



First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

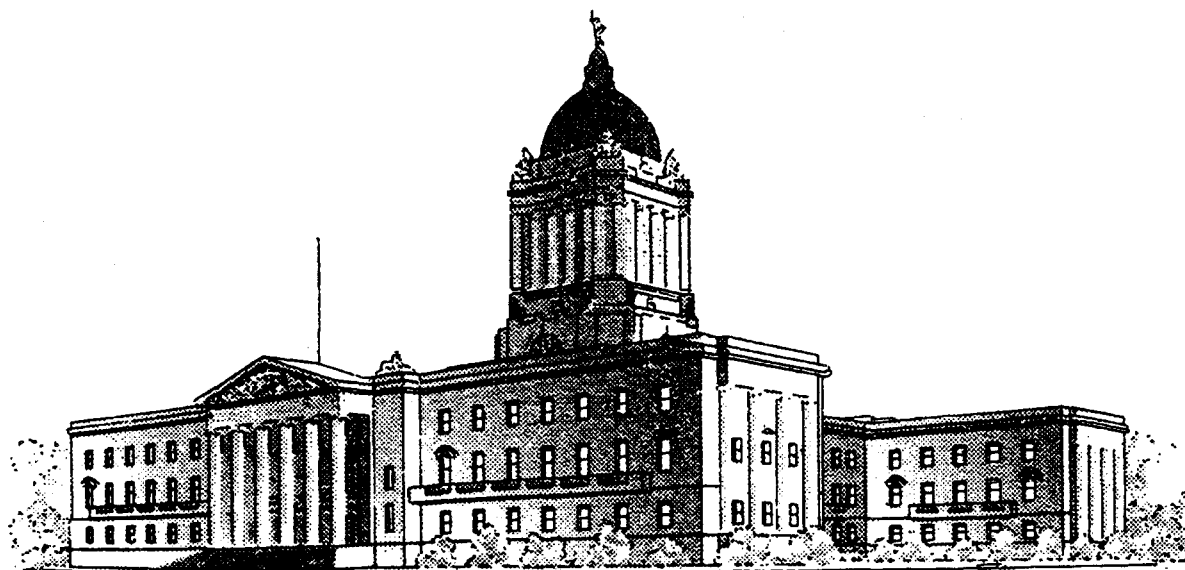
DEBATES

and

PROCEEDINGS

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSON, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 24, 1995

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS****PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**Emergency Health Care Services—
Seven Oaks General Hospital**

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Helen Fontaine, Wm. Puloski and Cheryl Boguski requesting the Legislative Assembly to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at Seven Oaks Hospital, as was promised in the 1995 general election.

**Emergency Health Care Services—
Community Hospitals**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Librada Retumalta, Fe Aliwalas, Carmelita Naval and others requesting that the Legislative Assembly urge the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) consider making a commitment to the people of Manitoba that emergency health care services in Winnipeg's five community hospitals will remain open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Emergency Health Care Services—
Seven Oaks General Hospital**

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

The petition of the undersigned residents of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election the Premier promised not to cut health care services; and

THAT following the election the Minister of Health promised that emergency services would not be reduced at community hospitals in Winnipeg; and

THAT the Minister of Health on October 6 announced that emergency services at these hospitals would be cut back immediately; and

THAT residents of the Seven Oaks Hospital vicinity depend upon emergency service at this hospital.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record requesting the Premier to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at Seven Oaks Hospital as was promised in the 1995 general election.

**Emergency Health Care Services—
Community Hospitals**

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes. The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned residents of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth

THAT emergency health care services are the core of Manitoba's health care system;

THAT Manitobans deserve the greatest possible access to this care;

THAT the government is considering reducing access to emergency services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Minister responsible for Health (Mr. McCrae) consider making a commitment to the people of Manitoba that emergency health care services in Winnipeg's five community hospitals will remain open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 211—The Limitation of Actions Amendment Act

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): I move, seconded by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen), that leave be given to introduce Bill 211, The Limitation of Actions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prescription, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. McGifford: The principle of the bill is to extend the limitations of actions, so that victims of sexual assault where the assault takes place in a relationship of trust have an unlimited time in which to launch civil suits and where victims of other forms of assault have a limit of 30 years. Clearly, the amendment will broaden the time limitations for the initiation of civil suits.

Motion agreed to.

* (1335)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us this afternoon sixty Grade 9 students from Pierre Radisson Collegiate under the direction of Mrs. Bendall, Mrs. Lucille Miller and Ms. Patti Field. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care System Emergency Services

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, as we have tabled in the past dealing with minutes from hospital committees dealing with the potential closing of emergency wards, there is a strong concern about five minutes can make a difference to the life and limb of citizens in the community hospital catchment area when emergency wards are closed from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.

Madam Speaker, we have argued and suggested over time that the government has, in fact, and, indeed, closed these emergency wards without any plan at all.

I would like to ask the acting Premier, why have you closed the community-based emergency wards from ten o'clock at night to 8 a.m. in the morning without any plan in place?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): As the honourable Leader of the Opposition knows, when emergency physicians and pathologists left their workplaces back on Labour Day, the hospitals, all of them, the community hospitals and the tertiary centres along with Manitoba Health, had to put together a contingency plan which was done and which was able to work throughout the duration of the strike. That formed the basis for the planning that went on after the strike as well, and services are being delivered in accordance with the plan as it is in operation today.

Mr. Doer: I would like to table a document dated October 20, 1995, a document that states and articulates an agenda for a strategy for developing a plan to deal with the Integrated Emergency Services Delivery Steering system, a strategy, Madam Speaker, that goes through three phases and will not be completed until sometime late November.

Madam Speaker, it is clear from this document there is no plan in place by the government. The government

had no plan. They are flying by the seat of their proverbial pants. They have no plan in place. I would like the government to reverse its position. I would like the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) to reverse the position of the government so the planning can go in before the decisions are made, not after the decisions are made, Madam Speaker.

Mr. McCrae: Contrary, again, Madam Speaker, to the assertions of the Leader of the Opposition, the way the emergency system is operating today is the result of a consensus amongst the members of the Integrated Emergency Services Delivery Steering Committee which is made up of professionals, medical directors, nurses and CEOs from the various hospitals.

I remind the honourable Leader of the Opposition that Mr. Jack Chapman, Q.C. made a recommendation in his mediation report, a recommendation accepted by the two parties to the dispute that was on at that time, and that recommendation was that an integrated emergency system be developed before the end of this year.

That work is being done by this Integrated Emergency Services Delivery Steering Committee. As it existed at the time, it was the hospitals that developed the consensus that forms the basis for what we are doing now.

* (1340)

Emergency Services—Consultations

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I would like the minister to explain why he says there was a consensus when the government Department of Health had to instruct the two hospitals that were leaving their emergency wards open to close them and play ball with the government for the next two or three weeks until final decisions could be made. They were instructed by the minister's own department, contrary to the allegation that they had a consensus.

I would also like to ask the minister why the public is not involved in the consensus that the government is talking about, why there are no public hearings in stage 1, stage 2, stage 3. Why are the public and the people,

who have been given the promises by the government, not involved in the decisions that affect their lives in their communities with their community hospitals?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, the honourable member forgets that the emergency services system in the city of Winnipeg has been under scrutiny for some five years, and that scrutiny has included various reports which have been the culmination of consultation with various people in society including members of the public. Organizations like the Consumers' Association and the Manitoba Society of Seniors are also involved in the Integrated Emergency Services Delivery Steering Committee.

Health Care System Emergency Services—Consultations

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, how can the minister in his recent response to the Leader of the Opposition say that there were consultations and studies prior, when the minister himself rejected the very recommendations of those committees and unilaterally, on his own, from the minister's office with help from their consulting firm, made the decision to close the emergency wards at the community hospitals?

How can the minister then say, oh, no, we have had consultations the last five years, and, in fact, rejected the recommendations of those consultations, Madam Speaker?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, Manitoba Health, at the highest levels, pleaded with the doctors not to go on strike for several months and to leave that option open pending the development of an integrated emergency services plan—pleaded with the doctors not to go on strike.

The honourable member for Kildonan would suggest that that did not happen, and there was precious little comment from the honourable member in those early days of the strike when the doctors left their work, Madam Speaker, precious little comment then and plenty of comment now.

Health Sciences Centre/St. Boniface Hospital Emergency Resources

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, can the minister explain why we have data from the Health Sciences Centre's annual report which shows that visits to emergency rooms last year were up 10 percent from 39,714 to 43,810, and now we know that visits are up dramatically because of the closure of community hospitals and we know they are going to cut another \$19 million from that budget, can the minister explain what resources are in place to take care of that extra load at Health Sciences and St. Boniface?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, resources are being made available to the Health Sciences Centre and the St. Boniface Hospital emergency departments while the closure at night of other emergency rooms places more pressure on those emergency rooms. Those resources are being made available.

You know, Madam Speaker, the honourable member is asking these questions at this late stage of the proceedings. After some five years of all these studies, he finally has some comment to make, but where was he on Labour Day? Was he putting the interests of the patient first, or was he putting his time-honoured NDP principles of labour solidarity ahead of the safety of patients in this province?

Health Care System Emergency Services—Consultations

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): My final supplementary to the minister: Madam Speaker, can the minister at least undertake today in this House to commit that he will hold public hearings, like members on this side of the House are doing, holding four public hearings, to let Manitobans speak about the damage this policy is doing to the health care system?

If he does not have the courage to hold public meetings, will he at least send officials from his department to attend our public meetings, so they can hear what the public is going to have to say about the closure of these emergency wards?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, all I ask of the honourable member is that he and his colleagues try to observe some modicum of consistency in the positions they take on health issues or any other issues for that matter.

You know, it is not good enough, Madam Speaker, for me to preside over the consultation of thousands and thousands of Manitobans on health issues, only to be told by the honourable member that we consult too much, and then on the other hand when decisions get made, we do not consult enough.

The honourable member ought to make up his mind what he really wants, Madam Speaker.

* (1345)

Youth Crime Bail Hearings

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

On Sunday, Manitobans suffered yet another tragedy of youth violence when 17-year-old Donald Ashcroft was shot in the chest at point-blank with a handgun. He is now struggling for his life. Manitobans will be shocked to learn that the 15-year-old who was charged with attempted murder and serious weapons offences was released on bail yesterday afternoon.

My question to the minister is, has she made inquiries so she can explain to the people of Manitoba how a youth allegedly involved in such a serious, tragic shooting over a hat can get bail in a day?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, by virtue of your ruling, I understand the member has a choice of convention of raising cases before the court or not within this Chamber. He has chosen to continue to do so.

Madam Speaker, I am the Attorney General. I do not have that same opportunity to discuss cases which are before the court. Any statements which are made by me very likely would influence the way a case was

further conducted, so I am not able to speak about that issue.

Members across the way, Madam Speaker, continue to think that is funny. The cases at hand are too serious and they are not funny.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister, who does not want to speak about this, but we do, Madam Speaker, explain what steps the minister is taking to ensure that the Crown appeals the bail decision on an expedited basis?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, again, I will not be speaking about that case. However, I will remind the member that bail is granted by the judiciary. It is the judiciary who make the decisions as to whether or not there will be interim release or bail.

Psychological Assessments

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): I then ask the minister, if, in the least, she would be prepared to take steps to ensure that a psychological assessment is done of the accused in the interest of public safety.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, the member always make it very tempting to have me want to speak about a case which is before the court. I will not speak about cases before the court, as the member well knows. However, I can say in a very general sense that we make every effort to deal with these cases which are before the courts and to make sure that what is required is certainly made available.

Foster Families Public Housing

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, this government has reduced the allowance for foster families by 6 percent, but for foster families who live in public housing, it is actually a 33 percent cut because now those families are having 27 percent of their foster allowance paid towards their rent in public housing.

I want to ask the Minister responsible for Housing how the government can justify increasing poverty for

these families by now taking this money from foster families to pay for the rent geared to income for foster families.

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Housing): The member for Radisson is correct when she says the rent that is geared to income is 27 percent of the income that is derived from the family.

In regard to the calculation of funding to foster parents, unless more than one-third of the family income comes from that source, it is not taxed or part of the income for the calculation.

*(1350)

Ms. Cerilli: Supplementary question, Madam Speaker: I would like the minister to clarify for the House that the purpose of this policy is to drive foster families out of public housing or to ensure that tenants in public housing do not foster children in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Reimer: Public housing serves and will continue to serve a function within the society here in Manitoba and for the people in need.

As mentioned, payments to foster parents and to people that look after foster children, payments in excess of one-third of the family income are then included in the calculation of funding that is geared to the income.

There is no change in the philosophy and it is not the intent to make public housing inaccessible to anybody, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Cerilli: Given that foster families in public housing are already low-income Manitobans, how can the government justify giving with one hand and taking away with the other and increasing poverty for these low-income families in Manitoba?

Mr. Reimer: Madam Speaker, I will repeat again to the member for Radisson that one-third of the family income is untaxed. If it is above one-third of the income of the family, it is used as income for the calculation on the 27 percent that is charged in the rent.

Health Care System Emergency Services—Costs

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, my question, too, is for the Minister of Health.

It is proving extremely difficult to get any sort of accurate information coming from many of the different administrators, given this particular Minister of Health's approach.

We do know that on average it takes six nurses and one doctor to operate in emergency services in a community hospital at an approximate cost of just under \$2,000. Madam Speaker, that does not include costs such as additional services at Health Sciences Centre, St. Boniface, additional ambulance fees, not to mention, first and foremost, the cost of delivering emergency services to our constituents or to the consumers.

My question to the minister is, can the minister indicate today whether or not the figure of just under \$2,000 is in fact what this minister is actually saving in any given day?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, the honourable member should be reminded that the whole idea of savings is not what is driving the process in emergency services in the city of Winnipeg.

