this facility, for developing this economic opportunity in that area, and now we see he's opposed to Aboriginal people running casinos; it's okay for the government. I might add, when he was the chief of staff for the Filmon

government, they built the two casinos that are currently in Winnipeg. They brought in all the VLTs that we have here currently in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

So it's okay for the government to run, it's okay for the government to get involved in gaming opportunities, but when it comes to Aboriginal people, no way, Mr. Speaker. He wouldn't even give them the credit, but this has turned out to be quite a success. Currently, there are over 250 people working in that casino complex and over 65 percent of them are Aboriginal.

What they're prepared to do, and as I've said, even though it's difficult for, for example, communities like Red Sucker Lake or Shamattawa, some of these northern reserves to have the same opportunities there, but the consortium that's operating the South Beach Casino is sharing their revenues with remote First Nations communities. In the next eight or so years it's anticipated that close to \$10 million will flow from that casino up into the First Nations, some of the more remote First Nations in this province. So I'm proud of that.

\* (11:10)

I know that there are a number of things I could raise. I know there are other people that wish to speak. We've announced, of course, the first and only Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce was launched here in Manitoba. It was led by the Premier.

Now the issue of the Aboriginal Set-Aside for individuals who wish to put together a business to work on the floodway, Mr. Speaker. We know the floodway project is currently underway, and I believe there's been close to 20 tenders. It's estimated that \$35 million has been awarded to—the majority of them are Métis or Métis joint ventures. All of these contracts have been completed on budget. The opposition leader is opposed. I believe he said during the leaders' debate on CJOB: I don't think we should have set-asides; I don't think we need them, frankly.

Well, that is not a step in the right direction. Earlier this month—I know the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (Mr. Lathlin) will probably speak to this—is that there was a First Peoples Economic Growth Fund recently announced, Mr. Speaker. I know you'll elaborate on that. So, not only that, announced that our government will be working with the Métis in this province. I'm pleased to be involved with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs on that committee—*[interjection]* Well, the member said: This is my

20th anniversary. I'm a member of the Manitoba Métis Federation, Mr. Speaker.

So, we know, Mr. Speaker, that our government is committed to increasing Aboriginal involvement in the economy. I look forward to both the opposition parties in this Chamber speaking to this issue and, as well, supporting this resolution. Thank you very much.

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa):** I, too, would like to put some words on the record in response to the resolution that's been put forward. Increased Aboriginal involvement in the economy—I know, through my critic area, through Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, that a number of groups that I've met with and have become an advocate for, support this, and I support it wholeheartedly. I believe that the people that I speak to believe in a handup and not a handout. I believe that there are a number of very strong leaders in Manitoba, within the Aboriginal community, who are making great strides in this area.

In 2006, Stats Canada numbers indicated that there were 175,000 Aboriginal people in Manitoba, or 15 percent of the population. Mr. Speaker, this is a 40 percent increase since 1996: 57 percent are First Nation; 41 percent, Métis; 1 percent, Inuit; and less than 2 percent, other.

Manitoba has the youngest Aboriginal population, and the medium age is 24 versus 40 for non-Aboriginals. Manitoba has the fourth-largest Aboriginal population behind Ontario, B.C. and Alberta.

In Canada, 29.3 percent of Aboriginal people are in homes in need of major repair. These are stats from Stats Canada, Mr. Speaker, that were shared at a Stats Canada Aboriginal conference in March of this year.

I think that those numbers are a good platform to begin my presentation today. I believe that, as I said earlier, Aboriginal people, whether they be First Nation, Métis, Inuit or off-reserve Aboriginals, they all believe in looking for opportunities that can sustain their livelihood. They believe that there are opportunities that can be taken by this government and by business to support those needs and those initiatives.

It was interesting to hear the comments regarding casinos, and I believe that is an important part of economic development for First Nations or Aboriginal people. But I believe that has to be

broadened, the scope has to be broader, and look at opportunities that can ensure that fishing, forestry and business development opportunities are also fostered within these communities, Mr. Speaker.

I believe that there are some challenges that need to be addressed, and I think this government has a role to play, a leadership role, in making sure that these communities do receive the support that they need to meet these challenges.

Housing—Duck Bay, Waterhen. In the House recently, we raised questions regarding a substantial amount of money—\$60 million that was received from the federal government to the Province, specifically for off-reserve housing, that failed to get into the hands of the people that need these homes. You cannot build economic-development initiatives if you do not live in a community that has proper housing and proper infrastructure supports, Mr. Speaker.

