

Fourth Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

The House met at 10 a.m.

Mr. Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom, know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

House Business

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I ask—would ask for leave to go directly to Bill 217.

Mr. Speaker, I would also ask leave for the member from River Heights to introduce Bill 217 for debate purposes without having the necessity of someone to second the bill.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement for the House to go directly to Bill 217 that's in the name of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) and for—is there leave? *[Agreed]*

And is there agreement for the honourable member of River Heights to introduce the bill without a seconder? *[Agreed]*

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

**Bill 217—The Phosphorus Curtailment Act
(Municipal Act Amended and City of Winnipeg
Charter Amended)**

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 217, The Phosphorus Curtailment Act (Municipal Act Amended and City of Winnipeg Charter Amended); Loi sur la réduction du phosphore (modification de la Loi sur les municipalités et de la Charte de la ville de Winnipeg), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, The Phosphorus Curtailment Act deals with the concentration of phosphorus that's allowed in the effluent coming from municipal lagoons and from the sewage treatment from the city of Winnipeg and other cities which have sewage treatment facilities.

The bill arises out of a broad concern that the amount of phosphorus that is being released in the effluent of sewage lagoons is quite high and is contributing significantly to the phosphorus load in the waterways at the lakes and rivers in Manitoba and contributing to the phosphorus load in Lake Winnipeg.

This concern has been raised with me by a number of people over quite a number of years. We have tried to get good information on phosphorus levels in sewage lagoons and the government have said, well, we're not measuring them. But the measurements that we've been able to find have shown that the phosphorus levels coming out of the effluent when it's released from sewage lagoons are, in fact, often quite high.

And, currently, what happens is that the sewage lagoons are tested to see that the E. coli levels are down to a certain safe level before the water is discharged from the lagoons into the waterways. The problem is that phosphorus itself is not being measured and that the—for the most part, if phosphorus levels are quite high and contributing to the phosphorus load in our lakes and rivers and contributing then to the algal blooms in many of our lakes.

It is clearly a source of phosphorus which needs to be addressed. I have talked to a number of people, municipal leaders. They have said, fine, we need to do this, but treat us in the same bill with the City of Winnipeg and the City of Brandon, so that all municipalities are treated together and have to achieve the same levels. So that is, in fact, what we have done.

We are bringing forward this bill not, on this occasion, with the expectation that it will pass but rather with the feeling that this issue needs to be brought forward, it needs to be debated and some proposals need to be on the table for discussion.

It has been kept quiet and under the surface for too long and it needs to be brought out into the open and discussed. I know that there are some municipal leaders who are already talking and understanding about this and I think that in the city of Carberry, in fact, the water from the lagoon may be spread on fields, which is one option to reduce the amount of phosphorus that gets into the waterways to acceptable levels, because the phosphorus in the water spread on the fields can then be used to help the crops grow. It is one option but it may not be the longer-term solution for all municipalities, and indeed there may be some concerns with that approach.

This bill requires that the municipalities and the City of Winnipeg ensure that their sewage effluent is tested for phosphorus before being released into waterways. It also requires municipalities and the City of Winnipeg to keep record of phosphorus tests. This, for municipalities, would add a requirement for a phosphorus test on top of the current requirement to look at E. coli levels.

*(10:10)

Bill 217 establishes what are unacceptable amounts of phosphorus content in the water. It sets the benchmark on January 1st, 2016, which is quite a number of years away. But we will need a number of years to have effective planning and change for all municipalities, and it sets this initial benchmark, January 1, 2016, to five milligrams per litre phosphorus with reductions thereafter. Every six months the phosphorus must be lowered by one milligram per litre until a total of less than one milligram per litre of phosphorus is released into the waterways.

Bill 217 also creates an offence if a municipality or the City of Winnipeg releases sewage or runoff from land into waterways that exceed the limits specified in the bill. The initial fine is set for \$100 for a first offence, which is really a warning, but then with subsequent offences of \$5,000 for a second offence and \$25,000 for a third offence, recognizing the significance and the importance of addressing this issue and making sure that we are in fact paying attention to the major sources of phosphorus which are contributing to the contaminations of our streams.

There has been a huge effort to emphasize decreasing the phosphorus in the sewage treatment in the city of Winnipeg. That effort is moving forward, although the government is trying to emphasize and

mandate the need for removing nitrogen as well as phosphorus. It is our view that the removal of nitrogen from the city of Winnipeg sewage treatment is not necessary, as have many other scientists and others argued, and we've been arguing this for quite some time. And it is also our view that the money that is being used for treating—removing nitrogen could be much better spread around the province to help municipalities around the province reach these phosphorus levels and that this would be a far better measure than the measure of trying to remove nitrogen, which, from all the evidence we have, will not do anything to reduce the algal blooms in Lake Winnipeg.

So I am presenting this measure. I am presenting it for discussion, because I think we need to have the discussion and the debate in this area because it clearly is an important source of phosphorus that needs to be reduced if we're going to clean up Lake Winnipeg. Thank you.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): It's a pleasure to rise this morning to speak to Bill 217, The Phosphorus Curtailment Act, and I listened to the member opposite. Once again, it seems that the Liberals, or rather the independent members of the Legislature here, are putting the—well, maybe it's the cart before the horse, I don't know. It just seems that it's a little bit backwards here in the sense that they want to discuss phosphorus and its removal from our waste water, and so forth, and that's something that this government has been doing.

We have been active in this regard since the very day that we were elected. We've had a strong focus on protection of waterways and so forth, and we basically had to start at square one, I might have—I might add, Mr. Speaker. And I've made this argument in this Chamber before, but it bears repeating, I think, in the sense that when we came to office things had declined to such a state that The Water Protection Act had actually been thrown out of the window. A court had actually ruled that the government had been so lax in its enforcement and so lax in supplying the resources to departmental staff that, really, they had no business being in the business of licensing of drainage.

So that's, in essence, where we began, and I was somewhat surprised because when I was elected it was 1999, we'd been a country for 130 years, and I had assumed, wrongly, that a lot of this would've been accomplished already, that most of the big stuff would've been done. But, in fact, it was the very

opposite. We were back to the frontier era, thanks to mismanagement of the former Filmon government.

So, when we formed government, we re-emphasized this. One of our first acts went through the House, as a matter of fact, was the reconstitution of The Water Protection Act, in addition to the amendment to The Wildlife Act, as I recall, which put a ban on panned hunting and, of course, the ban on union and corporate donations to political parties. Those were the three acts that went through the Legislature when we were first elected, and it's important that we recognize that The Water Protection Act was one of those first three that came through this Chamber.

Of course, this government went further and ultimately formed a stand-alone Department of Water Stewardship, the first of its kind in the country; I think, in fact, the first of its kind across the world. So for members opposite to even think that this government doesn't place a high emphasis—I would say the highest emphasis—on water protection is somewhat disingenuous, to say the least.

We followed up the water—or the creation of the Water Stewardship Department with The Water Protection Act. And, I recall, also, a precursor to that was the water strategy that this government put in place, and that was done under the domain of the late Oscar Lathlin, who was our Minister of Conservation at the time, and I think I can speak safely in saying that Oscar, being an Aboriginal person and his respect for the land, put a high emphasis on water protection, as well, and a lot of what we have accomplished today we have to look back as one of his legacies as our first Minister of Conservation.

There's a lot of talk about the clean-up of Lake Winnipeg, and I was listening to the member opposite very closely, because I wanted to hear, once again, him state what his position is in this Chamber in regard to the removal of nitrogen from our waste water. This is the big bugaboo. This is the big argument of the day, and I know the Conservative Party, quite determined to, you know, suggest that the removal of nitrogen is unnecessary, and—well, they have a lot of incomprehensible arguments across the way. I think the west-side versus the east-side power line is another good example where, obviously, the environment means nothing to them, and their position on the removal of nitrogen fits very nicely into that very vein.

It's true that the blue-green algae are capable of fixing nitrogen from the air, and, therefore, the

nitrogen that comes into the lake in the form of waste water doesn't really apply to the blue-green algae. But the same cannot be said for the green algae in the waters in Lake Winnipeg. Those algae do require nitrogen in the water, so the process of fixation from the air does not apply to the green algae.

So members opposite seem to have missed that point. It's—they focus on the blue-green algae and their growth, but the fact that the green algae thrive on nitrogen in the water that comes from waste water seems to be lost on members opposite, which is a little mysterious. I don't really follow their logic there and I guess the same could be said for most cities across North America don't follow that logic either because they do invest in the removal of nitrogen as well as phosphorus from wastewater.