I can understand his mind being on that since he fails daily to pick up the phone and call his federal colleagues, Madam Speaker, because they are going to be taking \$220 million away from us. He fails to do that on a daily basis and raises questions about savings here.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, Beauchesne's is fairly clear in the sense that the minister should be answering questions to the best of his ability, and if he does not have the answer, to sit down.

The information that the Minister of Health has put on the record is very inaccurate. All he needs to do is

check with the government's own estimates, and you will find just how bad you are in terms of your estimates of the federal government's expenditures on health care—and answer the question that has been posed to him, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health, on the same point of order.

Mr. McCrae: In light of what the honourable member has said in the guise of a point of order, Madam Speaker, perhaps then he can explain how you break down the \$7 billion Ottawa is taking away from the provinces for health and post-secondary education.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order by the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), I listened very intently, and when he initially started, I agree with him wholeheartedly, he had a point of order, but he added a lot of extraneous material that made me wonder why he was on a point of order. I would remind the honourable minister and all ministers that their responses to questions are not to provoke debate and are to be as brief as possible.

* * *

* (1355)

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I would ask the minister whether or not he is prepared to concede today that he cannot find other ways of saving taxpayers' money, given that we spend just under \$5 million a day on health care and the total cost that I would estimate, because the minister is not prepared to state, is approximately \$3.7 million.

Will the minister concede defeat on this particular issue and say that the real reason is because of cost savings, it is not because of quality patient care?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, I am not in the habit of making those kinds of concessions, especially when the information brought to the floor of this Chamber by honourable members opposite is so very incorrect.

The honourable member might be interested in knowing that the estimated additional expenses

currently being incurred by the Health Sciences Centre to cope with the additional volumes in their emergency departments is as follows: In the Children's Hospital emergency, there are two additional registered nurses and a .8 of an equivalent staff year for a nurse's aide plus benefits and drugs and other supplies and a physician. That is for the Children's Hospital emergency.

In the adult Emergency Department, Madam Speaker, this is on an annualized equivalent staff year basis, 4.8 registered nurses, 4.2 aides, 2.7 unit clerks. There is a 15 percent levy for benefits and then another amount for drugs and an additional physician.

So those are the kinds of additional resources being made available to the Health Sciences Centre while we go through this transition stage, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Lamoureux: Will the Minister of Health today indicate to the House what is the actual financial cost of closing down our community hospitals from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.? Does the Minister of Health have any idea—I throw the figure of \$2,000. Does he have any idea—

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

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, it is very nice of the honourable member to throw figures around, but I am not going to do that.

I would think that there would be some modest saving of dollars as a result of reduced hours of operation, but I do not have a number to throw around like the honourable member does.

North American Free Trade Agreement Impact on Trade Balance

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism frequently cites Manitoba's strong export performance, but does not ever refer to the real bottom line in trade, which is the trade balance.

Exports have indeed been strong and that is good news, but the real trade balance issue has been getting

steadily worse since the signing of the FTA and of NAFTA. Will the minister confirm the fact that our trade balance has been deteriorating since the signing of NAFTA?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Madam Speaker, I appreciate the fact that the member has indicated that our exports have been improving and increasing over the last years. In fact, I think it was 30-some percent last year to the United States, again, for the first seven months of this year, close to 27 to 28 percent to the U.S. markets.

Madam Speaker, it is my understanding as it relates to some of the imports that some of the products and some of the items that are being imported are plant for the expansion of some of the businesses that are in fact growing their exports. So that is some of the reason for imports of product or machinery into the province.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, will the minister then confirm that Manitoba's trade deficit has deteriorated since 1991 by some 70 percent from \$797 million in 1991 to \$1.284 billion in 1994? Will he confirm that deterioration?

Mr. Downey: No, I will not, Madam Speaker, but I will take a look at the numbers and get back to the member as it relates to the numbers that we have available to us.

Mr. Sale: My final supplementary question to the same minister: Will the minister also confirm that Manitoba's exports to Mexico in the first six months of this year have fallen by over 20 percent while our imports have grown by 47 percent? NAFTA is failing us clearly, at least in the early going.

Mr. Downey: Madam Speaker, the member for Crescentwood will do everything he can to try and paint a negative picture as it relates to an old, outdated position which he continues to carry with him as an NDP opposed to the development of trade and NAFTA. I do not know when he is going to get into the modern world and wake up to what is really going on. The economy, the jobs and the development of this province are far outstripping anything that he would like to have happen.

* (1400)

**Repap Manitoba Inc.
Forest Management Plan**

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

Repap has presented its fourth annual cutting plan without having completed its mandatory 10-year forest management plan, again.

Why is this government not insisting that Repap complete this 10-year plan, which was due March 31, 1992?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, we are in the process of completing it now.

Mr. Struthers: Does this minister realize that the increase in Repap's annual allowable cut without a 10-year management plan flies directly in the face of this government's commitment to sustainability, particularly the Endangered Spaces Program in which it has been quoted that there is no plan to represent natural regions involved in these agreements?

Mr. Driedger: Madam Speaker, I would beg the members of the House to have a little bit of patience, approximately a week or so, when we might be able to make some very positive announcements in this House.

**Swan Valley School Division
Post-Secondary Distance Education**

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): The Swan Valley School Division was shortchanged by this government when it was not included in the Distance Education program when it comes to post-secondary education. It was not included in Universities North, and it was shut out from first year's distance education.

Despite that, the school division spent \$100,000 and set up a site to deliver post-secondary education. However, the costs of the telephone rates which started out at \$180 an hour have jumped to \$635 an hour and are about to kill this program.

I want to ask the Minister of Education what she is prepared to do to ensure that post-secondary education can continue to be delivered at this site.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): I thank the member for her interest in this very innovative and challenging project upon which we are embarked in the Department of Education. Distance education, ultimately, will be expected to cover all parts of Manitoba. Right now it is in the initial stages. Clusters are being identified. Lines, networks and highways are being targeted for setup. School divisions have been making good preparation.

Our department has set up a special operating agency called MERLIN which is there to guide and assist divisions with their computer equipment and the materials necessary.

Ms. Wowchuk: I want to ask the minister if she realizes that the program in Swan River has been in operation for five years. The school has made the investment. They are prepared, despite the challenges that have been put before them by this government.

What steps is she going to take to ensure that those courses continue and that the people of the Swan River area are treated fairly, not shut out as they were in first-year distance education?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, many school divisions and many educational authorities across this province have begun in the last five or six years to set up their own systems. We are looking to co-ordinate, link those together. For that we have a co-ordinating agency.

As well, Madam Speaker, through Inter-Universities North, we will be establishing and are—we have established, but will be continuing to build upon the Inter-Universities North in northern Manitoba to co-ordinate post-secondary education throughout the northern part of the province and to link with post-secondary educational distance delivery services in the more highly populated portions of the province.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Speaker, since Swan River has already got an established site, can the minister

give us the assurance that they will not be punished or held back until other sites catch up? Can she ensure that the funding will be in place, that this site will continue to operate?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, the members opposite know and the members on this side know, as do many of the educators in Manitoba involved in the system know, that distance education and the innovations that are being put in place by this government to deliver such services—put in place by this government, not by the other party when they were in government—are on the forefront of education throughout Canada.

We have had discussions with other provinces as well, so that the linkages will not just be in Manitoba but, indeed, with other provinces as well. It is our intention, as I indicated in my earlier response, that this network will encompass all of Manitoba, linking all parts to each other and to other jurisdictions outside this province as well, Madam Speaker.

McKenzie Seeds Agreement Tabling Request

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson).

I understand that the Minister of Finance has discussed with the Minister of Culture and Heritage the possibility of providing the Legislative Assembly with a copy of the agreement of sale of McKenzie Seeds with Regal Greetings and MDC.

Is the Minister of Finance now prepared in the name of open government to table this agreement so that the public can see precisely what guarantees, if any, have been provided to keep the jobs in the city of Brandon?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Madam Speaker, some three hours ago in committee, we discussed this quite thoroughly. I indicated that we would take the member's suggestion seriously and hopefully have something for him in the near future.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, I ask this question of the minister then:

Why would the government not release the entire agreement as was done in the case of MDS, which was sold to the private sector, which was also in competition, rather than parts of the agreement as was suggested this morning by the minister in the committee, so that the members of the public and the members of the Legislature can see exactly how the government can exercise its rights and really guarantee those jobs in the city of Brandon?

Mr. Gillehammer: Madam Speaker, I find it interesting, the member has been silent on this for a year now. I indicated in committee this morning that we would take his request seriously. We would look at the third-party confidentiality issues and, hopefully, have something for him in the near future.

Board Membership

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the minister, why does the government not have a representative on the board of directors of the company to be able to keep abreast of the operations of the company? In other words, how does it intend to get the necessary data to assure itself that the specifics of the agreement are being upheld?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): I am sure that it will give the member for Brandon East great comfort to know that Mr. Ray West is the chairman of the board.

* (1410)

Social Assistance Government Initiatives

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Speaker, the Premier is the first amongst ministers, and so the Premier is ultimately responsible for all policies of his government, including the fact that Winnipeg has the disgraceful record of being the child poverty capital of Canada, and his government intends to make it worse when they standardize the rates for social assistance for children in the city of Winnipeg.

I would like to ask the Premier what his government is prepared to do to improve the lives, particularly of single parents with children, to make ends meet and to give them more income, not less, so they are not forced to depend on food banks, where over 40 percent of the recipients are children.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, certainly, for all of the detail of that question, I will take it as notice on behalf of the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), but I remind the member opposite that Manitoba's rates for single parents with children are in the top third, I believe, of the provinces in Canada.

Mr. Martindale: I would like to ask the Premier what his government is going to do in view of the fact that the new statistics are out recently which show that the income for single parents with one child in Manitoba between 1992 and 1994 declined by 7 percent, the worst record in Canada. What is this Premier going to do to improve the lives of single parents with children?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, we have always acknowledged the needs of single parents with children and tried to treat them in a better fashion than others on social assistance.

In addition to that, of course, we brought in the most generous child tax credits in Canada in the budget of 1989 that added several hundred dollars of income to those who have children in this province, and we will continue to look at ways in which we can address those issues.

Mr. Martindale: I would like to ask the Premier why Manitoba, in spite of what the Premier is alleging, continues to attack the incomes of people who are already poor so that, for example, couples with two children lost 3 percent of their income between 1992 and '94.

What is this Premier prepared to do to help people, instead of punishing them, by increasing their income instead of decreasing it?

Mr. Filmon: This government has maintained a policy of freezing or reducing almost all of the major tax rates

in this province, Madam Speaker. That has made it more affordable for people to live in this province than in other provinces. In fact, the cost of living—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister, to complete his response.

Mr. Filmon: The budget of the Province of Saskatchewan demonstrated unequivocally that for those in low-income circumstances, at \$25,000 or less—that in this province the taxes and the regulated costs imposed on those families were lower than they were in any other province in Canada, so by our policies we have lowered their cost of living below those of other provinces, instead of as they were under the NDP, which, of course, continued to raise their taxes and raise their cost of living.

Trade Deficit—U.S. Provincial Statistics

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, given the fact that the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics has published Manitoba's trade deficit with the United States in an official publication titled Manitoba Trade with the United States 1990-94, will the Minister responsible for Industry, Trade and Tourism confirm the fact that the deficit in manufacturing alone, and I quote from the publication, has grown in this past four years from a billion-dollar deficit to a \$2-billion deficit during that period of time?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Madam Speaker, I will not accept the numbers that the member has presented. I will not accept them in the context of which he is presenting them, but I will tell him, in 1994 Manitoba's world exports boomed to a record level of \$4.7 billion, a 29 percent increase. He continually wants to paint a negative picture as to what is happening in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, again, I made a reference to the fact that some of the import is for machinery to, in fact, produce the products that are being marketed in the international marketplace. That is the reason why there is a growth in the imports of product to this country.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, my supplementary is to the same minister.

Will the minister agree that the effect of the trade deficit of \$1.2 billion with the United States means that every Manitoban, man, woman and child, exports \$1,000 per head to pay the cost of that trade deficit which is widening every year, Madam Speaker?

Mr. Downey: No, Madam Speaker. The problem with the member for Crescentwood, again, he comes to this House looking at the wrong end of the sewer pipe. If he would—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, I do not know what expertise the minister has in terms of sewer pipes but, regardless, it is not parliamentary to make such a reference and I think it might be more appropriate if he withdrew that comment.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would ask the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism to withdraw the words.

Mr. Downey: Madam Speaker, I will withdraw. I guess he is looking at the right end of the sewer pipe. I will withdraw.

I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, to quickly complete his response.

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Speaker, the equipment that comes in to Louisiana-Pacific for a \$100-plus-million expansion probably comes as an imported product into this country.

We look at Nestle Carnation that expanded their plant at Carberry, which is several millions of dollars, and all of these create hundreds of jobs in Manitoba to produce the manufacturing products that we export.

You have to have the equipment to produce the products that you are going to sell, Madam Speaker. I hope he understands.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, when the government trivializes important questions by laughing, it clearly shows where they are at.

Madam Speaker, will the same minister confirm that based on the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics' first six months data for 1995, Manitoba's trade deficit will widen further to \$1.34 billion this year?

It is getting worse, not better, Mr. Minister. What are you doing about it?

Mr. Downey: The member should be fully aware of the fact that we have some 14,000 more people working in our economy than we had a year ago, Madam Speaker—14,000. [interjection] Nine months, that is right, not a year.