The Pas, a few years back, I went to a Take Back the Night walk and I walked with a woman who said, there's just no public housing available for me to stay in this community. These are individuals who are wanting to make a difference in society, who have ideas and dreams. They want these opportunities to be fulfilled, Mr. Speaker, but we have to be looking at the big picture and all of the needs that are required.

Education, I believe, is the key component to making sure that these dreams are realized. I know that, in the northern communities, education levels are at times lower than elsewhere in the province; I think that we need to be looking at ways to ensure that our young people do graduate. We need to be looking at enrolment numbers; we need to be looking at ways to ensure that children remain in school.

There are things that take children off course. This is not only in Aboriginal communities but in all communities, that take people off course. We need to ensure that those supports are available to keep people in school and to ensure that they do receive their education.

University College of the North—the president, Denise Henning, is doing amazing things with that university. I believe that a recent partnership with the Northern Manitoba Sector Council and looking at ways to ensure that young people remain in school and are receiving an education and partnering with the industry is key. It's estimated that there are 600 trade shortages in the north. I believe that



Manitoba Hydro alone has over 200 vacancies in the trades.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed. We're looking for leadership from this government. It's nice to have a resolution put forward in the House today to speak to this issue but, really, we need to see action from this government. We need to see some tangible results—*[interjection]*—exactly, less talk, more action.

Industry plays a role in this, and I believe they're at the table. They understand that they have to receive the support from government; they need to take advantage of the resources that are available in northern and remote communities.

I understand that Inco has targeted \$80 billion in a worldwide growth strategy. If Manitoba cannot get or meet its human-resource crises in mining, for example, the growth will occur elsewhere in the world. This is a wake-up call for Manitobans. It's a wake-up call for this government that, if we don't take these initiatives and move forward, then the industries will leave us, and they will look elsewhere for governments and people that will work with them.

In speaking to the MMF, the Manitoba Métis Federation's economic development initiative—the member earlier spoke about this being announced in a speech in 2007. My understanding is that the federal government has provided the MMF with a framework for economic activity or development.

My understanding is that the government here provincially has been on the sidelines. I believe they have not been meeting proactively with MMF on this file. My understanding is that the Premier and the Minister for Aboriginal and Northern Affairs spoke about this framework at the AGA recently, but not much has been done in this area.

I'll give you some hints and some ideas that might encourage a framework to be developed. There are seven regions within MMF, and I believe that each of those regions have specific needs and requirements. I think each of those regions should have a business-development officer in those locations. The people know what the people need within those communities. When you have a business-development officer who understands the community, understands the culture, understands the needs of that community, then that will best meet the needs of that community.

That business-development officer can then work with the community as well as government and assure that the programs and services are available for the community, so that there's not stalls or delays in making sure that these activities occur.

\* (11:20)

I know that the government has spoken in the past about a community economic development lens, and I think that that is supposed to be used to look at all programs and services that are being offered through government. I think that's a key piece that this government has failed to implement and failed to put forward. I think, if you don't put a community economic development lens on services and programs that are available, communities miss out.

I know communities that have printing companies. I know that they have food services. I know that they have different types of tradespeople who can help provide services and supports to government services in those communities, and there's no link. There's no use of that lens. I think that these are just a couple of ideas that I believe this government has missed the mark. I believe that the communities are asking for help. I think this is a step forward by putting early resolution forward like this. But we're looking for action. We're looking for some outcomes, Mr. Speaker, and so are the people that are directly affected who need this government to give them hope, not false hope.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Oscar Lathlin (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to get up in the House to add on to my colleague's, the Member for Selkirk's resolution.

I want to start off though by saying to the opposition that since we've been in government we have shown tremendous leadership in terms of our program and services development for Aboriginal people, First Nations people. We have shown tremendous leadership, and I like to give the opposition members a couple of hints as to how they have been constantly getting in the way of Aboriginal development in this province.

First of all, we have built the casinos, like my colleague has said. The Filmon government commissioned a study when I was in opposition and they were in government, and that commission recommended the establishment of up to five casinos. Just before an election they did some polling. The poll, of course, was pandering to their

right-wing constituency and, of course, the constituents said no to the establishment of Aboriginal casinos.

I remember the former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs getting up in the House and saying that there will be no Aboriginal casinos, and that was the end of that. So that was one way that this party across the way has always been getting in the way of Aboriginal development.