So the members opposite suggesting that Manitoba, that the City of Winnipeg is going down some new path here, creating new ground, is not the case. It's, in fact, the standard across the country to remove nitrogen. We're not reinventing the wheel here, so where members opposite are coming from is a bit of a mystery to me.

* (10:20)

Nitrogen in water is harmful to living organisms. That's a fact. If you—and what nitrogen does, I should explain, is that it bonds with the red blood cells, is my understanding, and prevents them from absorbing oxygen. So, if you filled a gallon jug full of water that was laced with nitrogen and drank it, you would die. So it's harmful to living organisms. So its removal from the water makes sense because animals, fish are swimming around in that water. And it just stands to reason that if the water is pure, not laced with this mineral to an excess, or that mineral to an excess, that it would be better off for them.

It's the responsible thing to do, to remove these harmful minerals and that's what we're doing. It's a little bit more expensive—yes, it is. And that is a challenge for all levels of government, whether it's the municipal level or the provincial level or, if we can engage the federal level, which happens on occasion, their—to their—an impact on their treasury, as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, I'm a little puzzled at this particular Bill 217 because it seems to lengthen the time that these different jurisdictions have to, in effect, remove phosphorus. And, you

know, I can understand there has to be some lag time for these different entities to, you know, budget for it, to accumulate some revenues and so forth, but, you know, our regime has given them some pretty good lead time in addition to significant financial resources to effect these treatments, and this bill, as I read it, extends those times even longer.

So if, you know, the Liberals were seriously intent upon the clean-up of Lake Winnipeg, they would agree with the domain that we have in place here, the time frames that we have in place and the financial arrangements that we have in place, as opposed to extending those times and slowing down the clean-up of these lakes, instead of what we're doing right now.

I know my time is limited. I would love to speak further about the rural perspective here, the challenges that all of our rural communities face with aging infrastructure, and some of the alternatives—you know, rather than just dumping lagoons into the rivers and waterways, you know, perhaps a little further investment in settlement areas where you can actually pump your lagoons onto fields, where the water is absorbed and then picked up by plants before it goes further, would be the way to go.

I see my time is up, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this bill.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I, too, wanted to put a few thoughts on the record in regards to Bill 217. It is yet another bill that the Leader of the Liberal Party has brought forward that represents protecting the interest of the environment. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that time past will clearly demonstrate that there's no shortage of good ideas that are coming from the Manitoba Liberal Party in regards to making the environment in which we live in a better place for all of us and, most specifically, for the children of our province going forward.

It was interesting to hear the member from Interlake talk about the nitrogen argument. And, you know, for so long, I've been talking to constituents that I represent and many others about the government's decision to spend literally hundreds of millions of tax dollars, in terms of—to get rid of the nitrogen that's in water. And I was beginning to wonder, because, quite frankly, I wasn't hearing government MLAs standing up, defending that particular policy, until today.

The member from Interlake stood up in his place today and talked about how important it is for us to

get rid of the nitrogen from the water. And, even though it might be in contradiction to a vast majority of the scientists that are out there, Mr. Speaker, the—I give full marks to the member from Interlake for being bold enough, bolder than the other 34, in terms of saying that we want to get rid of the nitrogen from the water.

But, Mr. Speaker, look at the substantial cost to doing that and the evidence which is very clear that it's just not necessary.

And then, Mr. Speaker, I often wonder, in terms of having listened to that, why it is that the government continues to move forward on that particular issue. And now because of the member from Interlake, I'm starting to get a bit of a sense. What he has done is he has shared with us some of those caucus discussions, no doubt, caucus debates. And I suspect that the member from Interlake is dominating on that particular issue within their caucus and that is no doubt why, at the end of the day, we are going to be wasting literally hundreds of millions of tax dollars when it's just not necessary. As some have pointed out on the bench, it's his fault. I suspect that there might be some merit to that particular line of thought.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a bill that ultimately attempts to put into place some long-term commitment to see the reduction of phosphorus into Lake Winnipeg and other bodies of water throughout the province. Phosphorus is a very important ingredient in terms of growth of all sorts of life, if we could put it that way, plant life, and there is no doubt that many, if not all of us, have seen the impact of phosphorus going into our water.

I, for one, have a beautiful cottage out in Pelican Lake, and there are times of the year in which you go to the lake and you see these little—what appears to be green balls of sorts, millions and millions, if not billions, of them, Mr. Speaker. These all come as a result of phosphorus in good part, and it makes you wonder how it is that it occurs.

Well, we know that there are some things that we can do to minimize that algae, Mr. Speaker, and this bill is one of those things that can, in fact, have an impact. I'm not too sure why the member from Interlake would be of the opinion that it's not necessary and, in fact, he went on to say that we are putting it too far into the future, that we should tighten it up and force municipalities to a tighter time frame. Why do we have to wait till 2016?

And, you know, if the government wanted to be a little bit more aggressive in terms of reducing it from 2016 to 2013 or 2012, you know, we would be open to listening an amendment of that nature, if that's the primary concern, Mr. Speaker. But I would advise that they do need to talk to some of the rural municipalities and the City of Winnipeg, City of Brandon and get a sense in terms of what those municipalities would like to see ultimately happen.

I suspect that if you were to canvass, generally speaking, those that are elected in the municipal level of governance to some of the bureaucracy types within municipalities, that you will find that there would be good support for the concept of what this bill is proposing to do, Mr. Speaker, and that is to set targets that will have a real impact in terms of the quality of our water bodies throughout the province of Manitoba.

And that's, in essence, what it is that we, within the Liberal Party, are talking about. We believe that it is necessary for us to do what we can as legislators to protect our environment, and this particular bill goes a long way in doing just that. You know, we have introduced bills, and one that comes to my mind is the dishwasher bill. I can recall a few years ago, myself and the Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party going out into Osborne Village where we found a phosphorus-free dishwasher soap, and we sent out a release and shared with Manitobans what we believe, within the Liberal Party, would be a progressive way of dealing with the environment.

* (10:30)

Imagine if people used phosphorus-free dishwasher soap, Mr. Speaker. There would be a huge impact, a positive impact, on our bodies of water, in particular, Lake Winnipeg.

And this is something that the consumer could actually do. There's also now, more and more, we're starting to see the private sector, corporations, that have taken it upon themselves to move in a direction that's more friendly to the environment.

I remember a few years ago—or, I shouldn't say a few years ago. A couple years ago I was in I believe it was either Revy or Home Depot, and they were talking about lawn fertilizers. And the individual that was in charge there had indicated that he was going to be—you're going to be seeing more and more phosphorus-free lawn fertilizers coming down and weed killers, and so forth.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's a good thing. We see that the private sector has even acknowledged that they have a role to play that is very significant. And there is, at times, things in which government can do to provide incentive, to provide leadership in terms of saying, here are ideas that will fly, that will be accepted, that will show that we care about the environment.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen children on different issues come before this Legislature. I remember children from Cecil Rhodes School coming to the Legislature talking about, for example, the banning of the plastic bags. I suspect that if we went to many schools we would find that there is this will to see governments take proactive approaches at dealing with the environment.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that, far too often, we take for granted our lakes and rivers and there is so much more that we can do to protect the integrity of those bodies of water. And where the opportunity is for us as legislators to take action I would suggest to you that we should. We shouldn't be shy in doing what's right. We should be bold and taking the leadership where we can to make a real difference.

And with those few words, I look forward to hearing more comments on Bill 217. Thank you.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity of commenting on the bill brought forward by the independent members.

And I kind of—it's very interesting that the member tied in with his comments some of the other initiatives that have been brought forward. And there's no doubt that, from time to time, interesting and useful ideas come from the opposition. And I welcome the fact that, in this Legislature, over our tenure as a government, that we have accepted many resolutions and many private members' bills, which is something that, when I was in—10 years in opposition, we couldn't get anything through. And I think it's a testament to the openness of the government to—and the work of the opposition parties to consider viewpoints and to have the opportunity to put forward alternative measures.

This measure and introduction is so, quote, Liberal, in its interpretation by setting targets, Mr. Speaker. Setting targets is useful, but setting targets that are so far in the future that they are actually—allow the existing regulations to be delayed or the

existing rules that are in place to be suspended is so classically Liberal.