Madam Speaker, when we look at the expansion of Ayerst Organics in Brandon, Nestle-Simplot, McCain at Portage la Prairie, Pine Falls, McKenzie Seeds, and all of the things that are taking place—the garment industry that needs 1,700 workers, they buy sewing machines and equipment to bring into this province to create employment.

That is what the imports are, Madam Speaker. The agricultural machinery imports, every machine dealer has had a tremendous year this year. A lot of it is imported machinery for agriculture production.

I hope, Madam Speaker, that he would, in fact, look at both sides of the ledger.

* (1420)

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

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk); Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans); Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), for Tuesday, October 24, 1995, for 2:30 p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) for Osborne (Ms. McGifford), for Tuesday, October 24, for 7 p.m.

Motions agreed to.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

United Nations—50th Anniversary

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I wonder if I could have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable First Minister have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Filmon: Today is the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. People worldwide are celebrating this momentous occasion. It is very appropriate that we, the members of Manitoba's Legislative Assembly, join together today to recognize the tremendous good the United Nations has accomplished over the last half-century.

Canada has been a proud member of this organization since its inception on October 24, 1945. The positive impact of the United Nations has been felt in virtually every country in the world.

The United Nations is a symbol of hope that no one is ever alone in their struggle for peace, human rights, freedom and a better way of life, no matter where they live. Dedicated Manitobans are a part of a global

community committed to the United Nations principles and committed to making the world a better place for all. We should also be proud of the fact that the United Nations has named Canada as being the best place in the world in which to live in 1992, 1994 and 1995. In the half-century the UN has been in existence, Canada, itself, has become a world leader exerting influence far beyond our size.

Earlier today in this building, 25 Manitobans became citizens of Canada as part of the UN 50th anniversary celebrations. I offer my congratulations to our new Canadian citizens. This is the latest of many events that have taken place in Manitoba celebrating the UN's 50th anniversary.

I thank all the volunteers who have worked so very hard on the Citizenship Court and the many events celebrating the 50th anniversary. Their interest in organizations like the United Nations is a sign that as Manitobans our sense of caring goes well beyond our country's borders.

As the United Nations turns 50 in 1995, Manitoba is recognizing its 125th anniversary. As we celebrate our heritage and our future, let us also not forget our responsibilities to the world around us as well. I commend all Manitobans who have contributed to the work of the United Nations association and encourage all Manitobans to support the ideals this organization embodies. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I would like to have leave for a nonpolitical statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the official opposition have leave? [agreed]

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I would like to join with the Premier and all members of this Legislature in paying tribute to the 50th anniversary of the United Nations and paying tribute to the ceremony today conducted by Judge Elizabeth Willcock for the citizenship of our new Canadians here in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, it is a tremendous amount of pride when you see people affirming their desire to be citizens of Canada. At a time when there is so much in

the national debate about Canada, it is wonderful to see people from all parts of this world affirming the great wonders and beauty and freedoms of Canada and affirming the great democracy that we have through their active citizenship that we witnessed here this morning. It makes us proud, all of us I think can be proud, to reaffirm our belief in our great citizenship of our great country, Canada, and it was so very important to see these people from literally all parts of the globe affirming that this morning in the ceremony.

It is also very fitting that this Citizenship Court would take place on the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. As Dr. Nichols pointed out today, Manitoba and the citizens of Canada reflect the peoples of the United Nations. Dr. Nichols pointed out the great contributions of the United Nations to world peace, world harmony, but Dr. Nichols also pointed out that there is more to the United Nations than 150 presidents meeting in the UN in New York, that the next 50 years of the United Nations will have to be consistent with the Charter of the United Nations where we will have united peoples in the world and on the planet.

That is why today, Madam Speaker, I was so proud to see so many young Manitobans who were sponsored by the United Nations Human Rights Committee who participated in the presentation of cartoons—and some of them I dare say might have good careers later on perhaps producing those in a political sense—but produced cartoons and produced essays about the future of our planet, about the future role the United Nations has.

The themes were very consistent, Madam Speaker. One of the cartoons from one of the young persons was, let us clean up our planet. Another theme was, let us deal with racism around the world and let us deal with racism in our own community. A third theme from the young people was, let us deal with world peace. Let us truly bring world peace to our planet and move ahead.

Madam Speaker, we also saw young people produce documents to deal with the tremendous disparity in the world, the tremendous disparity even in our own communities between the rich and the poor, the disparity that is not shrinking in our world and in our

planet but rather, unfortunately, growing greater and greater between the wealthy nations and the not-so-wealthy nations and wealthy people and poor people in our great, wonderful world.

So these young people, Madam Speaker, as they were celebrating the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, I think we can be proud of the vision that Manitoba's school children have about the future, the next 50 years of the United Nations where there is a lot more work to do, not just between the nations of the world but between the peoples of the world. I congratulate the United Nations and the young people of Manitoba and the new citizens here today. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I, too, would like leave to make a nonpolitical statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Inkster have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I, along with my colleagues, join with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) in paying tribute to the 50th anniversary of the United Nations.

Some of the things that the United Nations has done have been overwhelming and have touched the hearts and souls of millions of people around the world. When it advocates and it speaks out against activities that are against human rights, natural human rights, if you like, throughout the world of promoting peace, it has provided opportunities for thousands of Canadians coast to coast in terms of being able to contribute to the world in a very positive way.

I did get the opportunity to observe, albeit somewhat short, over at the rotunda. It was really encouraging and pleasing to see, as the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier have pointed out, new Canadians being sworn in. When you take a look at the faces and the individuals themselves who participated, we are in fact very fortunate to have people from all over the world participating in a very significant way in our economy,

our social fabric and every other aspect of life within Canada.

With those few words, Madam Speaker, we again pay tribute to the fine work that the United Nations has done.

* (1430)

Vincent Massey Collegiate—Project

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, may I have leave for a nonpolitical statement?

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Justice have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the students and the staff of Vincent Massey Collegiate in Fort Garry for their project, The Arts and the Environment, which they have recently opened. This project's purpose was to capitalize on areas of the school which had the potential to serve as vital living space, areas within the courtyard and also a small alcove just off the courtyard area.

The project took place during July and August of this year. It was students who did the work of this project, the planning and also the work that it took to develop the project.

The project had three functions. It was to develop in the courtyard area a place to showcase native plants of the Prairies and to allow student interaction in this comfortable area where they could also look at some of the wonders of our prairie plant life. The area also would make reference to Japanese culture because of the ties through the school's exchange program and also it would provide a way to feature art work by students and by local and international artists.

I was very pleased that there was just wonderful co-operation from the community. That co-operation was forged by the students and the staff of Vincent Massey Collegiate, and a large number of community members

representing business interests and people who are just generally interested in the school were there to participate in the opening.

The project, Madam Speaker, is a tribute to its planners, to those who developed it during the summer months and to those who will care for it in the future. I know that it will stand for future generations of students to care for and also to enjoy. Thank you.

Charleswood Bridge Opening

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Do I have leave, Madam Speaker, to make a nonpolitical statement?

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. McAlpine: Today, the sun shone in sunny St. James and in Charleswood as the government members along with members of our—my colleagues and members of the city, councillors, along with the mayor were able to participate with the community—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, an item that has been in dispute in this Legislature I do not think is a nonpolitical statement, with the greatest of respect. This is a matter of political disagreement in this Legislature, and has been in the past, about the government paying so high an amount for this capital facility and the issues raised. I certainly know the government would be at the opening and cutting the ribbon, but I think we should be very careful about nonpolitical statements. They should be nonpolitical.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, on the same point of order, I take some exception to the comments of the Leader of the Opposition. I think what you have here today is the member for Sturgeon Creek proud of an event that occurred in his constituency today, that for the first

time there has been a private-public partnership between the City of Winnipeg and a private contractor with respect to a project such as this. There is nothing political about it at all.

Madam Speaker, people may wish to determine whether they would have or would not have supported a project. The fact of the matter is the project is there, completed, done. The politics of it are over. The day is the day for the people of the city of Winnipeg to be able to use that facility, and I think the member for Concordia is out of order with his comments.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, I would point out that, first of all, nonpolitical statements are made by leave of this House. We have had rulings in the House, including by the previous Speaker, on the question of nonpolitical statements.

I totally reject the suggestion from the government House leader that simply because something is built it is no longer a political issue. I would suggest anyone who knows the background with this particular bridge knows that there are a lot of political questions that have been asked and will continue to be asked about the bridge, and I do not think the member meant any offence.

I appreciate the spirit it was made in, but I would suggest that if we do wish to have comment on this, it might have been more appropriate perhaps if the minister brought in a ministerial statement, because under those circumstances, we can then comment on the ministerial statement, but we are in a very difficult position here because not only would I suggest this is not nonpolitical, it places us in a difficult position because, quite frankly, I think a number of us would like to then comment on this statement, which I feel is a political statement if it continues.

What I would suggest, and I would urge first of all, Madam Speaker, that you take this matter under advisement and perhaps bring it back, and then at that time, if the determination is this is not a political statement—but members opposite should realize this is nonpolitical statements by leave of the House and, quite frankly, anybody who thinks the Charleswood

Bridge is not a political issue I think has not been looking at the circumstances.

I do not believe the member meant any disrespect to the House. I believe the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) raised this more in the spirit of nonpolitical statements. I would suggest you take it under advisement, and if you rule that it is a non—[interjection]

If I can just complete my—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate. A point of order has been raised. It is a serious matter. I have heard from members on both sides of the House relative to the issue. I will take the matter under advisement and report back to the House.

I would just remind all honourable members that in the spirit of co-operation, this would be an excellent time to look at the whole area of our rules, and this is one area that I know House leaders have had—we have had discussion on previously and may be an opportunity to further that discussion.

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I have some committee changes.

I move, seconded by the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development—this is for the Tuesday, October 24, 10 a.m. sitting: the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) for the member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

This change was moved by leave in the committee and is now being moved to be properly recorded in the official records of the House.

I move, seconded by the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: the member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe) for the member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan).

Motions agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY**House Business**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, on a matter of House business, I would like to announce that the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources meeting on Thursday, October 26, at 10 a.m., will be moved from Room 254 to Room 255.

The Committee on Economic Development meeting on Thursday, October 26, at 9 a.m., will be moved to Room 255.

I would also like to call, Madam Speaker, the Committee on Law Amendments for Monday—no, I had better wait for that. Disregard the above.

Would you please call Bills 14, 13, and then the balance of the bills as listed in the Order Paper.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS**Bill 14—The Mines and Minerals Amendment Act**

Madam Speaker: To resume debate on second reading, Bill 14 (The Mines and Minerals Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les mines et les minéraux), on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Praznik), standing in the name of the honourable member for St. James.

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): I am going to continue my remarks that I began last night and remind the members of the House that we are talking about Bill 14, The Mines and Minerals Amendment Act.

I am pleased to see that some of the ministers here have had an opportunity to work with the department and are familiar with this legislation. For those who may not be, it has been described by the present minister as a housekeeping bill, Madam Speaker, indeed, a housekeeping bill that must be cleaning up a house that is particularly dirty—77 amendments and eight more substantial amendments in this so-called minor bill.

* (1440)

We on this side, having reviewed the amendments, have some serious concerns about several of the areas and also the lack of planning and consideration for our local prospectors, who have this past year been unable to complete some of their work requirements on claims in areas that have been devastated by fires. There has been no understanding, no provision given by that side of the House, by this government that claims to be there for exploration, there for prospectors—hardly.

Madam Speaker, this government has been negligent in terms of introducing this bill without the proper amendment to provide that room for maneuverability, room for consideration for those prospectors who are not able to complete work, but is there that amendment? No. No, we do not see anything for the people who were seriously affected in a fire this year. Before us we see already amendments that are dealing with something that is truly—well, it requires rethinking.

Some of the amendments before us we can see are clearly an attempt to what I would interpret is a closed-door policy and under the guise of making the act more expedient, more efficient and more consistent. One of their amendments is to move the date of publication of the annual report from June to December. As I mentioned last night, it goes along with the rule, let us defer anything we can to just before Christmas when nobody will notice and we will not have a meaningful debate on this annual report.

The fact is that there is no reason why this government, if they wish to be consistent, cannot make reports more timely, Madam Speaker, something that we would applaud and attempt to assist the government in doing. Rather than delaying and postponing publications which are ready, why not move publication dates earlier so that the public and members of this House have an opportunity to review figures which are meaningful and current?

Under the clause where there is a change in wording, where a charge is being laid for noncompliance, our side does concur with that section. Moving on to the other major amendment, it is hardly an amendment, Madam Speaker. If members will recall, we are talking

about the complete deletion of a whole section of the act, a section which was put to protect the public interest of Manitobans, a section which all Manitobans should be concerned with and I raise here in the House. This act actually calls for the total deletion of the conflict-of-interest provision in The Mines Act, a statement that I think not only raises concerns but, I hope, will be reviewed in the light of the morning as a wrong step in taking out the conflict-of-interest measures of the act.

There are many people—and some of the questions that we have concerning the conflict of interest—the argument is that it is in fact, if I may read from the spreadsheet, that the conflict-of-interest provision is being deleted because it is felt that they were too sweeping and all-encompassing and that it is considered the provisions dealing with this topic will fall under the Manitoba government conflict-of-interest policies and are sufficient.

Madam Speaker, I think that the people of Manitoba and certainly this side of the House need to be assured that all members that are privy to classified information, perhaps members that are working for the minister as an assistant, are they indeed considered to be a civil servant? Will they be under the provisions of the government's conflict-of-interest policy? Hardly.

There are numerous questions about, are there going to be exceptions? Are there people going to be in the minister's office who have access to information which is, let us say can be used to their advantage for various investments because of their knowledge of various projects that may be occurring or other decisions in the mining community which may have a fairly drastic effect in terms of the market?