The other hint is, even on winter roads, they've criticized us for spending too much money on winter roads and, as you know, Mr. Speaker, if we connect the communities even by winter roads but preferably by all-weather roads, that would boost economic development in the First Nations Aboriginal communities in a big way. No, the opposition Tories across the way opposed that too. They criticized us.

The last hint I want to give the member across the way is at one election, I can't remember when it was now, two elections ago maybe, they were campaigning opposing the establishment of the University College of the North. I could never understand that, Mr. Speaker, why they would oppose the establishment of a university college in the north, you know, which we've proven now, as young as the university is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this University College of the North is helping northerners, is helping Aboriginal people and those Aboriginal people will end up contributing to society.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to tell you a little story, tell the House a little story of, you know, how Aboriginal economic development is so important. In my community—by the way the member says she was in The Pas, I don't know where she went, maybe to the A&W drive-in, I don't know. But, if she were there today, she would count more than 40 new housing units that have been built in conjunction with the University College of the North. We have shown tremendous leadership, Mr. Speaker.

Let me tell you a story, and I'll be short. Where I come from, OCN, 35 years ago, in the history of people is a very short time. Thirty-five years ago, we had the first high school graduate from OCN in the local town school system, one in 1972. Since then our numbers have just skyrocketed.

In 1975 we opened up the Otineka Mall on the reserve, a 200,000-square-foot shopping mall. While we were building that, we were criticized by our friends and neighbours across the river because

before that they would say, get off your butts and start working and be productive citizens like the rest of us. Mr. Speaker, we took their advice literally because two years after that, we were building a 200,000 square foot shopping centre. Then our friends and neighbours came back and said, no, no, that's too big. That's not what we meant, I mean, that kind of business is for us, not for you guys. We didn't listen. We went ahead anyway.

Today, OCN has become the second largest employer in The Pas area, second only to Tolko. We employ a large number of our own people in our businesses but you know, Mr. Speaker, we also employ about 35 percent to 40 percent non-Aboriginal people in our businesses. Before, you would see all the members from OCN go across the bridge because that's where the commerce was taking place. Now, if you go to OCN and if you stood by the bridge at 8 o'clock in the morning, you know what, you'd see people coming across north to OCN. You know where they're going? They're going to work for OCN businesses and social service agencies.

That's why I say, Mr. Speaker, economic development for First Nations people is so important. Let me talk about what we have done. I heard my colleague talk about several of our initiatives that we started. I'd like to talk about the pre-project, hydro training money, \$60 million cost-shared by the federal government, Province and Hydro. I'm told that today, or when we finish the program, we will have trained some 1,400 people from up north; northerners, Aboriginal people, First Nations people. Those people will end up getting all kinds of opportunities to go into employment or even to go into business. That's what we've done.

The Aboriginal Set-Aside was mentioned by my colleague and I need not go into that.

The First Peoples Economic Growth Fund opened up for business last week actually. The fund is an independent, not-for-profit corporation developed jointly by our government and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. The Province has committed some \$20 million over five years to the fund. That fund offers all kinds of opportunities for First Nations entrepreneurs for loans, business, plan assistance, training assistance and other services. This unique and creative initiative will help foster new businesses in reserves across the province.

\* (11:30)

Mr. Speaker, I want to end my comment by saying that we will continue to show leadership on this side of the House in working in partnership with Aboriginal people, because we know that that's the way out. As an Aboriginal person, I know that becoming educated and participating in the economy of this country, of this province, is a way out for our people. We have shown that already, and all we need to do now is move forward and come up with more ideas.

Mr. Speaker, I think the private sector is getting it now. They know that the Aboriginal population is growing very fast and they're short of skilled workers. So they are now starting to look to Aboriginal people to fill their vacancies. Whereas before our people would be rejected, now they're being accepted by industry to work in their companies.

So I urge all members to unanimously support this resolution because I think it's the right way to go. Thank you.

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** I want to put a few things on the record in regard to the resolution brought forward by the Member for Selkirk.

We do know that, on this side of the House, there are a number of issues in regard to the Aboriginal involvement in the community. Although I don't have a reserve in my constituency, I do have a large number of Métis people. In fact, the people from St. Laurent is one of the largest areas that have a Métis background. Certainly, they've done a fantastic job in showing the leadership and their framework that they've set up. In fact, as I look to that organization, the number of things that they've accomplished in a very short time since forming their organization, in fact, working with their organization certainly brings a great deal of pride.