Well, you want to do something about phosphorus. Let's set some targets for, oh, let's set some targets for eight years from now. We have targets in place right now where phosphorus levels are being met in significant matters. For decades, Canadian cities across western Canada have set and have established levels of phosphorus at one milligram per litre, Mr. Speaker, of phosphorus. And we have that in effect in the city of Winnipeg at some sites and we've asked for those targets to be—we've asked for those measures to be put in place, but the Liberals? No, they want to set targets in 2018.

And it reminds me of many—the member talked about the environment and the member's talked about—well, let's talk about what's been done, and let's talk about what's been targeted by the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, in Manitoba we've received, for the third year in a row, the Energy Efficiency Award across Canada. In Manitoba this year we're building the biggest hydro—pardon me, the biggest wind farm in Canada, this year.

Now, the Liberals in Ontario have promised gazillions of wind farms at 13.5 cents a kilowatt hour, Mr. Speaker, but it's a Liberal thing. It's a promise. It's in the future, just like the coal plants that were going to be closed in Ontario in 2010, 2012, now 2014. Do you get the point? You know, we hear about targets, but we don't actually have action.

You have a government here in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, that's closed our coal facility and has virtually shut down the second coal facility. So, virtually coal-free in Manitoba. And where are the Liberals? And where are the Liberals? They want to set targets. They want to set targets in 2018.

Mr. Speaker, we have most of our energy hydro-electric green energy in Manitoba. We are able to have the lowest hydro rates in the country, of clean energy, and we export a product that brings significant revenue to Manitoba. And where are the Liberals? Well, they're on the Tory side of the argument that was made last election about east side, west side.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it's a very interesting position. The Liberals are quite happy to go right through the boreal forest, and they're going right

through an area that can be preserved for the lifetime of this planet. That boreal forest is one of the last contiguous sites in the world. And they'll just set targets. And they'll cut right through it with their chain saws. And that would be a tragedy for our children and our grandchildren, because our children and our grandchildren and the people who live there will welcome the intact boreal forest, not to mention the fact that the American states have set some very significant standards on energy and those standards require green energy. And you ain't going to be able to sell any energy in the United States if you're going tearing up a boreal forest. It ain't going to fly in United States. It puts in jeopardy \$20 billion of revenue. It puts in jeopardy many, many jobs.

Plastic bags: The Liberals come up and they want to deal with plastic bags, Mr. Speaker. There's no question that plastic bags is a significant problem. We've tried to put in place measures that would do it in an appropriate fashion, but, you know, they go down and they want to ban all plastic bags, like, right on the spot. And we don't think that that approach—of course, that is one target they've actually talked about doing immediately, but, in fact, you know, it's—it wouldn't work. In fact, some of those plastic bags are actually less of a problem than some of the alternatives that the members have talked about.

But when we talk about energy and when we talk about the environment, let's talk about things like stopping harvesting of trees in provincial parks, Mr. Speaker. Where are the Liberals on that? I suppose they want targets.

And the essence I think of this bill is that it's—it misses the point by setting targets and talking about more discussion, when we know—and the Liberal leader mentioned it—we know that phosphorus is a problem.

We know that this is the first province in Canada, perhaps in the world, to have a Water Stewardship Department that actually puts in place regulations, puts in place and monitors and looks after the water. That was a very insightful and a well thought-out position by the former premier, Mr. Speaker.

(10:40)

Now, I can imagine members opposite—I can imagine the Liberal Party saying, well, we're going to put in place a water stewardship organization in 2020. And the Tory—the Conservatives, well, for 10 years I sat on the other side of the House, Mr.

Speaker. I was there, and there was nothing—nada, zippo—with respect to the environment. There was not even a mention, and no matters went to the—none of the matters went to the Clean Environment Commission. So there's no lessons to be learned from the 'fossilites' on the other side. There's absolutely no—*[interjection]* Well, I hear some chirping from the member for Brandon, and I just want to say that there's a difference between knowing raw sewage is going in and doing nothing, and knowing raw sewage is going in and doing something about it. And this is the can-do party, as opposed to the can't-do party opposite.

So I—you know, I just want to hear—I would love to run an election right now on the member's Liberal Party's targeted environmental targets and the Conservative Party record and their—oh, what did they promise last election about the environment? The only thing they talked about was east side, west side, Mr. Speaker, and saving money, quote, on the—on an east-side route, which could never be built, which would tear up the boreal forest.

So I don't accept the chirping or the advice from members opposite. And I suggest to members that the system that we've put in place, with respect to the ethanol mandate, the biodiesel mandate, the wind power, Mr. Speaker, the energy efficiency measures, and—has had a significant and lasting impact on the environment and is one of the reasons why a couple years ago Manitoba received the award as the—having the best environmental plan in the country. *[interjection]*

Now, the member talks about greenhouse gas. Could he please tell me what the Tory party's position is on greenhouse gas? Okay, they don't have a position. You don't even believe in it. You don't even believe in it. How dare you ask a question on something you don't even believe in? At least we took a position, Mr. Speaker, and we took action, and that's a lot better than doing nothing. That's a lot better than saying there's no such science. Check the record, check our action, and check it and compare it to members opposite.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to put a few words on the record in regards to Bill 217, The Phosphorus Curtailment Act (Municipal Act Amended and City of Winnipeg Charter Amended).

Mr. Speaker, there's three components to this private member's bill. And, of course, the two components of the bill address testing for

phosphorus, the first, as it relates to the municipal sewage works in—before it is released into waterways, and, the second, from the run-off of the lands after the product has been, perhaps, discharged onto the land. And the third component of the bill provides penalties to municipalities who have been deemed to have committed an offence if the phosphorus levels and their effluent are run-off—or the run-off exceed the limits contained in the bill.

I know that the member's intentions are well in regards to bringing this particular bill forward. I have concerns in regards to just how the, you know, the total cost of this process. But I just wanted to say, though, in regards to the member that just spoke from the New Democrats, he has a hard time making up his own legislation, never mind trying to figure out what the independent party in this House, the Liberals across Manitoba or, particularly, our Progressive Conservative Party are doing in regards to the positive areas of this—conservation efforts in waste-water management and effluent.

And, of course, the government has brought forth other bills that have proven that they don't understand the situation in Manitoba in relation to a balance between putting down the hammer—or the sledgehammer to kill an ant, Mr. Speaker, and the economic viability of the citizens that they're hammering while they're doing it. And I think that there needs to be a greater balance between those two. Our party certainly does, and I believe that the concern here is, as this bill does, allow for extra years, I guess, to look at the management of this area apart from what the Manitoba environment has already determined—could be the one milligram per litre level of phosphorus in the City of Winnipeg's waste-water treatment facilities.

And I would say that we need to look at what has happened in other jurisdictions as well. So when the member from Kildonan speaks about how we need to do this now, I think he needs to look at the areas of other provinces. And, certainly, in British Columbia they've even got tougher in areas. They're down to 0.25 percent of one milligram, Mr. Speaker—0.25, rather, of a milligram per litre, in regards to water going straight into their streams, into fresh water. But they are allowed to have a one milligram per litre level in regards to their overall jurisdictions.

Alberta has a similar one milligram-per-litre area, but it's only on cities over 20,000 people. They've given other parts of their province an opportunity to adjust in a longer time frame, as has

been suggested by the national policy that's been in place, Mr. Speaker.

Now, if we brought the same type of a bill in in Manitoba or the same type of regulation, we would only have two cities that qualified, because there's only Brandon and Winnipeg that are over 20,000 people, and so I think we need to be careful in regards to what we demand of our municipalities because they are working under very stringent guidelines in regards to what they can spend and what they can borrow, and they—and yet we know that their sewage lagoon systems in Manitoba are somewhere in the neighbourhood of 40 to 50 years old in many of those areas, and much upgrading is required. Some lakes and areas have already met the standards of one milligram per litre, Mr. Speaker, and so we need to continue to look at how we can manage some of those resources.

I believe that every member in this House can agree that finding ways to reduce nutrient loading into our waterways is an important goal, and, as we have seen all too often with our lakes, algae blooms have an aversive consequence. We had to consider the amount of debate in Manitoba about finding ways to reduce—we have to find ways to reduce nutrient loading from various point sources including municipal sources, Mr. Speaker; there's no question about that. It's just a matter of the timing.