For these reasons it is important to have a very clear and strong conflict-of-interest provision in The Mines Act. I believe that is exactly what we had in the past. I wish that the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Praznik) could be here because one of the things that we will be asking in committee is, what is the problem with conflict-of-interest provisions? What is the particular problem in terms of having a legislated conflict-of-interest provision?

It hardly seems reasonable to expect us to go down to the lowest common denominator. When we have good legislation in front of us, the flags are raised when the government in fact wishes to delete the whole clause. If there is a specific area of concern, whether the summary conviction component of it, does the government feel that that is too severe? Then why do they not let that be known? Are there certain individuals? Do they believe that individuals that are privy to information should be available to invest and have holdings perhaps in companies involved in mining?

These are all questions that we will be asking in regard to this. Hopefully, we will look at strengthening not weakening and in fact deleting the whole section of the conflict of interest. The purpose is, of course, to protect the public interest.

Continuing on in the so-called housekeeping bill where there are minor amendments, come to a clause where there is a section that deals with persons staking a claim on top of a former mineral lease. This, indeed, is not a problem for this side of the House. Anyone who is familiar with the geological setting will understand it is indeed possible to have a metallic mineral occurring in the Pre-Cambrian component and then perhaps have another mineral deposit which is a much later occurrence and during the Pleistocene or glacial period. So you could have indeed a quarry lease where you could extract sand and gravel. I could even argue that you could have a triple lease or a triple situation, where the sand and gravel would be removed for construction, the Paleozoic materials, the limestone, would be blasted and crushed for road base or other materials, and then, ultimately, an open-pit mine or some other form of access into the metallic minerals, Madam Speaker.

We do not have a problem with this. It, in fact, was possible under the old Mines Act, and it is unfortunate, during the major rewrite, that such an omission should have happened.

* (1450)

I would ask, during the writing of the new Mines Act, and it was proclaimed in 1992, if we had a broad-

based consultation process which included those very people who issue the mining leases and mineral depositions, were the clerical people in the Mines Branch, for example, sitting on the rewrite, or was it basically done at an administrative level, at a theoretical level? Were people with hands-on experience there at the table saying, we need a mines act that is workable, that is not going to hold back exploration, is not going to stifle the development of our mineral resources? In this case, it has for the past three years in terms of the provision which did not allow for a quarry lease and a mineral lease to occur on the same property, an oversight that perhaps caused complications and limited extraction.

In terms of the amendment that is presented in the act which is basically deleting the requirement for an Order-in-Council on monies used from the Quarry Rehabilitation Reserve Account, we have serious concerns about this. At the present time, it is our only access. It is the public venue to ensure that monies are provided in an expedient and an efficient way in terms of this fund.

Flags are raised, Madam Speaker, because it is this department which was reviewed through another incentive program, the Mineral Exploration Incentive Program, reviewed by the Auditor just the past year and received scathing comments in terms of its accountability, in terms of its management of a fund to actually spur on exploration. We want to commend the government for having incentives, but, along with that, comes the responsibility to ensure that public monies are expended in a useful, practical and meaningful way.

I am not sure that in the government's haste to make Manitoba a more saleable commodity they looked at the regulation component in sufficient degree. In fact, the Provincial Auditor has raised several very serious concerns about the department's ability to regulate these types of funds, and it is for this reason that flags are raised in terms of the Quarry Rehabilitation fund, a good program. It is a program where money is collected from the sale of materials, a small amount is put into a reserve fund, that fund is then used to rehabilitate areas that were used for the mining of sand and gravel, rehabilitated and put back into a usable condition.

There is no one on this side that is going to argue. That is a good program; we want to see that. There are hundreds of depleted deposits in Manitoba, eyesores that we wish to clean up. Had extractors been, I think, more responsible in terms of sustainable management, they would have taken on that responsibility a long time ago. Manitoba is scarred by the many operators going in, taking what they want and just leaving their waste, and not taking the responsibility to clean it up.

So we do agree that we need a rehabilitation program. This is a venue that can work. The concerns are raised with—given that this is a new program, and we are dealing with a considerable amount of money, \$2 million to \$3 million is involved in the reserve fund—do we have additional inspectors to ensure that the programs are working? Do we know that the money that is being allocated for a particular project is going to that particular spot? Do we have the proper inspectors? Do we have the documentation? Has this department increased its regulation control of the money that they are giving out?

Madam Speaker, my knowledge of Energy and Mines and of the regulation component has actually been decreased. Regulation in terms of the Mines department has been lessened, and we have seen this with the Auditor's comments, and they looked at one program—one program, Madam Speaker—a program which encouraged exploration programs. The Auditor's report cites its concerns over the lack of accountability; it is citing that junior exploration corporations did not comply in all cases with regulation, and that the ministry did not fully enforce that part of its regulation.

Madam Speaker, is it not the government's responsibility to ensure that its own laws are in fact enforced? It seems to me to be not only their responsibility to make laws, but it would also be, in fact, their responsibility to enforce them. That side of this plan to market Manitoba has been put to the wayside. It is put to the wayside to the detriment of accountability, and that is not something that the people of Manitoba can tolerate.

The Auditor's report goes on to say that they were unable to verify the completeness and accuracy of all

the incentive payments, basically saying that monies went out without necessarily knowing what the project was about or being able to verify the complete allocation. It also cites that there are other loopholes in the program, with no regulations, does not impose time limits for the start and completion of exploration plans, leading to questionable decisions and a great deal of unknowns as to is the company's starting date going to be in this fiscal year? Is it going to be in the next fiscal year?

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) understands that what we are talking about here is a large amount of money, investment money involving the private sector and involving us, as we are partners in these incentive programs, questions that I think Manitobans want to know. Is the money going to valuable projects? Are we sure the money is being spent on projects in Manitoba? The Auditor raises these questions, Madam Speaker.

The Auditor has actually said that the ministry, that is the Ministry of Energy and Mines, should improve its policies and procedures in assessing the reasonableness of incentive payments. That must be a concern to all of us. Madam Speaker, these are serious concerns.

The Minister of Mines (Mr. Praznik) seems like a very nice man, but his record, Madam Speaker, it is incredible. We are not talking about a personality. We are talking about the real important issues of accountability and verifying the payments of incentive programs to individuals to do exploration work in Manitoba.

Now, the Auditor has also said that half of the payments that were made to exploration corporations were made without, Madam Speaker, audited financial information. The ministry indicated that they did not enforce the requirement for the audited financial information.

Questions are going to be asked, why. Why did the ministry decide not to enforce its own legislation, its own laws and ensure that the people of Manitoba were protected? Why, Madam Speaker, did the ministry decide to do that?

In addition, there is an assessment committee for these applications, Madam Speaker.

* (1500)

An Honourable Member: Who is on the committee?

Ms. Mihychuk: Well, that is a good question. My colleague says, who is on the committee? The Auditor wanted to know that, as well, Madam Speaker.

We are not sure who is on the committee, Madam Speaker. There is no documentation on how the committee determines the technical merits or the cost reasonableness of the project. In fact, there is very limited evidence of clearly defined roles and responsibility of the committee or its members. In fact, there were some instances where the Auditor could not identify the members who went to those committee hearings.

The questions are, who sits on the committee? Are there people from the department? Do you have the technical expertise on that committee to be able to assess the projects that are coming before you? Who are the appointments? Who has this government appointed to the committee to review these applications? Where are the minutes of the meetings? What is reviewed in an application during the review process?

We would like to see the committee discussions and their rationale for support or denial, and I do not believe there have been any denials. Clearly, this is a lack of definition. It is a lack of defined policies and procedures which could lead and probably has led to inconsistent decisions.

Madam Speaker, the Auditor also cites in this program that in terms of inspections—and Manitobans are offering financial incentives to exploration companies in millions of dollars. Were there inspections conducted of the projects?

There are numerous questions about the whole area of regulation and accountability. Those are questions we will be asking, and we are going to be pressing the government to be responsible to the exploration

companies of Manitoba, which were not able to access their claims this summer, and this government has refused to make provisions for those individuals who were out there ready to do the work but could not. The regulations now require it to be done, and that is a shame as we look to being more co-operative, not less.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Would you call the question on the motion, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): En français?

Madam Speaker, after listening to a very substantive speech from the member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk), and speaking like an expert, we were going to support this bill, but I think now after listening to her we will have to not support it.

Madam Speaker, I know the government has said that it is a housekeeping bill; but, going over the bill, you find out that there are eight substantive amendments designed to improve the administrative efficiency. When they say it is a housekeeping bill, you get very suspicious when there are these eight amendments.

An Honourable Member: Some housekeeping.

Mr. Gaudry: Some housekeeping. I think there is a lot more housekeeping that they should do before they bring these eight substantive amendments to the bill. [interjection] I am always nice.

As I said, after listening to this member for St. James, but we would like to see it go to committee— [interjection] Exactly, but make sure that we have the committee and the people are notified that this bill will be coming to committee.

An Honourable Member: That could be trouble.

Mr. Gaudry: I know the member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger), the Minister of Natural Resources, says that

could be dangerous about having a committee and people coming forward. Yes, I guess with this kind of a bill.

I think, Madam Speaker, without any further delay, we would like to see the bill go to committee and give a chance to the public to express their views on this bill. Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 14, The Mines and Minerals Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les mines et les minéraux. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: No. All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please—

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Speaker: On division.

House Business

Mr. Ernst: On a matter of House business, Madam Speaker, I would like to advise the House that the Committee on Law Amendments will sit at 10 a.m. Tuesday, October 31, to consider Bills 8, 16 and 31. Bill 14, just passed, will be referred to the Committee on Economic Development on Thursday, October 26, at 9 a.m.

Bill 13—The Split Lake Cree Northern Flood Implementation Agreement, Water Power Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Madam Speaker: To resume debate on second reading, Bill 13 (The Split Lake Cree Northern Flood

Implementation Agreement, Water Power Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi concernant l'accord de règlement de la première nation crie de Split Lake relatif à l'application de la convention sur la submersion de terres du Nord manitobain, modifiant la Loi sur l'énergie hydraulique et apportant des modifications corrélatives), on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Praznik), standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to add a few brief comments on Bill 13, The Split Lake Cree Northern Flood Implementation Agreement, Water Power Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act.

This is an important piece of legislation, Madam Speaker, for the people of Split Lake. There are, of course, many issues that are surrounding this, and I had the opportunity when I was critic for Highways and Transportation to travel to Split Lake. Just—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am experiencing difficulty hearing the honourable member for Transcona.

Mr. Reid: As I was saying, I had the opportunity when I was critic for Highways and Transportation to accompany the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and, I believe, the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) through the various northern communities which included Split Lake and York Landing.

During that time, Madam Speaker, we had the opportunity when on our way to Split Lake, of course, to travel down the much talked about and so-called Highway 391 and had the opportunity to look very closely at the condition of that highway en route to Split Lake.

We also had the opportunity—I think it is road 280 which leads into Split Lake, Madam Speaker. We had the opportunity to travel on that road and look at the condition of that road, as well, and I must say that there were spots on both of those roads that are definitely in need of work. I know the member for Thompson has raised the issue in this House on several occasions. Of

course, I do not believe that there has been any serious attempt by the government to correct the situation that is occurring with those roads.

An Honourable Member: What happened to the former Minister of Highways?

Mr. Reid: Well, the former Minister of Highways, for the information of the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), I believe, did travel down some of those roads himself and, of course, found the condition was very much in a deplorable state, and while he may not have had the opportunity to rectify at that time since it was just shortly thereafter that he was moved from that department, I hope he has passed on his recommendations to the succeeding Minister of Transportation (Mr. Findlay) to allow some change or some improvement in those road conditions.

While travelling to Split Lake, Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity to meet the people in Split Lake and to actually participate by way of watching the people of the community as they came together through their winter carnival activities. Of course, we had a chance to sample the traditional food that was available at the carnival, and we also had a chance to look at the skills that were displayed through contests that were put on by the Split Lake community, dealing with trapper skills, races, et cetera. I found it to be a very tight-knit community.

Obviously, this agreement is very important. Bill 13 is very important to the community of Split Lake in that it deals with the flooding that has taken place as a result of hydroelectric development by the Province of Manitoba. I believe that the Split Lake community was the first community to negotiate a final settlement on the Northern Flood Agreement and that the agreement was signed in 1977 to deal with the extensive damage that had taken place as a result of that hydro development.

* (1510)

Now, I had the opportunity, along with my colleagues whom I spoke about a moment ago in our travels to those communities, to see first-hand some of the difficulties that were encountered by those

communities as a result of the flooding or the changes in the water levels, and I had a chance to travel on the winter roads that now are being utilized to service those communities.

I must say for the record once again, as I have before, those winter roads are in a deplorable condition. Madam Speaker, if I was to give an analogy of the condition of those winter roads, the winter road between Split Lake and York Landing, I have to say that if the people at the Ex, which comes to Winnipeg every summer, every June, wanted to get a better ride, they could go to the winter roads serviced between Split Lake and York Landing, because it was comparable to that type of ride.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): I wonder if the member would submit to a question.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism have leave to ask a question?

Mr. Reid: If it is a serious question that the minister is prepared to ask about my experiences in northern Manitoba and what I have seen and witnessed firsthand, I am prepared to entertain a question at the end of my comments here. I hope that the minister will be serious and that he is not doing this just purely for political purposes. I hope he is serious, Madam Speaker, when he suggested he is prepared to ask a question. If he does it in a serious manner, I will attempt in a best effort to respond to his question.

We were travelling, as I indicated, between Split Lake and York Landing on the winter road, which we found in a deplorable condition, and I know the Highways department people were out looking at the highway condition, and I have raised it with the former Minister of Transport and the current Minister of Transport to try and make some changes there.