I'm in St. Laurent a large number of times. This past summer, we just had a new drop-in centre that was established through initiatives through the federal government in partnership with the provincial government. I know that anything they can do to help educate, help foster, help encourage self-worth, self-esteem, certainly goes a long way.

MMF has asked the Province to support development of seven development officers for each of their seven regions, which would go a long way in establishing those people in their workplace in order to ensure that they have those right people in place. We need a government that's going to show that

leadership, that's going to put those in place. In fact, the Member for Selkirk referred to the Throne Speech. Nothing has happened since then. We certainly need to get those people in place and certainly need to ensure that those officers, in fact, do become a reality instead of just lip service.

They also need someone to understand their businesses and challenges that they face. They need officers that are familiar with the communities, their regions. I know that the people in St. Laurent, in particular—in fact, I was in Selkirk this past summer as well, and a number of Métis people and Aboriginal people that were there did talk to me about having more people in the grass roots, people that would actually be there to lobby them, give them advice that they need in order to make sure that they have the tools in place to make sure that their businesses are successful and not set up for failure.

I was actually chairman of the Neicom Development Corporation which was located in Riverton. I was representing Rockwood at the time, and we did put a significant amount of funding in place for the Aboriginal people, businesses that showed the opportunity to help not only the community in which they lived, but also the community in which they lived in and wanted to see grow and prosper. A number of those businesses are still going, I'm very proud to say, as a result of some of that funding that was put forward by the federal government and the provincial government. I happen to be there during the time the Conservatives were in power. So we've certainly seen a number of growths in businesses that took place, as a result of that funding that was put into place.

The reeve from Fisher Branch was also on that board with me. She was a great advocate for the people of Peguis and those people that were in that area and certainly brought an awful lot of expertise to the field and to the table for us, in order for us to see what actually was out there for businesses wanting to grow and prosper.

As a result of that, we did follow up a number of initiatives that were part of that funding, to ensure the business plan was in place. When we look at any business—and being a past business owner—we want to make sure that they have a solid business plan, no matter whether that's a septic business, a livestock equipment business, a floral shop, a number of those that were actually presented to us. We needed to give them the tools in order to make sure that that did become a reality.

I know the challenges which also are facing a number of the Métis people are the forestry and the fishery. We look at the Swan River and also the Thompson area; there's a number of people that are seeking to get into that field. I know the people from the training centre in Ashern have done a fantastic job in helping get construction workers out into the workplace.

We know this is a population that's growing. It's a very young population that we see, that is going to be in the forefront of our next generation and generations to come. So we need to do everything we can and we will, on this side of the House, ensure that we give them those tools in order to make sure that they can grow and prosper in a way that they're going to be the next leaders, the next generation of our province of Manitoba and make sure that they, in fact, are able to sustain themselves in a way that's going to be meaningful.

We do all want to contribute to society in a way that is beneficial. Whenever we look at these tools, we need to make sure that whatever we do in government is done through consultation. We've talked about this an awful lot and sometimes I feel that, by just talking to the leaders in those communities—yes, they've been elected by those people, but we also need to get to the grassroots and talk to those people who are making those decisions on a daily basis and the information that's been put forward because, a lot of times, we have little cliques. Sometimes those cliques don't get the information out to them in a way that, by being in touch with the grassroots, it's so important.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I know there's a number of people that do want to speak to this resolution. We only have an hour, so I'll leave it at that, but I do want to make sure, just in closing, that we don't miss an opportunity to talk about the east side.

We have an opportunity on the east side, even though the government has decided they want to go on the west side. Those economic benefits, the economic spinoff that we could have had—I believe there were some 15 communities that wanted to see the towers, the east-side development go forward. I think 15 or 16. That would have been a huge impact.

Unfortunately, the government decided not to take that route, but that's a decision they're going to have to live with. We've been very vocal on our side in regard to the transmission line going on the east side.

Also we want to make sure that—I just touched on it briefly, and that was on the education process. We need to ensure that the education is there for our next generation, the generations to come, for all sectors. We have to have an education system that's going to be in place in order to ensure that all our generations, not just the Aboriginal people, but everybody in this province has an opportunity to a good education, an education that's going to be there in order to benefit our youth and those generations to come.