And I think one of the areas that we've seen the national level on is in February of '09, the Canadian Council of Ministers on the Environment released a report entitled, and I quote: Canada-wide Strategy for the Management of Municipal Wastewater Effluent, Mr. Speaker, end quote. In that report, the CCME pointed out that there was being an interest in all levels of government taking a harmonized approach to better managing the waste water discharged from the 3,500-plus waste-water facilities across Canada in order to help protect human health and our environment.

The strategy outlined by the CCME requires, and I quote: that all facilities achieve minimum nutrient and national performance standards and develop and manage the site-specific effluent discharge objectives. The national performance standards address pollutants common to most waste-water discharges and the site-specific effluent discharge objectives will address specific substances that are of concern to a particular discharge or environment, end quote, Mr. Speaker. And I note

that on March 19th of this year the federal Environment Minister Jim Prentice announced that the proposed waste-water systems' effluent regulations have been published in the Canada Gazette for public feedback.

The proposed regulations are aimed at implementing the Canadian Council of the Ministers of the Environment Canada-wide for management of municipal waste water. The regulations would require high-risk waste-water facilities to upgrade by 2020, and medium low-risk facilities would be required to upgrade by 2030 or 2040 depending on the level of risk. And, of course, that's even longer than what the member from River Heights is proposing today in regards to giving more time for some of those facilities to—and locations to meet these standards. But it would be a national standard, Mr. Speaker, and if we can do it faster, it's to our benefit as a province and to our people, but we need to keep in step with what's happening in the rest of Canada as well.

The strategy for the management of municipal waste-water effluent also addressed in '09 another issue that is currently on the radar in cities like Winnipeg and that being the risks associated with combined sanitary sewer overflows. As we have witnessed repeatedly during heavy rain events in Winnipeg, discharges from the combined sewer system are a real problem and one that requires a long-term solution, one that this new democratic government has not found a solution to in spite of it going on for, you know, in the 10 years at least, the 11 years that they've been government, Mr. Speaker.

Upgrading waste-water treatment facilities across Canada will not come without a significant cost. Mr. Speaker, the—and I quote from the Canadian Council of Ministers again of the environment, quote: The total cost over 30 years to implement the strategy including capital and non-capital costs is at least 10 to 13 billion dollars depending on inflation. Initial cost estimates do not include all costs associated with implementing the strategy, in particular, those costs associated with managing combined sewer overflows and meeting site-specific effluent discharge objectives. For many small and very small communities with limited capital or fiscal capacity, it'll be a challenge to implement the strategy without senior government assistance, end quote.

So you need to look at all levels of government that are going to be involved in this process, and I

believe that's what the member is suggesting that we would work on when he brings this Bill 217 forward.

* (10:50)

While there is consensus on the need to address nutrient loading and the need to upgrade facilities that manage waste, such as lagoons and waste-water treatment plants, we have to find ways to pay for the needed infrastructure. That's why it's so important that our infrastructure dollars are being spent wisely.

Take, for example, the debate over nitrogen and phosphorus removal in the city of Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, and I know the NDP is embarrassed to go there, but we've repeatedly questioned this government's approach on this important issue, and it's unfortunate that the provincial government is forcing the City of Winnipeg to undertake costly upgrades to reduce nitrogen levels in waste water when many well-respected scientists have cautioned that that approach could, in fact, be the wrong one. A group of 63 top scientists have found that the key to controlling algae growth in lakes is to remove phosphorus, and that the removal of nitrogen could in fact make the algae problem even worse.

The *Free Press* has reported that when debt-financing and operating costs are spread over 20 years, it'll cost \$750 million more to remove both nutrients instead of just phosphorus. Perhaps it'd be a better and more useful approach to target some of these monies at a more broadly based phosphorus reduction strategies in Manitoba and to target these monies at upgrading other waste-water treatment facilities, but I think that might be too novel an idea for the NDP today, Mr. Speaker. Such an approach might help local governments be able to meet the phosphorus content targets outlined in a bill like 217.

Mr. Speaker, as an aside, I note that on March 2009's CEC report regarding the City of Winnipeg's waste-water treatment facility, suggested that all new and expanding sewage treatment plants should be required to meet the nutrient discharge limits that are being mandated by the City of Winnipeg. The nutrient management strategy should establish a target by date by which cities with populations over 10,000 and those in ecologically sensitive areas should have adopted nutrient removal processes.

Different strategies are used with respect to managing nutrients and waste water in different provinces, Mr. Speaker, and I've alluded to what's happening in Alberta and B.C. already in this area, and I'd like to thank the member for River Heights

(Mr. Gerrard) for bringing forward this bill in order to stimulate the debate about curtailing phosphorus, and I think we can all agree that all levels of government should be working together to develop long-term strategies to reduce nutrient loading. This could include developing standard targets for municipalities to meet, and doing it with some greater science base in regards to the environment commissions that have already been in place.

Provincial government certainly needs to take a greater leadership role in this area and stop spending money on misguided policies such as requiring the City of Winnipeg to treat its waste-water—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable member's time has expired.

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors): I'm pleased to put a few words on the record for the third-party bill and—for the bill for the third party in this House.

Bill 217 is an interesting bill because it's typical of the Liberal Party where, definitely, they will probably, definitely, may take action in the future, should actions be okay. and you look at the members' records in most cases and—just the Liberal Party as far as Kyoto. They set a very good goal, and I agree with their goal of meeting the Kyoto targets but, then, they failed to put a lot of concrete plans to actually achieve their goals, and so it's a typical Liberal initiative where you set these long-term goals that sound real good but actually accomplish nothing in the short term, nothing in the medium term, and definitely move towards your object, maybe, in the long term.

And, you know, I look at the member opposite, the leader of the third party. He was Secretary of State for Science and Technology for the federal government. He was representing an area right beside Lake Winnipeg, and what did he do to the environment and for the lake when he was at the Cabinet table federally? The word "nothing" comes to mind. And I look at—he wanted be—he had the portfolio of science and technology. He had the ability to move the science forward and the actual plans forward when he was at the Cabinet table with the federal government, and nothing happened. And then, you hear a few years later, I could have, I should'a, I might'a, but I didn't. And so, we believe in doing something.

And so I think it's passing strange that the bill proposed by the member opposite actually would

slow down the removal of phosphorus that is going on right now. In other words, right now, we have regulations that a number of facilities are controlling the amount of phosphorus that are going into the water system. The member opposite's bill would actually allow them to turn off and stop this curtailment of phosphorus and actually allow more phosphorus to go into the water for the next number of years.

To me, that's not intelligent use of regulation. If you are decreasing the amount of pollution—and the word "pollution" comes to mind—and you're decreasing it now, under this bill they would allow different municipalities to actually turn off the pollution control. I don't think that's good for the environment, and I think it must've been an oversight by the third party because I don't see how they would support increasing pollution in our waterways, especially increasing the amount of phosphorus that's allowed.

The other thing is is that we look at the Tory record. Many times they're criticizing for what we're not doing. Well under the Tories—lots of development that never went to the Clean Environment Commission and what we're trying to say is we want to hear from the Clean Environment Commission. We want an independent third party to look at it and make recommendations to government, which has happened. And it didn't happen under the Tories when there was large economic projects.

I find it interesting that the member from Brandon West was chirping from his seat, because now you sit there and say, wait a minute, what happened in Brandon. Certain environmental projects did not go in front of the Clean Environment Commission and actually had some very, very negative environmental aspects of waste being dumped into the river.

So I think it's really important to look at what we can do. And I'm not saying that the Liberals didn't do some very positive things. They actually had a very good thing when they talked about acid rain, where they started a process of curtailing the acid rain over 20 years. It was a very progressive thing and they did move forward in getting rid of the acid rain issue, and it was a long-term solution but they did carry through on that. So I do want to say that the Liberal government isn't totally negligent on the environment. They have moved forward on some things like the acid rain issue.

I think that we also have to look at where we are going as the government. When you're talking about the environment as a whole, whether it's energy efficiency, I'm very pleased where we work with BUILD and BEEP, a low-income energy efficiency project. I'm very pleased we went from 10th to first for four straight years as far as energy efficiency in the environment, and I'm pleased we made those investments.

And, frankly, Mr. Speaker, those investments that our government made were voted against by the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party. So while we were investing in energy efficiency, when we were investing in the environment, the entire opposition voted against those investments.