Madam Speaker, I think that the communities of Split Lake and York Landing are being disadvantaged still in that the water regulation that takes place on that lake is affecting those communities in that they cannot use

what had been traditionally a route of travel along the lake.

The ice surface becomes unstable due to that changing water condition, that changing water level, forcing the people to use what I consider to be a substandard trail in the true sense of the word. I do not know how any truck traffic that is servicing those communities in the wintertime can travel those roads and not come out of there with some serious damage to their vehicles. I know the vehicle that we took, which was a small vehicle, I am sure, had some undercarriage damage as a result of the travel on that winter road.

This agreement, Madam Speaker, while it does address some of the issues relating to the extensive flood damage that occurred to those communities, there are obviously some other issues that have yet to be dealt with.

I had asked the current Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay) to have his department look at ways where we could rectify the situation with that winter road servicing Split Lake and York Landing, but, to this point in time, I do not believe anything has been done to rectify that road condition.

This legislation, Madam Speaker, Bill 13, I believe, has to be agreed to by both levels of government, both federal and provincial. This legislation has already been passed, I believe, by the House of Commons, and it only requires that the Manitoba Legislature take the final steps to initiate this agreement or this process, and Bill 13 is that step.

We know that the people of Split Lake have made serious efforts to negotiate this agreement, having been involved with this for a number of years, and we are quite prepared to have this legislation go to committee to have perhaps the people of Split Lake, if that is their will, come forward in committee to tell us their thoughts on this legislation and the Flood Agreement itself and any other comments that they might wish to make, Madam Speaker.

So we are prepared to listen to the members of the public coming forward on Bill 13 and their comments,

and we look forward to the committee hearings. Thank you.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, in regard to Bill 13, we are prepared to let it go to committee, also to listen to the people of Manitoba. The effect of this legislation is to prevent any claims for compensation against Manitoba from being brought forward by individuals from Split Lake under the terms of the Northern Flood Agreement. This legislation deals with the claims of the citizens of that community on the comprehensive basis.

Under the terms of this legislation, Manitoba is released from any future obligation under the Northern Flood Agreement. Any claim or matter under dispute shall be settled in accordance with the terms of the settlement agreement between the federal government, provincial government and Manitoba Hydro Electric Board and the Split Lake Cree First Nation signed on the 24th of June, 1992.

We will support this legislation to go to committee to listen, but I know it will cause some rhetoric to arise as it brings closure to an agonizingly long process of settlement under the Northern Flood Agreement. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I am pleased to speak on second reading on this particular bill.

I want to say that I have had the opportunity as a member of the Legislature for the Thompson constituency to work very closely with the people in Split Lake, the Split Lake Cree First Nation. I value the contact. I really feel that I have been honoured to be able to work with and in some small way even become part of the community in dealing with many of the concerns of the residents of Split Lake.

I wanted to outline today just some of the perspective that has been expressed to me by the people of Split Lake about what has happened with the flooding that they faced, with many of the changes that have taken place in their community through the flooding, and other changes that have occurred in recent years and their perspective on this particular bill, Madam Speaker.

I only wish to do this in a very preliminary way because I know Chief Norman Flett has indicated that he wishes to make a presentation to this committee, and I want to thank the government House leader (Mr. Ernst) for indicating his willingness to accommodate this very reasonable request that we have the committee hearings later this week.

But I want to begin by perhaps ironically commenting on an event I had the opportunity to attend on Friday. It was a retirement party for Joe Morris who has been very involved in the community in Split Lake, the council. He served 23 years on behalf of his community. What struck me as I joined with other people who paid tribute—the chief of The Pas Reserve was there; there were people from Norway House and of course many people from Split Lake itself—was the fact that Mr. Morris and the other people who had been involved in the council over this period were involved in discussions right at Northern Flood Agreement throughout much of this period.

In fact, Northern Flood Agreement was signed in 1977. If you look at that, that is a total of 18 out of those 23 years in which the Northern Flood Agreement was in place. That does not include the work that went into negotiating the Northern Flood Agreement itself which goes back to the mid-1970s.

I say to you that the feeling in Split Lake is that there were some very difficult decisions that had to be made. Initially, negotiations were undertaken by the Northern Flood Committee, and Split Lake was essentially the first community to choose the route of direct negotiations.

I must say that there was some considerable discussion at the time, but as is the case in Split Lake, it was essentially a community decision that was adopted. Those negotiations proceeded. A referendum was held in the community, and the overwhelming percentage of people who voted in the referendum were in support of the actions of the chief and council, the negotiators, and, indeed, they signed the current agreement that we are dealing with here.

I want to indicate that this is essentially one of the formalities to putting that agreement in place. The

House of Commons has, indeed, already dealt with this matter, and it is important for this matter to proceed that the Manitoba Legislature also deals with it.

But, Madam Speaker, I also want to put on the record some frustration, some concern, that has been expressed about the agreement that has been put in place. This is not only a concern that has been expressed by the people of the Split Lake Cree First Nation but also other Northern Flood communities.

* (1520)

I want to indicate, Madam Speaker, that I raised this issue in a question to the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Praznik) when the minister brought this bill in in the spring sitting of the House, and that was the question of whether the government acknowledges that the Northern Flood Agreement is, in many ways, a modern treaty.

This is a concept that received some support in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. It is a question that was raised, I know, by many people, many Northern Flood communities, and I want to indicate my concern, Madam Speaker, that the minister indicated that it is the government's position that the Northern Flood Agreement is simply an agreement.

I want to say that I feel that the concerns expressed by people in the communities is something that should be listened to by the government. The former Minister of Northern Affairs may have a different view on this, but this was the response that was received from the current Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Praznik), when he said it was an agreement.

I think he and other members of this House will have to understand the frustration of many First Nations people about even the treaty process. Many treaties have still not been fully recognized in terms of their full import. We see even today the federal government denying the fundamental treaty right, as many people see it, of its role and obligation in providing health care to First Nations residents.

I raise this, and I raise it on the record, because even in passing this particular bill, I think it is important to

note that the people of Split Lake and the people of other communities affected by the flooding, Madam Speaker, are not in any way, shape or form giving up the concept that there has to be some additional weight that goes beyond simply the recognition of this as an agreement and simply a negotiated settlement.

I think that is important because I believe that the history of Manitoba and the history of Canada has unfortunately been in many cases characterized by a betrayal of the trust that First Nations people have exhibited time after time in dealings with other levels of government.

Madam Speaker, I look only, even in recent months, to the issue of the provincial parks, which was brought in with very limited, if any, consultation, without the agreement of First Nations in areas which are supposed to be subject to co-management, and, in fact, affect, amongst other communities, the community of Split Lake. There is a great deal of frustration about the continued lack of respect, I believe, not only for the traditional rights of First Nations but of the very fundamental concept of the inherent right of self-government.

I believe, Madam Speaker, that if we are to progress in this province, the province that has the highest percentage of residents who are of First Nations background, that we must be the lead province in recognizing the inherent right of self-government.

I also believe we must be the lead province in recognizing the full import of treaties, and I say that in the sense that I believe that there must be generous spirit shown on each and every one of the many issues that are involved, Madam Speaker.

The record should be clear that nothing, with the passage of this bill, changes the feeling, the very strong sense that has been expressed by people such as Joe Morris, that I mentioned earlier, by Chief Flett, other members of the council, that the long-term obligations still remain in place. I say that because I do know the impact that the flooding has had on the Northern Flood communities, and it continues to happen. The member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) referenced very, I think, accurately the situation in Split Lake, because the

flooding affects the ability to use the winter road, the ice surface.

I also want to look at the other side, because I think one of the unfortunate facts is that in Northern Flood communities, there continue to be many people without sewer and water, there continue to be people without adequate housing. The bottom line is if you do not have such basic provisions as a sewer system and such basic provisions as adequate housing, it really does make mockery of some of the statements that appear even in the Northern Flood Agreement itself about providing those kinds of services.

I look at roads, Madam Speaker. Split Lake is served by Highway 280. It is not in as bad a shape as Highway 391, but it does have problems. The community has made repeated requests, for example, for brush clearing to make it more safe. The community has made repeated requests to deal with some of the corners that have led to tragic incidents, tragic deaths. That continues as a legacy in northern Manitoba. I want to say that the sense of the community, as has been expressed to me both publicly and privately, is that people in the community felt it was important to move on. That was one of the underlying bases for the negotiation of this agreement: the need to move on. It is not that they fully agreed with everything that is in the settlement, and I think that is to be understood. In any negotiations, one gives up certain things that one would like to see take place.

I do want to acknowledge, too, and this is something that the community has been fairly clear on, that it is ironic that in many cases throughout the years of negotiations, it was the federal government, which supposedly has the trustee relationship with First Nations, that has in many cases been the level of government that has delayed the negotiations, Madam Speaker. That applies both in terms of previous negotiations under various governments, the three governments that have been in place in that time.

I say that because I want to say very clearly that, throughout the process of negotiation, including leading up to the negotiation of this final settlement, in many cases it was the federal government that was delaying the final signing. It was the federal

government in the case of Nelson House that delayed. I am not even stating that it was the federal government as in the political party, the political entity, but certainly federal officials were not only not supportive in the negotiations but in many cases created new difficulties.

I want to acknowledge that because I feel that the province, regardless of disagreements on the question of modern day treaty status, I think the province, generally throughout the negotiations played a constructive role.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

I want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is no joy in the community of Split Lake over the signing of this agreement. There is a sense that it is time to move on. There is a sense of respect for the people who were involved in the negotiations. There is a sense that many people in the community worked very hard to achieve the goal of having the final settlement agreed. But there has also been a very consistent sense throughout, and it is something I have respected as a member of the Legislature as well. The people of Split Lake have made it very clear that they have never viewed this as a political issue to be raised one way or the other by any political party. It is an issue between the Split Lake First Nation and the other levels of government.

I know the former Minister of Northern Affairs is here, and he will, I am sure, note the fact that throughout the period of time that there were some very sensitive negotiations, we respected the sensitivity of the negotiations. I know, on a number of occasions, there was information I was made aware of by the community to keep me up to date in terms of negotiations that we respected not bringing to this political forum. I say that the spirit, when we decide on this particular bill today, should not be in any partisan sense, should not be in any political sense, and in fact, despite my comments about the role that the federal government may have played in the past, it should not be even any sense of any one party or the other having been more committed to this process than anyone else. I think the sense that we have to debate this bill today

and pass it through to committee is out of a sense of acknowledgement and respect for the people, the Split Lake Cree First Nation.

* (1530)

They have been through a great deal, the life of their community, Mr. Deputy Speaker. One of the most dramatic challenges to the community of Split Lake was the flooding that did take place, but it is a community that has held together. It is a community that, thanks to the efforts of many people and, particularly, I might note, of the elders of the community, have held together as a community.

I want to note the role of the elders because Split Lake is one community that can be a model for many other communities. There is a very strong involvement by elders, both on council and in an advisory role to council, and it is not uncommon, in the Split Lake Cree First Nation, for elders to be asked to provide advice to current-day counsellors. They know the background, and our role as legislators should be to respect their role and pay tribute to that role.

I would say that it goes beyond extinguishment of any further claims. This is the technical nature of this bill. It is not strictly a technical bill for the people of Split Lake.

It is a generation in the life of a community. It is a generation that wants to move on, that wants to be able to implement some positive changes in the community as a result of this particular settlement. That is why I know, if the Split Lake Cree First Nation has the opportunity to present later this week in committee, that they will provide a fair amount of background to members of this Assembly on the role of that community and provide recognition to people in that community that were part of the initial negotiations of the agreement itself and of the final settlement which we are dealing with here.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to pay tribute to the community of Split Lake. I want to acknowledge the difficult times that many people in Split Lake faced as a result of the flooding that did take place. I really want to pay tribute to the long-term

commitment of many people who were involved throughout this process.

I want to just end by reminding us all that I think we can learn from the perspective of First Nations, particularly in this case the perspective of the Split Lake Cree First Nation, because I believe there is one thing that I have learned from First Nations people. It is the different perspective of time and of history. Believe you me, in the difficult times that faced the community of Split Lake, and I have talked to people about this, there was always that sense perhaps of a different perspective of time than many of us might have, and it was that sense and that strength of long-term view and commitment that kept the community together, that led to some pretty tough negotiations and has led to the agreement that is being achieved here today.

I call it an achievement in the sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is not perfect. It does not go as far as the people of Split Lake would want, particularly the area I mentioned, but it is an achievement for the fact that the Split Lake Cree First Nation finally will be able to perhaps put right some of the things, some of the difficulties that happened to the community over the last 20-25 years of its history. I think that in itself should be something that we should mark in this Legislature as being a very significant event.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not going to intend to prolong the debate, but I do just want to, for the record, put a couple of points forward, and I would appreciate the support that I am sure will be coming forward from the members opposite.

Interesting, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) in putting on the record the comments that he has, did really not acknowledge the history of the Northern Flood Committee and the inability of him and his administration from 1977 to 1988 to show progress. From 1977, when the agreement was signed, to 1988, very little progress was in fact shown, and that is a fact. It is on the record.

I guess my disappointment is the lack of acknowledgement that there was a government in place able to accomplish what we feel was substantial.

Now, I am not here to compliment the government. What I want to do is compliment the chief and the council and the leadership of the Split Lake Cree, who in fact clearly saw that under the negotiations that had taken place as a five-party agreement as it related to the Northern Flood Committee chiefs and councils that a lot of time and a lot of energy and a lot of resources were being expended in the hiring of lawyers, in the hiring of consultants, and there was a tremendous amount of frustration.