With that, I thank you, the Member for Selkirk, for bringing this debate to the House. It's a very important debate for all members not only on the government side, but also on opposition side. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to put a few words on record on the resolution put forward by the Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar).

As we know, Mr. Speaker, there are 150,000 Aboriginal people in Manitoba, which means approximately 14 percent of the total population. We do know that Aboriginal people have a high birth rate, so that figure can only go up. Fourteen percent will become 15 and will become 20 eventually.

As well, the median age of Aboriginal people in the province as of 2006 was 23.8 years. The median age of the rest of the population, non-Aboriginal, was 40.2, a difference of 16.4 years. The Aboriginal population is, basically speaking, a young population and a young population obviously needs jobs, needs education much more so than an older population.

Our government views the First Peoples of this land as a key part and an integral part of our overall economic development and strategy. This was not always the case in the past, Mr. Speaker. When the opposition was in power in the dark days of the '90s, northern Manitoba was ignored. They imposed user fees on our northern patient-transportation system; they basically ignored road maintenance and construction. They walked away from the Hudson Bay Railway; left it to the market forces along with, of course, their federal cousins. They also did not put very much money in improving airport terminals or airports in general.

\* (11:40)

The very first thing we did in 1999 when this government was elected, Mr. Speaker, was that the

northern MLAs gathered together in a place called Grace Lake airport, somewhat south of The Pas, to have another good look at how we should be operating as a government to make sure that Aboriginal people are thoroughly included and they can finally have their rightful place in the sun. It didn't take us long to isolate four major components or themes that we had to look at, which shouldn't surprise anyone because there are themes all over this land, all over this nation. The first point that needed to be addressed—major theme—was housing, followed by health; educational training, which is part of the focus of today's resolution; transportation was critical; and economic development. Again, today we're focussing on economic development as well as education and training.

But let's take one little look at housing, Mr. Speaker, because that seems to be one of those persistent challenges and problems that face northerners, particularly people on reserves. I was in South Indian Lake a couple of months ago with the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Lathlin) at a place called South Indian Lake, one of my favourite places in northern Manitoba. The new reservation—their reserve is called O-Pipon-Na-Piwin First Nation.

Chief Chris Baker is a very progressive chief. I talked with Chief Baker and Mike Dumas, one of the councillors—and numerous other people—because Mike Dumas and some of the other people have actually been students in Frontier Collegiate Institute, a school that I had taught at for 20-some years. They were so proud of showing us one of their projects which was a sawmill. The Aboriginal and Northern Affairs people had put a modest amount of money into this sawmill and it provided a couple of trainers, and you could tell with these trainers they were rugged, grizzled northerners. So, we felt at home. These weren't city slickers. These were northerners teaching northerners and that gave us a good feeling.

We were watching how these young men, particularly—some young women, but mainly young men—were regaining a sense of pride because they were building their own homes. They weren't waiting for INAC to act, the slow and ponderous as molasses movement of INAC, they were just doing it themselves. They were cutting the wood, slicing the wood into boards, whatever you do with wood to make houses, and they were building their own homes. It engendered a huge degree of pride in the community. People were cleaning up the community,

they were fixing up things, making the community look better. Also, they were building traditional homes from solid, square chunks of wood rather than, you know, the board construction.

Another thing that I found particularly interesting was how innovative the people of South Indian Lake were. The young men had made a deal, I think, with Rattan Mine and they had acquired a number of telephone—not telephone, I guess what would be electricity poles made out of cedar. They were just going to be dumped anyway, and they sliced them up and they made cedar siding for the home, beautiful cedar siding. So creative, innovative, didn't take an awful lot of money, and yet it really created a lot of jobs and interest, and it beautified the community. I thought that was a wonderful initiative in South Indian Lake.

Of course, it was great to talk with former students because in 1972 I came to Frontier Collegiate Institute and I taught a number of those students that are now chiefs, or councillors, or whatever in northern Manitoba. That was the first year, 1972, as the minister had pointed out, the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. That was the first year that Opaskwayak Cree Nation graduated a student, 1972. That was also the time when the buzz and the rumour in northern Manitoba—and I remember it well—was the death of Helen Betty Osborne, and even people on the street pointing out who they thought the murders were.

It was a very kind of dark time of our lives. But that gives you the kind of a sense of the atmosphere in northern Manitoba at the time. That has changed quite a bit. It has changed enormously and we know that education is key to that. People need to be educated. Northerners need education. That's why it's astounding that some members opposite would oppose the University College of the North, our own degree granting institution, yet the former Tory leader actually was not in favour of the University College of the North.