I also look at some of the other things. When I built my house, I made sure that my house was the most energy efficient it could because I know that when you're building a facility—when you're building something the added cost of making it totally energy efficiency or adding on is very small, but then again if you build your house, and then you build a new addition on top, and a new addition on top, or try to make it more energy efficient, it becomes very, very expensive.

That's why the CEC said that, yes, you should remove phosphorus but you should also remove nitrogen because if you're building the facilities to remove phosphorus under our regulations that are in place now, the additional cost to remove nitrogen is much smaller than if science said, okay, two years from now you have to remove all the nitrogen. The new facility and a new process and all the rest would add tremendously to the cost of it. So only prudent, and financially environmentally prudent, to remove nitrogen and phosphorus at the same time.

And, you know, I look at it this way. When I talk about adding certain things to the environment, most times people sit there and say—whether it's CO₂ or noxious—these are all pollution and the more we can not pollute our environment, the better. And so I'd like to keep it as simple as possible.

And, lastly, I wonder why the Liberal Party doesn't like farmers because under the bill, a farmer—a corporate farm—could be fined 50,000 or even \$500,000 for breaking this law where—

* (11:00)

Mr. Speaker: Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have three minutes remaining.

The time now being 11 a.m., we will now move on to resolutions, and we'll deal with Resolution No. 4, Canadian Rangers Program.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 4—Canadian Rangers Program

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): I move, seconded by the MLA for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen),

WHEREAS the Canadian Rangers program for part-time army reservists forms the nucleus of Armed Forces support in northern Manitoba, providing essential relief during search and rescue missions, flood or fire evacuations and major air disasters, performing border surveillance, sovereignty patrols and safety inspections in the region; and

WHEREAS there are currently over 170 Canadian Rangers stationed across seven communities in northern Manitoba, with new recruits signing up every year; and

WHEREAS there are active detachments at Shamattawa First Nation, Northlands First Nation, St. Theresa Point First Nation, Lynn Lake, Snow Lake, Gillam and Churchill, ranging from 10 or more members to 40 at Lac Brochet and roughly 30 at St. Theresa Point, Gillam and Lynn Lake; and

WHEREAS reservists on duty earn salaries and are often able to rent snowmobiles, boats, all-terrain vehicles and other equipment, contributing to the local economy; and

WHEREAS in just one example, some 15 Ranger reservists played key roles in the rescue of a surveyor lost some 30 kilometres north of Lac Brochet in September of 2009; and

WHEREAS the Rangers also serve as role models in their communities through a Junior Canadian Rangers program, a practical youth program that strives to promote traditional cultures and lifestyles, provides recreational opportunities and strengthens communities through a variety of structured activities to young people in remote and isolated communities; and

WHEREAS there are other remote northern communities who would like to have a Ranger detachment.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to recognize the important contribution of the Canadian Rangers program to

northern Manitoba, delivering relief and improving security in our illustrious northern frontier;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to applaud the Canadian Rangers currently serving in northern Manitoba for their unwavering dedication; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Assembly endorse the Rangers program and encourage the Canadian Armed Forces to support an additional detachment in northern Manitoba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the federal Minister of Defence.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for St. James, seconded by the honourable member for Flin Flon,

WHEREAS the Canadian Rangers—dispense?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

Ms. Korzeniowski: As the Special Envoy for Military Affairs, I take great pleasure in bringing in this resolution, singing the praises of our Rangers. The Rangers have a tremendous impact on the lives of people in their local communities. They play an important role in northern search and rescue missions and many community events.

They are role models and fill local leadership positions and, most importantly, provide positive inspiration to youth. They are sometimes the only visible evidence of the Canadian sovereignty, other than hunters, in remote areas. They play a vital role to Canadian sovereignty and security.

They are comprised of men and women, young and old, easily identified by their red hoodies with a distinctive crest and military pants, boots and toque.

Mr. Speaker, they say a picture is worth a thousand words. Well, I say an experience is worth a thousand pictures.

I'd like to share a phenomenal experience I was privileged to partake in. I had not even heard of the Rangers before I was given the title of Special Envoy for Military Affairs. I became very intrigued with them and what they do and spoke with our Air Division Commander, Major General Bloudin.

Subsequently, he was kind enough to arrange an invitation for Brigadier-General David Millar to join him, his staff and one other guest, Dr. Suzanne Lalonde, a professor from Montreal university, to accompany them on a trip around Nunavut, nine of us in all.

Ms. Marilyn Brick, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

We departed from Yellowknife to visit six communities in Nunavut. At each one we would be inspecting the Rangers, youth rangers and/or cadets. Special thank-you to the staff for taking such good care of us, and particularly, Captain Peart, who kept us on line and—in line and on time. Up to this point, I had visited some of the northern communities and became acutely aware of the social problems there, which were very much the same as the ones in Nunavut, and saw the Rangers as an answer to many of them.

The first stop was at Coral Harbour, a community of 800. We learned, on our arrival, that a young man of 19 had committed suicide. He was a Ranger. That certainly helped me develop a new perspective on just how much anyone or any group could do to become the answer. The community had cancelled Halloween, but they were there in force to greet us and their welcoming attitude and gratitude was evident and humbling.

I came to realize that night just what the Rangers did give the community. They gave them a sense of togetherness and pride, strength and hope. The most poignant moment for me was to be told that one of the female Rangers was the young man's grandmother. The day after his death there she stood, tall, proud and strong, a role model for her community.

Next stop, the big city of Iqaluit, population 7,000. We enjoyed meeting the Commissioner, equivalent of the Lieutenant-Governor, of Nunavut, who gave us a briefing on Aboriginal affairs. She was a delightful woman, also an Inuit, who shared her own experiences as a child. There are many leaders who are women in Nunavut, mayors, council women and the premier of Nunavut. From there we went to Arctic Bay, population 800, again the warm welcome and sense of excitement at the arrival of their military coming to visit. I was struck by the quality of the school and teachers. There was one very young couple, both teachers, who had been there for two years. Each community has the presence of RCMP, usually two, who are obviously

an integral part of all activities in addition to policing.

In addition, though, there were also usually the mayor and/or deputy mayor, the senior administrative officer, of course the elders and, in this case, the MLA Ron Elliott. He and I spoke of the reserve day resolution we passed recently, and he was going to take it to his caucus. All this in an incredibly beautiful but tiny community.

Grise Fiord, population of 150, is not only the furthest, most northern community in Canada, it was the pinnacle of my comprehension of the roles of everyone. The success and survival of these communities is built on an interdependency and total respect for each other. The military and Rangers are critical, but so are the RCMP, the mayor and council, band staff and the residents themselves. One example was in the council meeting. The first question was them wanting feedback on the sighting of a submarine. Several of the townspeople had individually spotted one and reported it to the RCMP who reported it to the Rangers, who reported it to the military, who were able to respond within two hours. This is teamwork.

They all take great pride in being the eyes and ears of the north, protecting their Canada. They take this responsibility very seriously. Recognition of the community and the role they play in protecting our sovereignty, I am certain, was reinforced with the Olympic team bringing the torch there. When we left, the students were making a banner saying: From Greece to Grise. The evening and overnight was spent in Resolute Bay, in a very unique and sprawling South Camp Inn which housed several families of the owner, as well as accommodating the nine of us and several workers. It allowed me to believe what a popular and beautiful resort it can be in the summer months.

* (11:10)

Cambridge Bay was our last stop, and we were treated to a day on the land with the Rangers really showing us how they work and some of what they do. The land was actually a frozen lake which they drove us over on Ski-Doos and toboggans with equipment. They quickly set up tents and propane stoves to warm up over, put on tea, and served frozen caribou and bannock. They then proceeded to demonstrate ice fishing, starting with chipping open holes with long heavy metal bars. Some went off to get a closer look at the caribou spotted a few kilometres away, but the herd had quickly moved on.

It was a beautiful sunny day belying the bone-chilling cold. It was an experience of a lifetime to watch the skill, dexterity and swiftness with which they were able to set up and then dismantle the camp. Again, the warmth with which we were welcomed and so taken care of, and the pride they took in being recognized, not only on the land, but on parade, was, indeed, a heart-warming end to a fun, but cold, day.

It was also a testament to their survival skills and the saying goes up there, never go anywhere without a Ranger. They know the land well, and their navigation skills are a huge asset, not just to the military, but the communities in general.

I have had the good fortune to visit some communities, namely, Pukatawagan, Cross Lake, Flin Flon, Brochet, Lac Brochet—and expecting to go to Tadoule next—before and since this trip, thanks to our member from Flin Flon.