In 1988, this Premier, Premier Gary Filmon, previous to the election made a commitment that there would be progress made on the Northern Flood settlement, and I am pleased to report, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there was.

There was tremendous progress made, and it did not come that easily for the chief and the council to make the decision to split away from the four other bands, but I do report today, and I happen to be fortunate, and I say fortunate, to be the minister responsible when we signed the agreement. I say that was a very satisfying day for the government of Manitoba, a very satisfying day for myself personally, and I know a very satisfying day for the chief who had gone through considerable frustrations of making sure that he was representing his community in the interests of his community. [interjection]

So he is back as chief again. I compliment Norman Flett on his re-election because he demonstrated commitment and getting on with the job.

I want the record to clearly state that there were a lot of years of frustration, where the New Democratic Party, for some particular reason, was not able to conclude the agreement—[interjection] Well, I am not adding politics to this. I am just saying for whatever reason there was they were not able to put the agreement together. History shows that. I am pleased that we were able to accomplish it.

I have a little bit of a concern about the comments made from the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) in his criticism of the northern roads. I know it is not totally on the subject, but it has something to do with it because the northern roads, winter roads, have a lot to

do with access for those people to have supplies taken in and supplies taken out.

His criticism of the roads—I am not sure whether he is criticising Norwin Construction, which had the contract over the past five years to provide the roads. What was his criticism? I was not quite clear on his criticism. Was he criticising Norwin Construction, which was carrying out the work of the northern roads? I was not quite clear as to what his criticism was. Was it Norwin, or whether it was in fact—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: On a point of order, I suspect—first of all, I would suggest that the minister's comments were not relevant to the Split Lake Northern Flood bill, nor I think are they in keeping with the kind of respect we should show for the importance of this issue.

But if the member wanted to revert back to the question that he was going to ask the member for Transcona, I am sure we can deal with any misconceptions he might have, because the road he was referring to is the Split Lake-York Landing Road. Norwin Construction does not construct that road.

I think we could accommodate, perhaps by leave, clearing up the misconception of the minister, without taking up the time in irrelevant comments that only detract from the very seriousness of the debate on this bill, which is very important to the people of the Split Lake Cree First Nation.

I think we should all show respect for the people of Split Lake by debating the Northern Flood concerns and the specific concerns of the people of Split Lake, not some other agenda the former Minister of Northern Affairs might have.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Thompson for that. The honourable member did not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts, but I would ask the honourable minister to be

relevant to Bill 13, The Split Lake Cree Northern Flood Implementation Agreement.

* * *

Mr. Downey: The point that has to be made is that this is a bill that is a piece of Manitoba history. It is important to note what contributions were made by Chief Norman Flett of Split Lake Cree. So I again compliment the committee, but I also say to the members that the communities when under some 15 years of frustration under the former administration—and it was unfortunate. It is unfortunate that we cannot have the acknowledgment from the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) that they were not able to accomplish what he should have been able to.

*(1540)

That aside, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just say that I am pleased today that the Split Lake Cree and Chief Norman Flett and all his councils and all their citizens are able to move forward, that we have seen what I believe is a compromise, yes, on their part, but a compromise on the federal and provincial governments' part.

The future, I think, is a tremendous opportunity for them, because they in fact are not sitting there waiting on a government who has prolonged for far too long a conclusion to an outstanding obligation that has now been fulfilled. I look forward to the presentations during the committee stage and am just pleased to have been a part of resolving a long-term, outstanding issue of which it is time it reached this stage. It is past time that it reached this stage.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to comment on the bill. Actually, I was just testing a long-held tradition in this Chamber that, when the minister closes the debate on second reading, no further comments are made, but I was just checking the new rules.

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): I also welcome the opportunity to say a few words on this bill, The Split Lake Cree Northern Flood Implementation Agreement, Water Power Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, first of all, I want to say that I welcome and I respect the decision and the voice of those members of the Split Lake First Nation. I do not know if the former Minister of Northern Affairs is aware that the Cree name for Split Lake is Tataskweyak. I understand that the people from Split Lake, members of the First Nations from Split Lake, had held a referendum and the referendum was—the vote was yes. I respect that.

Indeed, it has been a long time, not only for the people of Split Lake, but other communities as well, such as Nelson House, York Landing, Cross Lake and Norway House, and other First Nations in the North who have been affected by hydro development or by any development that required rechanneling the natural waterways and the lake system of northern Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, indeed, much has happened since 17 years ago. Seventeen years ago the land up north was in its natural state for the most part. It had not been disrupted. Those were the good days. Those were the good times. That was the good life.

Many of the people who were involved at the start of this process have since passed on. A lot of the chiefs and councillors, the staff of Split Lake, who worked there from day one, some of them have passed on and are no longer with us. Then there are those who were involved right from the start and who are still there today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The people and the land have changed so much up there. A whole way of life has been changed forever by this hydro development—forever. It has been changed forever. That means that we can never go back to the way it was before. That means things will never be the same any more.

When I hear stories from trappers, hunters and fishermen from Split Lake and the other communities telling me about how good everything was in those days I get really saddened and I feel for those people because I myself know what it was like in the old days before the development came on the scene. The abundance of everything was there. We lived off the land. Life was pretty good, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and then the land was flooded. There was a lot of disruption not only because of what resulted after the development was completed but there was also a lot of

disruption caused during the construction period. That disruption was very traumatic for many members of the community.

You see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the only life that members of the Split Lake First Nation knew for a long, long time, and they were comfortable with that life. So when their environment, an environment that they knew and interacted with so well, was disrupted, naturally there was confusion and people did not know what to do. Since the beginning of time this is how those people lived up there. So now they have assessed what was there and is there now. They know that things will never be the same. They know that it will not be corrected, it will not be back, it will not be put back to the state that it was in before the development took place, so the people from Split Lake—and I know this because I have talked to a lot of people from Split Lake, including the chief and council—know that this is the best they can get.

They are not entirely satisfied with the agreement, but they know that given the circumstances, given the 17 years, given the fact that a lot of people have died since while trying to negotiate this agreement, they know that they have agreed to come to terms with this government.

This development and the manner in which it took away traditional land from the people and from the affected First Nations from northern Manitoba such as those ones that I mentioned, those who belong to the Northern Flood Agreement, and the social cost that it inflicted on the people is not unlike treaties that were entered into in the past. The AJI concluded, as my colleague for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) alluded to earlier, that the Northern Flood Agreement be regarded as carrying the same legal and financial obligations as to the numbered treaties. In our case it is Treaty No. 5. This government, however, refused to even listen to that concept.

So I want to finish by saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I often wonder how people from down south, people who live on farms—because I often sit here and I read the newspapers and I watch TV, you know, people, farmers, worrying that the farming life is disappearing, and there are more and more young

people moving out. Communities in some cases are dying, and so it is like the aboriginal people up north.

That is the life that they knew for so long, and the farmers down south, that is the life that they knew for so long. For any disruption that takes place on that farm, on that family farm, well, it creates a lot of problems.

* (1550)

So I often wonder how they would feel if I were to come into southern Manitoba, and I started changing waterways, and I started changing the physical layout of the land, and I started displacing people, I destroyed their way of life. I wonder how people would feel because that is exactly what happened in northern Manitoba.

Government has destroyed a whole way of life in northern Manitoba. People were caused to be dependent on governments in Manitoba in a lot of ways, not entirely, but in a lot of ways, and so when I think about those two situations, it makes me think, I wonder what they would say. I wonder what they would do. It would be a scandal, I know, if it were to happen in southern Manitoba.

So with those few words, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for listening to me, and I salute the people of Split Lake, and I wish them the very best. Thank you.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rose earlier on what I believed to be a point of order believing that the bill was in the name of my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism. I appreciate that technically I suppose you could rule that, therefore, I have already spoken to the bill and I not now be given an opportunity to make a few comments, but I would ask leave to put just a few comments on the record, particularly in response to the member for The Pas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Agriculture have leave to put a few words on the record seeing as he had been recognized at a previous time? Does the honourable minister have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Leave? No. Leave has been denied.

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): I am going to take this opportunity to put a few remarks on record with respect to this particular bill, Bill 13, The Split Lake Cree Northern Flood Implementation Agreement, Water Power Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am a band member of one of the Northern Flood bands. I am a member of the Cross Lake Cree Nation, and I was born and raised in Norway House and many different northern communities throughout the North. I know first-hand of the situation of aboriginal people. I know the way of life that was altered. Among my people, the traditional livelihoods that our people once enjoyed in northern Manitoba are no longer there.

In 1977, and we can, I suppose, throw remarks across this Chamber as to who is responsible for the flooding of many traditional territories and the loss of life. It is unfortunate that we lost our way of life in many of our northern communities.

One of the things that I do, is that, when somebody else is speaking, I do listen. I would ask for that same respect.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Could I ask all honourable members to carry on their conversations in the loge so that the honourable member could finish his debate. The honourable member for Rupert's Land, to continue.

Mr. Robinson: In 1977, Split Lake, Norway House, Cross Lake, York Landing and Nelson House became part of the Northern Flood Agreement. I have had the opportunity of being in Split Lake on a number of occasions, and, most recently, this past spring when I accompanied the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

At that time, we had a community meeting with many members of the community, the elders of the

community, the council under the leadership at that time of Chief John Garson. Of course, now Chief Norman Flett and council are going to be speaking on this particular bill in committee that we are now talking about.

Split Lake is one of the traditional communities in northern Manitoba where the first language is Cree, and the people of that community still speak that language as their first language. As my colleague for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) mentioned earlier, many people have come and gone who have worked on this very issue for a number of years, including Chief Walter Monias who recently passed away. It was, of course, with deep sorrow that the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk), Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) and myself attended the funeral and showed our respects to the family of Chief Walter Monias.

Chief Monias was one of those people who had ultimate respect for all people and elders and his fellow leaders, and in Split Lake, we have had an opportunity to recently have discussions with the community leadership and with the elders who provide extremely good advice to their current leadership, and that is a practice of this community. Their meetings are conducted in a very traditional manner where the first language is spoken, and also the availability of elders is evident, where elders provide the younger leadership with some guidance on critical issues that they are dealing with.

One of the findings of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I would like to read the recommendations that were found by the commissioners of the AJI. I had the opportunity of being in Split Lake during the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry hearings. What they came up with in their recommendations is that the governments of Manitoba and Canada recognize the Northern Flood Agreement as a treaty and honour and properly implement the NFA's terms.

In other words, the NFA communities, including Split Lake, regard the Northern Flood Agreement as a modern day treaty, and we support that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Another recommendation of the AJI was that appropriate measures be taken to ensure that equivalent

rights are granted by agreement to the other aboriginal people affected by the flooding.

The community of Split Lake is an active community. We have a high school. We have the opportunity now for many of the students to complete their education there from K to Grade 12, and this is primarily due to the hard work and the leadership of the community of Split Lake. We have seen a community, in spite of the problems that have been suffered in the past by the flooding and the loss of a way of life and traditional economies being taken away from the people in that community, we have seen people, in spite of those negative things that have occurred and have happened to those people, make great strides.

I was deeply honoured when the community elders and the councillors and the chiefs gave their MLA the proper blessings for him to carry out the work in this Manitoba Legislature. They sought words of prayer from their elders to provide him with the strength to be able to speak properly on their behalf here, and those are very significant things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for an MLA to be given that respect and honour. Even though there was some disagreement between the communities in the past on how to proceed in terms of the Northern Flood Agreement, Split Lake was the first community to break away from the Northern Flood Committee and are pursuing matters on their own hand.

Out of respect for the community leadership, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and a request by them for us to support this bill, I stand today to applaud the accomplishment of the leadership of Split Lake, and I will be supporting this bill into committee. I will be the last person from our side of the House to speak on this bill, and I move that we move it to committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 13, The Split Lake Cree Northern Flood Implementation Agreement, Water Power Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Agreed.

* (1600)

House Business

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Acting Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, we wish to refer Bill 13 to the Economic Development Committee for 9 a.m. on Thursday, October 26.

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Agreed.

The hour being 4 p.m., as previously agreed, the first private members' hour.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS— PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 201—The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), Bill 201, The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie, standing in the name of the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine).

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? [agreed]

Bill 204—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (2)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), Bill 204, The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille, standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? [agreed]

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 205—The Health Care Records Act

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Second reading, Public Bill 205, The Health Care Records Act; Loi sur les dossiers médicaux.

Are we proceeding?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No.

Bill 208—The Elections Amendment Act

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Bill 208, The Elections Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi électorale.

Are we proceeding?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 35—Altona Centennial

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On the proposed resolution of the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), the Altona Centennial.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to move, seconded by Mr. Dyck, the member for Pembina, that

WHEREAS the 1880s saw the opening of the West Reserve in southern Manitoba and the settlement of the area with Mennonite immigrants; and

WHEREAS in 1882 the Canadian Pacific Railway brought a line to the West Reserve and built a spur at Altona in 1885; and

WHEREAS the building of three elevators along the CPR spur line in 1895 marks the beginning of the town of Altona; and

WHEREAS Altona is the site of the first oil-crushing plant in the province of Manitoba which was organized and built by the people of Altona and which was at the forefront of opening the west to the oilseed industry; and

WHEREAS the town of Altona has historically been attractive for business, being the home of firms such as the Golden West Broadcasting corporation and D.W. Friesen & Sons, the largest printing firm in Canada, and

WHEREAS the diversity of the Mennonite community has been instrumental to the development, growth and continuing vitality of the town of Altona; and

WHEREAS 1995 is Altona's 100th birthday.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba congratulate the town of Altona on its centennial birthday and wish the residents all the best in their celebrations in 1995.