It's appropriate, I think, to develop this college, very appropriate, at the same time we're developing Hydro, at the same time there are new mining ventures in northern Manitoba.

There's a sense of things happening and things are happening in northern Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. Dam building is proceeding. Hydro is going to be in great need of trained people because Wuskwatim is well underway, that's a 200 megawatt dam; Keeyask is starting to be on the drawing board; possibly

Notigi, certainly, Conawapa, a large major dam in the same line as Limestone, a dam of over 1,250 kilowatts. We need training programs, and we have training programs. As in the past, Mr. Speaker, for example with Limestone, a lot of northern people were trained when Limestone was built.

I'll give you an example of Grand Chief Sidney Garrioch, and I think even you, Mr. Speaker, were very much involved I believe with new careers and the training of northern Manitobans in the Limestone project. So we have a history of working in the north. This government has a history of working with people of the north.

There is a Hydro Northern Training and Employment Initiative, HNTEI, and this initiative involves some \$60.3 million with partnership from Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro, the federal government and seven Aboriginal partners. This is hugely exciting for us in northern Manitoba. It deals with pre-construction training to prepare northern Aboriginal individuals to qualify for employment on Hydro construction jobs as well as increase individual employment mobility in Manitoba's skilled labour.

There have been some 1,600 participants. Success rate is well over 60 percent. So we're talking it's somewhere between 1,000 to 1,400 people have been trained, and that can only be good for northern Manitoba and can only be good for all of Manitoba. That's 1,000 people who would not have been trained before under the former government, who would be sitting idle probably because there was no focus in northern Manitoba, and there was a real blind spot towards Aboriginal people by the former government.

I could talk about many initiatives and programs that we've developed. I will just mention a few of them. There's a community-based training program. There's a Métis educational development strategy. In fact, I should point out that, talking with the Métis people at their last mining convention, I listened very intently to David Chartrand as he talked about how the Métis people want to be involved in economic development in northern Manitoba, particularly focussed on mining.

I've talked with some of the Saskatchewan people, Aboriginal people, because in northern Saskatchewan some of the Aboriginal bands have grouped together and have formed companies that actually are actively engaged in exploration or in developing mines or in providing services for mines.

Also, Employment Manitoba is partnering with Opaskwayak Cree Nation for an essential skills carpentry upgrading course. There is a Winnipeg partnership agreement which puts \$75 million over five years into the city and about \$19 million of that is for programs for Aboriginal people.

I could talk about many other programs, Mr. Speaker. I could talk, for example, about small initiatives that have huge consequences. One of them is in my own town of Cranberry Portage where we developed the world's largest Teepee with a very modest amount of money. It brought in a lot of business from outside the province, and it brought in a lot of tourist business. I'm very proud of Lisa Camblin and Musky, also known as Irvin Head, who were the two people who spearheaded this.

So there is a sense of optimism in northern Manitoba. There is a sense of optimism among Aboriginal people because this government is really trying to give Aboriginal people the rightful place where they belong—in the sun. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to this resolution.

I first of all want to pay tribute to the many, many excellent Aboriginal entrepreneurs that we have in Manitoba. There are far, far too many to list. They are a growing and important part of our economy, our culture, who we are as Manitobans, and I want to make sure that that is recognized and that we are here today to try and improve the opportunities to advance the potential for young Aboriginal people who are interested in being entrepreneurs and participating in economic development. There are huge opportunities here, but there are areas, clearly, where there is need for government support.

One of the initiatives which I brought forward when I was at the federal level was the Community Access Program which helped to put in place Internet access associated with opportunities for learning and entrepreneurship in communities. There is an ongoing need, and we have campaigned for a number of years to make sure that there are technical and educational entrepreneurship centres in communities throughout Manitoba. I believe that these are very important and badly needed, particularly in northern and more remote communities but not certainly exclusively. They should be around all of Manitoba.

\* (11:50)

There are opportunities in the current economy, which we are not taking advantage of in terms of the new economy as well as in the traditional economy. We need to be doing all we can to support efforts throughout Manitoba to grow the opportunities for Aboriginal people in their own communities and throughout the province.

I think it is significant that, at the federal level under the Harper government, it's important that there be renewal of the Community Access Program and, hopefully, the debate in this election, the debate today will lead to continued support for the Community Access Program because of its importance to everyone but, I believe, particularly for Aboriginal people and their opportunities.