I would like to note that, before the Arctic trip, I had the opportunity to meet a number of Rangers from several northern communities, Manitoba communities, at 17 Wing, just prior to their trip to Victoria for further training. It was a wonderful feeling to meet three of them when I arrived at Lac Brochet, which boasts the most Rangers stationed in one of seven northern communities with Rangers. They number from 10 or more to 40.

The high esteem that the community has for its Rangers was evident at the school—a very beautiful one, I must say—where there was a major display with many photos of the local Rangers. Other communities have shown a keen interest in having a detachment in their community. I have been to two, and witnessed the chief and council's enthusiasm toward this prospect.

In conclusion, I want to comment on the interest the media is now also taking. The *Sun* and Global joined 105 reservists on a winter exercise, northern [*inaudible*] and around Churchill. The soldiers were being guided by members of the Canadian Rangers, reservists themselves, who patrol the north. It was so gratifying to read and hear the praises of the Rangers and reservists for their contributions as recorded by the media. They referred to the Rangers as unequalled experts when it comes to operating in a frozen, remote environment, populated by polar bears, caribou and frostbite-inducing winds.

More and more civilians are signing up to join the Rangers every year. Hopefully, as interest in the

sovereignty issues on the northern coast of the Arctic increases—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The honourable member's time has expired.

Ms. Korzeniowski: Leave to finish the sentence?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to—

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Ms. Korzeniowski: —this will impact on the number of detachments the Rangers, especially here, in northern Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. David Faurschou (Portage la Prairie): It is with great pleasure I rise this morning to participate in a debate of what, I believe, is a very important resolution brought forward by the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Korzeniowski).

It is with great pride I speak, as a son of a veteran of the Second World War, a father that dedicated his youth to the service of his country and, very fortunately, returned from overseas service to once again engage in the career of farming, to which I feel most privileged to have been raised.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Canadian Rangers are an integral part of our Canadian Armed Forces and they were formed in 1942, at the height of the Second World War. It was their formation that came to be, in response to a shelling of the British Columbia coast and recognition of the importance of having eyes and ears to the—to safeguard the sovereignty and security of Canada by those persons that were residents of remote regions that a lot of Canada can be considered as.

So the Rangers came to be in 1942, and following the World War II, the Rangers have expanded and currently play an extremely important and vital role in protecting both coastal and remote areas of our country. And the honourable member for St. James' personal experience, as shared with all of us this morning, is of great interest, as only my experience that I have with the Rangers specifically is by the History Channel and noting the—a number of documentaries that have been produced that detail the activities of the Rangers in remote areas of Canada.

And as the honourable member made mention, it is a—quite a varied participation of male and female, young and old, and without question the experience and abilities that are honed by individuals from their

normal everyday activities can be extraordinarily useful in performance of the tasks that the Rangers have been assigned, really amazing to myself raised in the southern climes of Canada to see the ingenuity that is brought forward by persons adapting to the remote nature of their residence and their performance of their duties and how those adaptations are employed for survival and protection of the security of Canada.

The Canadian Rangers are also very important in providing role models for youth in these regions of Canada, and in 1996 the Junior Canadian Rangers were created and many of the Rangers serve as instructors to these young people in remote areas. Also within the documentary that I witnessed on television, it was very important to the elders that the youth growing up in the North now have some of the modern technology at their fingertips such as satellite dishes and video games, that the elders say that the activities of the Rangers are even more important to make sure that the youth residing in the remote parts of Canada indeed can experience and learn from the Rangers those skills that perhaps are not being employed on a regular basis because of the modern conveniences that are now widespread throughout Canada, especially in the remote regions now. And so these activities that were normal course of everyday living and the—and survival in remote areas of Canada now are coming in the way of instruction and programming rather than necessity in this changing world of ours.

By mentoring the Junior Rangers, the Canadian Rangers have built up a sense of community and nationhood for young people in some of the most remote areas of the country by performing these instructional duties.

* (11:20)

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe that the Government of Canada is very supportive of the Rangers' activity, and I know that there has been vast amounts of money either invested or planned to be invested in equipment that will adapt well to the remote regions of Canada and supplement the activity of the Rangers in preserving the sovereignty of our North. And it has been well documented in news reports about the various interests of the—of other countries in the northern regions of Canada. And it is incumbent upon all of us to support the federal government and their efforts to demonstrate the presence in the North, and, indeed, by doing, preserving the sovereignty of areas of the North that

we believe are genuinely part of Canada. So, this is what does take place, and the Rangers are the on-the-ground efforts that should be supported in—to make certain that the area recognized as Canada remains as Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I might mention that within the Rangers, the Aboriginal communities that are represented speak over 23 different languages that, indeed, advance the recognition of the diversity within the Aboriginal community, Inuit, First Nations and Métis people alike.

Currently, I understand, there are over 4,000 persons serving in coastal and remote northern areas of Canada within the ranks of the Rangers, sharing their skills and expertise with Canadian Armed Forces personnel who travel to the remote regions of Canada for experience and training. And it is the Rangers that fully participate as instructors in—on these occasions. And who better to instruct individuals about survival and the adaptation to the harshness of remote areas of Canada than those that reside there?

The Rangers, I will say, as mentioned by the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Korzeniowski), are very easily recognizable with the bright red uniforms. And, indeed, could I perhaps advance that these are even iconic recognitions that are present from coast to coast?

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, I know there are others that want to put their comments and debate of the—of this, what I believe a very important resolution. And, personally, I would like to encourage others to support this resolution because, indeed, I believe, in these tough deficit times, recessionary times that we are currently experiencing, government has to make some very tough decisions, and I do believe that the—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): First of all, let me begin by thanking the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Fauschou) for what I think were, indeed, very wise words.

And also, I want to thank the member of St. James, Manitoba's Special Envoy for Military Affairs, for bringing forth this resolution. She happens to be a tireless advocate in support of our military forces at home and abroad, and I thank her for the many behind-the-scenes activities in which she's engaged that promote not only the formal

military forces, but also the supportive systems such as the reservists and other organizations, organizations such as the Canadian Rangers program, the Junior Canadian Rangers Program and cadet programs and so on. I think we all owe her a huge debt of gratitude in the quiet, modest, but effective way she operates, gets a lot of good things done, doesn't always get recognition for this so I want to recognize her formally at this moment.

Several years ago, she initiated the Year of the War Bride and she took the proclamation to Halifax, actually took it to Pier 11 in Halifax, which, ironically, was also the pier that I arrived in Canada, June the 6th, 1952. So it had a special place in my own heart. And then she repeated the same event at this Legislature. And, again, several years ago I had the privilege of joining her at the Deer Lodge Centre where we handed out medals from the Dutch government and the Dutch Queen, along with the Dutch—it wasn't the ambassador, it was—

An Honourable Member: The consul.

Mr. Jennissen: —the consul, and that was a very special occasion as well.

I should also thank her for coming north frequently, and she's worked with the cadets in Flin Flon, has given me enormous support there. She's worked with the cadets in Cross Lake. She has visited Mathias Colomb, Pukatawagan, Brochet and many other areas, always with an eye on supporting, pushing, initiating the Rangers or the Junior Rangers program or the cadet programs. And I think this is so important, and I want to thank her for that effort.

The Canadian Rangers have a long and illustrious history, to which my colleague from Portage la Prairie alluded. They were formed in 1942 as the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers because there was a threat during World War II of Japanese incursions into our territory. They were the coastal watchers. They were, even then, the ears and the eyes of our military, and they were the first phase of surveillance to protect our sovereignty.

In 1947, the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers were formally established as a corps reserve militia, and they're very important, but they somewhat faded during the '50s and '60s but were rejuvenated again in the 1970s. They have and still are, or they were and still are, a Canadian presence in a sparsely populated and isolated area—or areas. They embody Canada, the visible tangible evidence of our sovereignty in those far and remote places. They are

the people on the ground in remote areas, people that know the isolated regions intimately, people that can live off the land, in many cases, people that'll come to your rescue if the plane is downed or if the person is lost.

To give you one example, the Rangers in Lac Brochet—15 of them—helped the Lynn Lake Mounties and other volunteers in looking for a 33-year-old man who was lost about 30 kilometres north of Lac Brochet last year in September. It was very cold weather, the end of September, I believe it was, and the gentleman was working for a survey company—Stoffel Surveys—and got lost. But the Rangers and the other volunteers managed to track him down. They spotted his campfire in the morning. And, again, if it wasn't for the Rangers, this person could have possibly frozen to death.