Motion presented.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Acting Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to stand in this Chamber and congratulate the people, the council, the mayor and all the members of the community of the town of Altona on its birthday, and 1995 was that hundredth year that the town was incorporated and established.

I think it is somewhat ironic, Mr. Acting Speaker, that this resolution comes before this Chamber almost at the end of 1995, and I guess this is somewhat symbolic of how we deal with issues that come before this House. Had I had my way, I would have stood in this Chamber in the spring of the year and congratulated the community at the beginning of the year. However, the way we draw our resolutions leaves some things to be desired in the process of establishing speaking orders in this House, but set that aside, I think it is important to note that the town of

Altona and the surrounding community were part of a migration of people out of Russia that established the area which was then known as the West Reserve.

First of all, the immigrants out of Russia came to what was then called the East Reserve, an area just east of the Red River within the Niverville and Arnaud, that area, where they established a number of smaller communities, and a year or two later, some of the people headed down river, down the Red River by barge and boat, and ended up at Fort Dufferin and from there on started to explore the territory which was then known as the West Reserve, or which was later to become known as the West Reserve, in search of better land.

It was always deemed that the area west of the Red River was an area that was too dry for the most part. There were no large lakes which communities could use as water reservoirs, and there were no large rivers running through that other than the Red River, which again could be used on an ongoing basis as a water supply, and, therefore, settlers, when they came to Manitoba sort of ignored that area, and the Mennonite community was encouraged by the then government to look at that area for settlement.

The government of Manitoba, which was then a newly formed province, encouraged these Mennonites to explore that area, and as a matter of fact, set aside a fairly large tract of land and said, we will allow you to settle there unimpeded and hence became known as the West Reserve.

The town of Emerson at that time, which was right next to Fort Dufferin, found out that CN Rail was going to build a rail line into the United States, and the small community of West Lynne, just west of Emerson, decided that they would become the transportation hub of western Canada, and, in fact, planned six major railways heading out of West Lynne connecting to CN Rail, which was the north-south connection to Manitoba and into the United States, and one of those rail lines was planned to run through in a northwest direction through the community of Altona on its way to Rock Lake. That, however, did not materialize because CP Rail, at the same time, decided that they would build a rail line from what is now known as

Winnipeg to the town of Neche, which was actually not called Neche. It was called Smuggler's Point at the time, and hence the birth of the town of Gretna.

Similarly, Rosenfeld established a small post office, and between Gretna and Rosenfeld there was really nothing until the Rempel family and the Wiens family migrated from Fort Dufferin on their way west, and they stopped at the new railway and decided that they would take up a homestead there, and that, hence, became known as the village of Altona; in other words, old Altona.

* (1610)

A school was built within a few years and the community prospered. What really started the growth in this area was an elevator company, because there were many farmers at that time operating in the area who had no place to haul their grain except to the nearest town of Gretna which was some six or seven miles away.

An elevator was built and within two years another three elevators were built, and the town had a storage capacity of almost 200,000 bushels of grain within two years. That, of course, encouraged other business entrepreneurs to come to Altona and establish there and provide a service centre to the then growing farm community in that area.

What is interesting to know is that Altona became known as basically a very integrated town, because it was not just a Mennonite community. It was known as a town that was rather diverse in its culture. There were a number of Jewish businessmen, a number of English businessmen, some of Irish and Scottish descent, who decided to open stores and blacksmith shops and all those kinds of things that communities depend on and farm communities depend on for service.

So out of this grew a rather diverse community but a very, very progressive community. Until today, it is probably known as one of the most progressive communities and is certainly part of the southern part of this province which has seen the largest growth rate as an area in all of Canada.

I think it is a compliment to the leaders of that community because it was not only the business community that drove the spirit, it was, in large part, the community's effort to make sure that their young people would have the ability and would have the knowledge to progress. Education was deemed one of the most important parts of community development in the town of Altona.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is noteworthy to note that, after the second year of the establishment of the town, there was not only one school but there were two schools in the town. It did not take long before a college was built, although private, but it was a college because the community wanted their young people to have the basis of higher learning. So education has become a very important part of that community—or became a very important part of the initial establishment of the community.

Secondly, I think it is important to note that the religious aspect of the community also became a very significant driving force in that community in that they established, the first year of its existence, a church that all members of the community attended, not only the Mennonite community, but it was a mixed congregation that attended the religious exercises there. I say this because there is a misconception in many areas of the province that Altona is solely and purely and was always a Mennonite community. It has only become probably known as a real Mennonite community within the last 30 or 40 years. Previously, it was never known as such.

As a matter of fact, some of the early Mennonite settlers avoided the town of Altona because it was one of the few towns that had a hotel. It had a liquor store, and it was seen as a community that encouraged what they then called the vices, so it was avoided by some people.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

In spite of that, not only did the community grow, it became a leader in the establishment of industries. I think it is important to note that some of the people who resided in that town, some of the pioneers that pioneered the area, had a vision. They were not afraid

to take chances. One of the people and one of the leaders in the community who drove the growth in that area was, of course, Mr. Siemens. Mr. Siemens was convinced that one of the products that the forefathers had brought from Russia could in fact be utilized in a manufacturing process. It was the sunflower seed.

The sunflower seed was initially brought to Manitoba by the Mennonites from Russia as a confectionery instead of peanuts. I mean, we were not able to grow peanuts in this area and neither were they able to grow peanuts in Russia where they had initially settled when the Mennonites migrated from Prussia to Russia.

Similarly, they brought the confectionery seed, so they had something to do in the evening when they read their newspapers or their Bibles or those kinds of things.

Mr. Siemens was convinced that they could manufacture and crush an oil. That, of course, became a reality when most of the farmers and many members of the community bought shares, \$10 shares, in a company which was later called CVO. They spent \$10,000 buying crushing equipment in Chicago, transporting it to Altona and setting up a small sunflower oilseed-crushing plant.

That plant became a very important aspect of the then-war effort during the late 1930s and early '40s because the war effort was looking for a very specialized oil. So there was a ready market created for this type of oil as a fine lubricant that would resist heat. So they had a well-established ready market for this oil. Later on, of course, it became known as a very significant product that could be used in cooking and all those kinds of things. Hence, of course, when canola came along, or rapeseed, that also became an important part of the crushing industry.

So Altona has really demonstrated its leadership ability in not only establishing and finding at the initial stages new industry—and the oilseed-crushing industry in western Canada or in all of Canada really, North America, was largely developed from the idea that Mr. Siemens had, proving that you could in fact crush oil and utilize oil from something that you grow on your farm.

Similarly, the Friesen family and its printing firm has provided over the years a significant growth for the community, now employing some 600 people in an industry that is relatively not well known across Canada, however, has become probably the largest printing industry in all of Canada.

Similarly, the Loewen family, which manufactures replacement parts for machinery, exports across the world its products that are made in Altona.

One of the newest industries that we have is Elmer's Welding, manufacturing row crop equipment and exporting, again, to many parts of the world. The progression of the community was largely a credit to the leadership that was shown by the development of those, and we need to congratulate today. I stand proudly in this Legislature and say happy birthday to all the people of Altona and the surrounding areas.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Madam Speaker, perhaps the member for Emerson could lead the House in a rendition of Happy Birthday for the town of Altona, but I will not even attempt that, knowing of my limited capabilities at singing to attempt singing Happy Birthday to Altona, although we do wish them well.

An Honourable Member: We appreciate it, Daryl.

Mr. Reid: I am sure the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) would appreciate that if you heard my voice.

This resolution is important, Madam Speaker. I listened very intently to the comments of the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) when he was relating the history, first when he was reading the WHEREASes of the resolution itself where it referenced the history of the community in the town of Altona starting in I believe it was 1880 when the southwestern part of Manitoba was opened to settlement and there was an influx of people from Russia, I believe, there was an influx of new immigrants to this part of Canada, particularly from Russia, and the community Mennonite peoples chose to settle in this particular area of Manitoba looking for new opportunities for themselves and their families.

* (1620)

One of the things that I find interesting that I guess by way of omission on the part of the member for Emerson, and I am not sure if it was intentional, but there is obviously a long history of the First Nations people in this province that also contributed to the development of the opportunities in this province. I want to mention to the member for Emerson that the First Nations people also contributed to the development of this province and still continue to, Madam Speaker.

I listened intently to the comments from the member for Emerson when he referenced businesses. Now, I know businesses form a large part of the small towns, whether it be the elevators in the town and the agricultural opportunities or the establishment of certain industries like the Golden West Broadcasting or D.W. Friesen, relatively well-known names to Manitobans.

One of the things that I like to hear when we talk about the history, and I know the member for Emerson perhaps has a long history and can relate historically to the community of Altona, but I like to hear about the people and the accomplishments that they have had. I know it is important to talk about the businesses, but it is, I think, more important to talk about the people themselves and what they have done to prosper, to have their communities grow and the efforts that they have made.

The Mennonite community, of course, the diversity of the Mennonite community has allowed the town of Emerson to build and to grow into what is now a thriving town, and they are contributing to the economy of the province of Manitoba. Madam Speaker, I know that the businesses are important, and the member did reference somewhat to some of the accomplishments and the historical perspective of the Mennonite community and the people of Altona.

Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the people of Altona on the occasion of their 100th birthday, and may they continue to grow and prosper as a people working together in co-operation.

With those few words, Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak on this resolution and to congratulate the town of Altona on its centennial birthday and wish the residents of this community all the best in their celebrations.

The story of Altona begins with the history of the Mennonite people and their settlement in southern Manitoba. Madam Speaker, much of the information that I have brought was taken out of a book which was given to me by my uncle, which is called the Altona Pictorial History, and it was my uncle Peter Victor Penner, known as Vic Penner, who edited this book. He compiled it. He did the pictorial history of it, and then, interestingly enough, it was his son Steve, who is my cousin, who did the jacket for this book and also compiled the pictures in there. So, to me, this resolution has extreme interest, and so I am very pleased to be able to speak on this resolution and to congratulate the people of Altona.

A large group of Mennonites first immigrated to Canada in 1874, '75 and '76, and this first group of immigrants were very hardworking and determined to make a life for themselves in this new land. For many of them, their lives were a constant struggle filled with many difficulties and obstacles. The tradition of overcoming obstacles through hard work and effort continues to be a part of the Altona culture. This is evidenced by the many successful businesses and enterprises which form part of the fabric of this community.

The CP Railway also was a large contributing factor to the development of Altona. Madam Speaker, calls for the establishment of a railway to be built in the West Reserve were being expressed as early as 1870, and in 1882 the Canadian Pacific Railway established the southwestern branchline from Gretna to Rosenfeld.

This line also went directly to the old Altona village, and in 1895 the CPR built a new siding half a mile north of the village, and a new townsite was surveyed. Over the following decades, the two communities

shared many services and community facilities. Today, it is difficult to make a sharp distinction between these two communities. The establishment of the railway line quickly resulted in the growth of the town of Altona, and soon there were flourishing businesses and a rapidly expanding population.

The first school was established in Altona in 1896, but because of the growing population, a larger school was needed. In 1899, a bigger four-room classroom was erected, and by 1900 there were 100 children in attendance. The program of instruction was in keeping with the ethnic make-up of the local population. Instruction of arithmetic, English and geography was conducted in English, while German literature, grammar and religious instruction were conducted in German.

In 1908, we saw the establishment of the Mennonite Educational Institute which contained a 28-room dormitory for those students from outside of the local community, and, by the end of its first year of operation, the Mennonite Educational Institute was instructing 66 students from Altona and surrounding areas.

The main purpose of the Mennonite Educational Institute was to train teachers for public schools. Soon, however, the Mennonite Educational Institute also became somewhat of a community centre by introducing the local community to the world of music, literature and religious thought.

The first church was established in Altona in 1912. By the turn of the century in 1900, Altona had become a flourishing community of 200 people with all the features required by the townspeople: churches, a school, a growing business sector and community, and health services.

Altona has always had, and continues to have, a vibrant business community. At the turn of the century, Altona possessed such traditional businesses as general stores, implement and lumber dealerships and blacksmith shops.

Some of the more well-known businesses that were established during this period were the Friesen Brothers

store; J.J. Priest started the Altona Machinery Company; and H.C. Epp opened a machinery business.

These businesses contributed significantly to the quality of life in Altona. Many continue to flourish to this day. For example, in 1907, David W. Friesen established a confectionery and grocery store. David Friesen's business would eventually grow and expand into one of Canada's largest printing and school supply firms. This is one business still operating in Altona which can trace its beginnings to the turn of the century.

Madam Speaker, this business also had the Altona Echo. They did the publishing of this paper, and the gentleman I named as Victor Penner was the editor of that paper for 35 years. So I want to pay a tribute to him and thank him for his many comments that he made in that paper.

It was also at the turn of the century that the Bell Telephone Company extended lines to Altona and surrounding area.

An Honourable Member: Is that Penner related to you?

Mr. Dyck: That Penner is my uncle, sir. Yes, sir.

The new telephone lines and the existing railway system provided the townspeople of Altona with greater opportunities to communicate with their rural neighbours.

Medical services were available in Altona from almost the beginning of its establishment. Now, the first doctor in the community was a woman by the name of Susan Isaak. In 1902, Miss Isaak left the community of Altona and was replaced by Dr. E.E. Meeck, who was joined by Dr. John Paul Hiebert in 1907. He stayed until 1912. In 1912, Dr. Lambert Breidenback settled in Altona, where he practised until 1952.

Nursing and dentistry facilities were also to be found in the community of Altona and served the community quite well until 1936, when a hospital was established. The hospital was a private institution which was

supported entirely by voluntary activities of the local communities. It was incorporated into a public institution in 1935.

Interestingly enough, this was all run by volunteers, other than the doctors who were working there, so certainly is a deviation to the way we are operating today.