When I was at the federal level and involved in economic development, I helped to begin the Vision Quest Conference, which has highlighted the Aboriginal entrepreneurs, their achievements. It's become a very successful conference held once a year and is a real example of what is happening and what can be done to highlight the opportunities and the successes and develop opportunities for Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

I also want to recognize the contributions in the MLA for Selkirk's own area, the Selkirk and District Community Learning Centre, run by Karen Keppler and her husband. The fact of the matter is that this is playing an important role in providing opportunities for Aboriginal people. They have partnerships with the University of Winnipeg and with other areas. This is a particularly important example in the member's own community of initiative which we need to support and enhance and develop. I'm talking all of us, not selected to one side of this Chamber or another. I mean it is important that all of us here are concerned about Aboriginal entrepreneurs. It is certainly not something which I would hope that the Member for Riel (Ms. Melnick) would get partisan about. This is important for Manitoba, for the future of Manitoba.

Let me also talk a little bit about one of the things which is happening this very week. You know, we've heard of Turtle Island. We know of Turtle Mountain and the area around it is being considered this very week in Québec City for World Heritage designation. Here is an incredible opportunity for developing, understanding the culture of the people in and around the Turtle Mountain area. It is bringing together people from

the Sioux, the Pipestone First Nation, the Canupawakpa First Nation. The Métis people, Dan Gooden [*phonetic*] from the Boissevain area and David Brien who is the tribal chairman with the Turtle Mountain Chippewa tribe in North Dakota, so it's bridging north and south of the border between Canada and the United States.

It is an opportunity to celebrate the history. It is an opportunity for bringing in tourists to one of the significant, long-run, historical locations. There was a major economic corridor that went from the Knife flint deposits along the Knife River, maybe all the way up to Churchill, Mr. Speaker, and so it is a very historic route and historic location. This is an opportunity which is coming before a conference of the International Council on Monuments and Sites which is being held, indeed I believe, as we speak, but the presentation will be in a couple of days.

So there are real opportunities that are all around us. They are opportunities in southern Manitoba and northern Manitoba. I've had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to visit and meet with people in many of the First Nations and Métis communities in northern Manitoba to see the advances that are coming through improved schools in places like Norway House and at the places like Easterville, Chemawawin First Nation.

These schools are having an impact and there are quite a number of new schools and improved educational facilities in First Nations communities. These are having quite an impact on the number of young people graduating from grade 12 and the economic opportunities. It is good to see in the school in Norway House there were, you know, not only some of the things that we would regard as traditional in terms of schooling, but schooling related to economic and entrepreneurial activities.

So I think that this is the right sort of step to foster opportunities which can occur locally in the north to build up the skill base. There is clearly much, much more to be done. There is still too much unemployment, too much poverty. I have called for many years for Stats Canada to include fully, Aboriginal people throughout Manitoba as, sadly, they have not done yet. But certainly, what we need to do is to improve what we are doing to set the bar higher to work with Aboriginal people in First Nations community and the Métis community and the Inuit community in northern Manitoba and set the bar higher and work co-operatively to achieve economic growth which extends to the four corners

of Manitoba and provides opportunities for the future, prosperity for the future for everyone and including Aboriginal people. Thank you.

**Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to speak to the resolution from the Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) on increased Aboriginal involvement in the economy because, and I also want to recognize the number of young entrepreneurs that have been successful in their business ventures and the Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce and their annual job fair, all of these things are very stimulating, I think, to the economy.

When we really look at the number of Aboriginal people in this province—and it is a growing sector in the province and a lot of young people there—there's an opportunity to involve the Aboriginal population in the jobs in the province. But, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that the government is failing in is the ability to have more educational opportunities. We do have some

opportunities such as the centre for Aboriginal human resources, which do wonderful work, but the statistics show that the Aboriginal population is still falling behind in terms of education.

In fact, I just want to quote Mr. Helgason in an article written by Martin Cash in March. He said that there is a serious education deficit and it has to be addressed, said Wayne Helgason, executive director of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. According to Stats Canada data released Tuesday, Manitoba's Aboriginal community has the highest percent of adults without a high school diploma, 41 percent. I think that we need the Department of Education within the provincial government to be a leader here and to show some leadership so that—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have eight minutes remaining.

The hour being 12 noon, we will recess and reconvene at 1:30 p.m.



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Tuesday, September 30, 2008**

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