So they deal with the potential threats to our sovereignty, or at least they give us the alert, and we can face those threats more and more in the future because of global warming. The Northwest Passage could become quite passable in the future. Trade could be enhanced enormously, and Churchill could take on a huge role, the Port of Churchill. We're lucky to have an inland port.

But other countries are watching those open waters of the future and are saying, those are international waters. So we need a presence there. Now, at one time we would take Inuit people and stick them 1,500 kilometres north, against their will, and say that was a Canadian presence. We don't do that anymore. We did something very similar with the Sayisi Dene.

We need the Rangers on the ground. They are our presence on the ground. As I said before, polar nations are challenging our sovereignty in the vast reaches of the North Pole. Russia claims some of that territory. So does the United States via Alaska. So does Denmark because of Greenland. So does Norway.

And sometimes you can have a storm in a teacup as we did a year or two ago over Hans Island, a tiny speck of land. You know, I think it's barely large enough to pitch a tent on, but anyway, it became a controversy between Denmark and Canada. This speck of land is located between Greenland and northern Canada.

Sovereignty is important to us. Right now a scientific expedition is in the very far North and is drilling through seven feet of sea ice to examine

underwater topography. And they're examining that topography under the ice which is two kilometres below the ice, and they use echo locators and they even use a small sub, and this sub runs on batteries and can go as far as 350 kilometres and come back, takes pictures, comes back.

So we want to establish, clearly, the extent of our continental shelf because that will then tell us what belongs to Canada because we suspect there are vast oil and gas reserves in those areas in the North. But we might—we need to establish that it belongs to us because those huge areas are disputed and are claimed by other nations such as Russia and the United States, Norway and Denmark.

* (11:30)

I want to talk a few minutes, Madam Deputy Speaker, about the structure of the Canadian Rangers; 163 communities are involved with the Canadian Rangers and they have 4,400 members in total. There is an attempt by the government, I believe, to try and reach the magic number of 5,000 by the year 2012 and I hope that some of those increased numbers come from northern Manitoba.

There are five Ranger patrol groups across this nation that reflect the geographic diversity of our nation. We, in Manitoba, belong to the western Canadian patrol group which is headquartered out of Victoria, British Columbia.

The Canadian Rangers are present in seven Manitoba communities and they involve a total of 170 members. Some of my colleagues have already listed that but I'll go through it again. Shamattawa First Nation has a Ranger patrol. Northlands First Nation, Lac Brochet, also has one, and I think it may well be, I believe, the largest one. St. Theresa Point First Nation, Lynn Lake, has a ranger patrol. My good friend Horace Cockerill lives there and he's been part of the Rangers for decades.

Snow Lake has a Ranger patrol. So does Gilliam and Churchill. Unfortunately, Tadoule Lake, which had a program several years ago, does not have one today but some of the people in Tadoule Lake, particularly Councillor Peter Duck, and some others are working to try and get that reinstated. And I know the member for St. James (Ms. Korzeniowski) could be most useful in this regard in the future.

Little Grand Rapids at one point had a Ranger program, that was about five years ago—no longer has one, but hopefully, someday, maybe that could be re-established.

The Canadian Rangers are great role models, as the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou) said, for younger people. And so, in 1998, a Junior Canadian Rangers program was initiated and it is run basically by Canadian Rangers but also other volunteers, and it is in 119 remote communities right now. So it is spread all over Canada.

This particular Junior Canadian Ranger program offers safe, positive programs to at-risk youths in isolated communities. The stress is on healthy living for young people, on building self-esteem. The program builds on the history and legacy of the corps itself, or of the Rangers themselves. They have a history going back to 1942. The stress is on survival skills, emergency medical training, map reading, mobility in a harsh and isolated environment, because you never know when Rangers are called upon to come to the rescue.

I guess they're the equivalent of those great big dogs in Switzerland that used to rescue people in avalanches—

An Honourable Member: Saint Bernards.

Mr. Jennissen: Saint Bernard—the ones with the little keg of rum underneath their neck. That's the equivalent we have in the north with the Rangers, Madam Deputy Speaker. And, of course, the Junior Rangers are being taught by the older Rangers. Hopefully they, too, will become part of the Ranger program later on.

This is especially necessary in isolated regions where there are social challenges for young people, suicide is endemic; particularly worried about places such as Lac Brochet and Shamattawa, so we need these programs. And some of our young people, unfortunately, lack goals and directions and the Ranger program or the Junior Ranger program instills that kind of discipline and they really look forward to a structure and discipline. It's needed, this structured environment.

Our young people are taught goal setting. They're taught to become better citizens. We need, Madam Deputy Speaker, more Ranger programs in the north. We need more Junior Ranger programs and I hope that all members of this House will support this very worthy resolution and it would be nice to say it was unanimous. Thank you very much.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Madam Deputy Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise to put some words in the record here as well in regards to the resolution put forward by the member from St. James

on the Canadian Rangers Program, a very important program that we have in northern Canada. And, particularly, we'll talk today about our circumstances in northern Manitoba and the north of—area north of Manitoba.

It's always been important to Canadians to protect our sovereignty and our security of Canada no matter where we are in our country, Madam Deputy Speaker, but the situation that we're speaking about today with the Canadian Rangers has a long history dating back to 1942, the middle of Second World War.

As members have indicated today, that were brought forward because of the response to the shelling of the British Columbia coast—the basically, the internment of the Japanese in the Second World War, Madam Deputy Speaker. And I'd just like to say, as well, that that has been apologized to by the Canadian government, and Mr. Art Miki here from Winnipeg was one that indicated that that should go forward. He pushed for that kind of apology, and I know that he had the opportunity of speaking with my sister-in-law many times on this, Bonnie Berry when she was teaching with him in parts of Winnipeg, and I had a personal experience with the persons interned in regards to working in British Columbia back a number of years ago or decades ago, a few decades ago in regards to a family that had actually been interned, a Japanese family there.

I became very good friends with the Sakaki family, Norio, one that worked in his father's business with four other brothers and a sister at that time, that I knew of at least, and very proud Canadians, I guess I could say that along with the farmers that were interned into the Raymond, Alberta, area in that time period became very strong Canadian citizens, had an extremely strong work ethic and were leaders in their communities. And so from sometimes bad policy comes good to—for the rest of us in Canada.

But, of course, the circumstances around the Canadian Rangers is that they did their job at that time and were put together to try to look after and protect—or protect, rather, the sovereignty of our country. And, of course, when the Second World War ended, they—there was still a need for that area, and it's been talked about today by my colleagues here in the House in regards to maybe a little different focus than on the west coast or the east coast. But our sovereignty in the northern part of Canada, Madam Deputy Speaker—and I think that it's

incumbent on all of us to recognize the good work that's been done by the federal government and by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in regards to letting the rest of the world know where we're at in relation to our sovereignty in the north, and a lot of that is supported by the Canadian Rangers as they do their work and become the eyes and ears of the Armed Forces that we have in our country in the North. And I think it's incumbent upon all of us and the rest of Canada to recognize here today, and I commend the member for bringing this particular resolution forward because it's an opportunity for all of us in the House today to speak about the importance of the surveillance and the importance of the Canadian Rangers program in Canada today.

It's also important—I think it's been pointed out by others that the junior program that was started in Canada along with other—many other groups that have helped with discipline and upbringing of our Canadian youth—that the junior Canadian program is recognized as being created in 1996, and, of course, that the Rangers that are out there today, the senior ones, if I could say that, are the instructors for these young people. And, of course, they know only too well the impact that this program has had on their lives and their ability to provide discipline to their lives in some circumstances as all of us that have belonged to some of those youth groups in our childhoods, Madam Deputy Speaker, have had the opportunity of knowing the importance of these areas as we grow up in commiserating with our peers and colleagues of our age groups.

And these are important programs brought forward I think to develop skills on behalf of young people today, life skills in particular to the Rangers' program that can be used throughout their lives. It also puts in a good deal of discipline into their lives, Madam Deputy Speaker, and perhaps instils a patriotism in them that is all too often missing in some of the livelihoods of our busy schedules of the day-to-day life that many people are involved in, in Canada and perhaps in other areas of the world as well.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

I think that there's also a good deal of understanding of nature in regards to the Canadian Rangers program, and being able to pass that, of course, from the Rangers that have lived it to the Junior Ranger program as well and provides a great deal of sense of community and nationhood for the young people in some of our isolated areas of our

country that many of us could learn from. And I think that we all too often, perhaps in our conservation and environmental circumstances today, don't give enough credit for those who take care of adapting and adopting our natural surroundings and doing everything we can to make sure that we keep our environment as clean as possible, to make sure that we continue to deal with responsible management of those resources on a day-to-day basis.

* (11:40)

And I only know that from growing up in my circumstances as a young farmer in Manitoba dealing with my father who was a naturalist, if I could say, in his own way, did everything he could. He always used to have a slogan that I've used many times in speeches across the prairies as a farm leader, Mr. Speaker, and that is that if you take care of the land, it'll take care of you, and I think all too often, we forget that farmers on the land today are responsible stewards of it as well as the young Ranger program, the people in the north that look after and know how important they are being impacted by things like climate change and other areas.

I think that from the issues of healthy living and sustainability is something that is being moved forward and taught by the young Rangers program and by the Rangers program today, and I think the diversification of the group is shown—or the program, shows in the fact that there are 23 different languages spoken in various Rangers organizations across our North and, Mr. Speaker, they obviously take in the languages of Canada's Inuit, our First Nations and Métis people, and I think we should be extremely proud and encouraging of the cultures of those areas, as much as any other culture that we have in our society today, and I think that the vastness and diversity of the North is pointed out by the fact that there are 23 languages spoken in those various communities.

As has been pointed out, we have somewhere in the neighbourhood of 170 Rangers in Manitoba, 40—over 4,000 across the country and hopefully a growing program easily recognizable by their bright red uniforms, and I say that that's not the Mounties, Mr. Speaker. It's the Rangers program and presence from coast to coast that makes them that recognizable.

Mr. Speaker, I say that the Canadian Rangers support military work by carrying out studies and collecting data that is significant to the military

operations. The many Rangers that we have have extensive experience in traversing Canada's difficult northern terrain, and as trappers, hunters and navigators from all walks of life is my point. They are an invaluable resource for anyone choosing to venture into Canada's North. I guess I would say that like our armed forces that they support, they come from all walks of life and they come from all backgrounds and that's also good in regards to continuing to expand the diversity of their organization.

They are also well respected and often provide leadership in different organizations, the Rangers do, Mr. Speaker, and I think that as they're called to participate in search-and-rescue activities, they also lend their time and expertise to difficult and dangerous situations, whether they're both natural or man-made circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, in summary, their motto, "Vigilans," states the Canadian Rangers are "the watchers," that I quote. They are the eyes and ears of the military in the North, and their focus is on sovereignty, diligently monitoring the remote areas of our North, and I know that throughout their proud history, they have proven that their skills and dedication are an important part of our Canadian domestic operations.

For all these reasons, it's important that we in this House support the Rangers and encourage the growth of their programs in our province and across our country. With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to say that there are valuable resources involved in our Canadian Forces that are gained from the natural or the Rangers program, no matter where they live, in whatever communities, and we encourage their continued development across the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Frank Whitehead (The Pas): First of all, I want to thank the member from St. James for bringing this resolution forward on the Canadian Rangers program, and I want to thank the previous speakers for their statements and words of support.

I just also want to mention that like the member from Portage la Prairie, my dad is a veteran, war veteran, second war, and actually my son is also a veteran who served with the Second Battalion Canadian—Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry. And so I have a special, I guess, feelings about initiatives such as this. I want to say that the Canadian Ranger program is probably one of the

most positive initiatives to ever come forward that would most benefit Canadians and territories alike.

There are many benefits of being a Ranger. I know that many residents in—of northern communities can become Rangers. Service is open to men and women over 18 years of age who are Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, in good health and willing to be members of the Canadian Forces. And becoming a Ranger can be the fulfillment of a lifetime commitment, as exemplified by a Canadian Ranger from the Yukon territory who is currently one of the longest serving members of the Canadian forces, after more than 50 years of service. The—I think that that speaks to the level of interest and commitment by any individual who seeks to serve his community or his region and his country for various reasons. That person, 50 years ago, started out as a trainee, of course, undergoing training courses with the program. I'm sure, today, that individual is now training others in their region and making use of his experience so that others may benefit from his knowledge of the land and his knowledge of the—of how things are done in a military way.

But I think it's also important to know that being a Ranger is not just about having the knowledge of land and resources and having the skill to survive and to be able to deal with any kind of adversity that's presented before you, but it's the attitude. It's the attitude of the individuals that are part of this program, who give themselves to the program. Many of them will spend many hours training, getting ready for, perhaps, incidents that may come before them, in terms of people getting lost in the territories, in the wilds, in wilderness. And I know that these Rangers are very skilful in manoeuvring their ways through any form of obstacles that are presented before them. And that takes concentration, that takes training and that takes commitment to want to learn all those things.

As all Canadian Rangers, they conduct basic training, annual training and more optional training and attend special meetings as called for by the patrol leader. Special arrangements can be made for those who cannot attend daytime training. It's almost like similar to what volunteer fire departments have to go through as well. But they make a time, they plan so they can do their training and have these special meetings. Mr. Speaker, I think, you know, we need to recognize that these Rangers are very committed individuals, both young and old, men, women, people from all walks of life, people who are

committed to preserving the integrity of our north, of our jurisdictions, but at the same time serving the people, serving the regions, providing safety when needed.

* (11:50)

Canadian Rangers will participate in a 10-day basic Ranger qualification course that includes seven days of training at a facility in the community.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, that, you know, a training that includes basic drill, rifle training, general military knowledge, navigation, your maps, your compass, your GPS, first aid, search and rescue, and communications, Rangers also receive patrol sustainment training which may involve courses in first aid, flood and fire evacuation planning, search and rescue, major air disaster assistance, communications, firing exercises and setting up bivouac sites, igloos or tents.

Mr. Speaker, that's a lot of training and preparedness they have to be prepared to do. That, to me, it's very important to be recognized because it takes total commitment to do that. Serving as a Canadian Ranger provides one with a great source of pride and purpose. Being an important resource for the community and being able to set a positive example for others, it also helps mark the Ranger as a pillar of one's community.

This position is highly regarded in our northern communities and Rangers are seen as reliable sources of advice, guidance and aid on many important matters. And it's not just the residents of the communities or the territories or the regions that make use of these services. But it's many different people that come into the territory from the south or from any part in Canada to do any kind of exploration or business. They rely on the information that is provided by the Canadian Rangers and it makes life more easier, more pleasant and more enjoyable for all people to know exactly what to do in the northern parts of our country.

They help bring communities together, these Rangers, as the position of a Ranger helps instil one with confidence and marks them as outstanding citizens. Our Rangers are able to take on important initiatives and experimental projects that transform neighbourhoods and communities. Bringing communities together, bringing people different levels of leadership and jurisdiction, I believe that requires special skill and a special kind of attitude. I am proud of these Rangers, I am proud to be a

supporter of this Ranger program and I am proud to stand here to say that I support this resolution and I hope to see that we expand in the future. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the resolutions that it is quite easy to get behind and support, and I thank the member from St. James from bringing it forward today. I think that we could recognize the valuable contributions that the Canadian Rangers have made to our province, indeed, our country just through their sheer efforts and their presence.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I read through the resolutions, there are many points that can be picked up upon that will just emphasize just how important the Canadian Rangers and the Junior Rangers have been to our province and no doubt will continue to be in terms of going forward into the future. I listened to many of the comments that were put on the record and I think that they were done in such a way to pay tribute to how effective this organization has been, again, over the years.

And suffice it to say that I want to emphasize the point of the valuable role that they play in terms of community leaderships. The Rangers are, in fact, leaders in their own right and will continue to be

great role models and provide us a service that is of great value well into the future, Mr. Speaker.

I just wanted to get on the record, on behalf of the Manitoba Liberal Party, in support of this resolution in anticipation that it will, in fact, be passing this morning. And to all those Rangers and junior Rangers, a job well done, and we look forward to many, many more years of their contributions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is the resolution moved by the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Korzeniowski), Canadian Rangers Program.

Is it the will of the House to adopt the resolution? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to call it unanimous.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, they will go down as unanimous. Okay, so it has been passed unanimously.

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House to call it 12 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

Okay, the hour now being 12 o'clock, we will recess and we will reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

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