* (1630)

The First World War brought a period of great change to the community of Altona. This era saw many townspeople leave the community but also saw the influx of new settlers. Because of religious convictions, between 1922 and 1926 nearly 1,000 Sommerfelder Mennonites from the West Reserve left the province.

Now, this had a significant impact on the community of Altona. However, this loss was offset by the arrival of Mennonite refugees from Russia. By various accounts, hundreds of people arrived between 1923 and 1928, and many were made welcome in Altona homes. These new immigrants soon settled in Altona and surrounding area and quickly became part of the local community.

In 1919, Altona became an unincorporated village district. This allowed for an elected committee of three, who were responsible for such things as roads and sidewalks, the provision and supplies of water, heat and light and the management of the local fire department. This early committee also oversaw the construction of sidewalks and the establishment of streetlights in 1919.

This early Altona village committee financed its operations mainly from tax revenue, and the people who filled the positions on the committee were almost always of Mennonite background and were businessmen in the community of Altona. The Rural Municipality of Rhineland managed the affairs of Altona. In 1946 the Village of Altona was formally incorporated.

Altona, like other Canadian communities, suffered serious hardship due to the Great Depression of the

1930s. Altona, like other communities in southern Manitoba, depended heavily on wheat to sustain its economy. In the 1930s, the wheat market collapsed and this event brought severe economic times to Altona. The response of Altona and area to this catastrophe will not surprise those familiar with the character and the traits of Altonians. The people of Altona and surrounding area came together to find a solution to this problem in the spirit of co-operation and collaboration.

An excellent example of this was the development of the Rhineland Agricultural Society. The society was instrumental in recognizing the fact that local farmers needed to diversify their crops and provided interested farmers with the knowledge and assistance needed to make this transition. The society also aided in the formation of agriculture clubs and the establishment of an annual fair boasting local agricultural exhibits, Madam Speaker.

Finally, this society established the Rhineland Agricultural Institute, which sponsored short training courses for farmers. There is little doubt that the society was instrumental in assisting farmers and thereby the entire community in recovering from the effects of the Great Depression.

Another important development which grew out of the disappointment of the Great Depression was the Rhineland Consumers Co-operative, which was formed in 1931. This co-operative sold items which many farmers considered necessities: gas, oil, grease, binder twine, and later expanded to include a general store, a co-operative hatchery, machine shop and a lumberyard. The co-operative soon emerged as an important part of the business community of Altona, serving both Altona and the larger local community.

Although the Great Depression of the 1930s affected Altona quite severely, it is important to note the lessons the townspeople learned from this experience and how they coped with this situation. Co-operation and sharing of resources was necessary for the community to prosper, as were local initiatives and motivation. These traits are the hallmarks of the community of Altona.

The Second World War was another period of change and transition for Altona. During the war, the population of Altona rose from 600 to 1,065. As a result, the local village committee decided that the time had come to seek incorporation as a village. Incorporation would allow the community to grow and prosper in an orderly fashion and would help to provide the services which a growing population would require.

The Second World War brought another period of expansion to Altona. For example, in 1948, the Altona hospital was constructed with a laboratory, X-ray rooms, major and minor operating rooms, pharmacy, labour and case rooms, nursery, waiting rooms, nurses station and a total of 30 adult beds. At the time of its completion, it was regarded as one of the most modern and best-equipped rural hospitals in western Canada.

The Second World War years were years of transition for the community of Altona. The people of Altona were increasingly seeing themselves as Manitobans and Canadians and not only as Mennonites. The 1940s also witnessed the transformation of Altona from a small village to a busy, rapidly expanding town, the establishment of industries, commerce and services which served as the foundation for future growth. Much of this growth took place in the 1950s, and this decade saw the change in status of Altona from the village to a town in 1956. This allowed the community to undertake endeavours on a much larger scale, example, completion of a sewer system and waterworks. This decade also brought the establishment and expansion of new businesses.

An exciting business venture was opened, and that was the radio station CFAM in 1957. Madam Speaker, I must interject here as well. The lady who was the host of Children's Party was Aunt Ollie, and she also was my aunt, my real aunt, and so she was the wife to the editor of this book, who I have recognized here. So my connection goes closer and closer all the time to Altona.

The recreational and the cultural life of Altona which had always provided the community with social diversions became much more sophisticated during the '50s. While once there had been outdoor hockey rinks, there now was an indoor rink in the community. The

arts came in to being, as well as speech arts festivals. Golfing was introduced into the town, and so you can see that many sports activities became a part of the Altona community.

While many things have changed in the community of Altona, one thing has endured. This is the character and the initiative of the people at that local level. It was through their efforts that Altona and surrounding area was able to survive and flourish while other communities did not. I am confident that the hard work and efforts of the people of Altona will continue to sustain this community in the years to come. I know that all members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly join me in wishing the town of Altona congratulations on this the year of their 100th birthday. May you enjoy many more years of prosperity and growth.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I speak actually on behalf of the Leader of the Liberal Party and my caucus colleagues in joining the member in support to this resolution.

Altona's 100th birthday is a very significant milestone, in particular in a year in which we are celebrating Manitoba's 125th. Altona has done wonderful things for the province in the past, and I am sure that Altona will continue to do that well into the future. We are convinced, at least on this side of the House, that it is going to be a town with a wonderful, prosperous future. We applaud all of the efforts of individuals that have contributed to this year's celebrations of the centennial and give everyone our very best.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Is it the will of the House to pass the resolution?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Res. 44—50th Anniversary of the United Nations

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, there has been some discussion and there has been agreement amongst House leaders, subject to agreement from the House, by leave, to bring Resolution 44, the resolution on the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, forward at this time.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to bring Resolution 44 at this time? [agreed]

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): I move, seconded by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that

WHEREAS October 24, 1995, marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations; and

WHEREAS hundreds of agencies and programs of the United Nations, such as the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization and the World Food Program have provided vital support for initiatives in developing countries and in maintaining democratic mechanisms across the world; and

WHEREAS the United Nations is the only international agency to embrace issues of human rights, women, children, the disabled, indigenous peoples, the environment and world peace and justice; and

WHEREAS Canadians have played an integral role in the United Nations over the last 50 years and Canada's role as a middle power has contributed to bridging the gap between the world's north and south states; and

WHEREAS United Nations Peacekeepers are currently deployed in a number of troubled areas around the world; and

WHEREAS Canada has been a major contributor to peacekeeping efforts to restore peace and justice and protect human rights and is expanding its role in the prevention of international and internal conflict; and

WHEREAS worldwide conferences sponsored by the United Nations, such as those on the environment,

women, population, human rights, social development and habitat have resulted in an open and productive discussion of important issues; and

WHEREAS reform of the United Nations will be a primary focus of the United Nations Association Canada in this year marking the 50th anniversary to ensure that the organization continues to be responsive to difficult global problems.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba join with millions of other groups and individuals around the world in recognizing the 50th anniversary of the United Nations and in looking forward to further progressive initiatives from this organization which will contribute to the democratization and effectiveness of the UN for many years to come.

Motion presented.

Mr. Struthers: Madam Speaker, I take great pleasure in rising in the House today to put forth this resolution in support of the United Nations and celebrating its 50th birthday, the 50th anniversary of the United Nations.

I want to thank all members for allowing me the leave to speak on this bill at this time. I think it is timely seeing as today is actually the anniversary of the UN, and I would encourage all members to think about and hopefully, at some point in the next short period of time this afternoon, join with me and pass this resolution forward and show our support in celebrating the United Nations' 50th anniversary.

There are times, I think, in the House when co-operation of all members of the House is called upon. In my mind, this is one of those instances where all MLAs, irrespective of political affiliation, can join together in one voice and express our support for the United Nations, a world body that does so much good in keeping peace throughout the world and helping people who may not have as much of an opportunity to help themselves as we do here in the western world.

Madam Speaker, the United Nations has oftentimes been instrumental in peacekeeping efforts around the

world. Multilateral efforts have helped to bring about peaceful solutions to conflicts of warring factions in a number of countries over the last 50 years. However, after everyone has gone home, the citizens of Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean have become everyday victims of antipersonnel mines which are indiscriminately planted during times of war.

I am talking very specifically about one issue, for the next few minutes, that I think the UN can move to actually help people in many countries, many third world countries who have been the football fields for larger powers in their struggles for, in some cases, world domination, for their struggles against one another, the struggles that have occurred over nothing more than political ideology. There are many countries around the world right now struggling as superpowers, and indeed some middle powers vacate the warring zone and go home thinking that the war is over, Madam Speaker.

We have to remember that the war lingers on in some parts of our country even after the armies and the navies and the air forces return home. A specific example that I am talking about is that I think the UN can play a very positive, proactive role in removing the mines that are left behind once a war is over. The United Nations itself estimates that at least 100 million of these deadly seeds, these mines, are currently sown in the ground and a similar quantity sits in stockpiles ready for use.

It is my hope that these stockpiles of mines will never be used, but I think what we have to do is realistically look at the mines that are already in place underground and killing and hurting people. Every year two million more mines, on average, are laid in the ground and only a fraction of that number are removed. In Cambodia alone, 35,000 men, women and children have lost one or more limbs due to the mines that have been left behind following the war in that country. One in every 236 Cambodians is an amputee, the highest concentration of any country throughout the world. Once productive land has become a death trap.

Canada has yet to legislate an export moratorium on anti-personnel mines, while some of the biggest mine

exporters like Italy, Belgium, France, the Czech and Slovak republics and Sweden have already done so.

It is my contention, Madam Speaker, that the federal government should move with these other countries and put in place an export moratorium on antipersonnel mines. I think that would be a very positive step from our government in Canada during this, the 50th year of the existence of the United Nations.

I think we as legislators, although we cannot directly dictate what the federal government does, I think we as legislators have a responsibility to approach our local federal representatives and impress upon them the importance of taking the very positive step of putting an export moratorium on the mines that are sent to predominantly Third World countries and have caused the kind of maiming and killing that is taking place following the wars that have taken place in their countries.

I think that the United Nations should take a lead in demanding that countries legislate a stop to mine production, mine use and mine export, not just individual countries around the world, but I think the United Nations working together should be able to take this lead. I think they can demand a stop to the production of mines and a stop to the use of the mines, and I think they should be able to put a stop to the export of mines from one country to another, Madam Speaker.

The bill for worldwide demining is enormous, \$85 billion dollars or more, according to the United Nations, from \$300 to \$1,000 per mine. Few of the affected countries can afford the price tag. I think all honourable members can imagine the difficulty of many of the Third World and developing countries having a tremendous amount of difficulty digging up and disposing of the mines that have been left behind in their countries and trying to protect their own people.

I believe that we in the developed world have a moral obligation to clean up the mess that we have put there in the first place. Now, I do not care whether they were communist or whether they were fascist or whether they were capitalistic or socialistic, there are people in some Third World countries who are being maimed

and killed because of the mines that we leave behind once we vacate the country after war.

My contention is that we all have an obligation to help out these people when they cannot afford to take the mines out themselves. I think that any of the members present would find it hard to disagree with that. It is my belief that we must support land mine victims with medical care, prosthetics and therapy. Each artificial limb costs an average of \$125, and a child amputee requires about 25 prostheses in a lifetime.

* (1650)

The production, sale and export of various types of antipersonnel mines boosted the financial coffers of many wealthier countries like Canada across the world while the victims pay the ultimate price. The time is long past due for the countries responsible to get rid of the menace they created and to give the land back to the people. The United Nations, I think, can play an effective part in doing this.

Madam Speaker, I just want to spend the last few minutes that I have to speak on this resolution to talk a little bit about what are some of the obstacles in the way that the UN is experiencing in actually helping out, with one small example, like the demining of what used to be military zones in Third World countries.

One of the things that right now is working against the UN is a humongous deficit that it is under. We have learned fairly recently that the UN is in debt to the tune of \$1.4 billion. That, obviously, is a hindrance to the capabilities and the effectiveness of the United Nations.

My understanding of the United Nations is that they have been undertaking a restructuring program and are seriously looking at ways in which they can get their financial situation under control. Part of that has to do with the amount of money that the United States of America owes to the United Nations, and I was very encouraged to hear President Bill Clinton yesterday, on Monday, talking very much favourably in having the United States come forward with its share of what it owes to the United Nations in terms of money. My

only hope is that President Clinton will not be stopped by the attitude and the swing that is taking place in the American Congress towards not paying their share of the bills at the United Nations.

I think one of the other barriers that comes into play on these sorts of issues is ignorance, and I use the term ignorance in the true sense of the term. It is a lack of understanding. It simply means that folks maybe back in my town or your town or any of the developing countries do not know what is going on in some of these Third World nations. They do not understand the pain and the suffering that occurs because of the mines that are left underground in communities in the Third World. So I think, again, we as legislatures have an obligation to educate people whom we come into contact with wherever you live in the province, wherever you live in the country, and tell people what is going on in the Third World in terms of mines killing and hurting people.

Finally, I think the last thing that needs to be dealt with is political will. I think sometimes there is very good reason for countries of the world to put aside partisanship, to put aside the politics of everyday political life and work together in order to help people out.

It is my feeling, Madam Speaker, that demining countries in the Third World provides an excellent opportunity for the developed countries of the world to band together, obtain the resources necessary, obtain the technology necessary, and go back into these Third World countries not on a mission of war, not on a mission of destruction and killing, but on a mission of peace, a mission of helping out fellow man, on a mission of helping out women and children who have become disabled because they have inadvertently stepped on a mine.

I think what we have to do is get all countries, despite the form of government that they have, despite the religion of the country, despite all of the characteristics, the traditions, the customs of the country, I think on this one occasion, on the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, I think that that would be a very good opportunity for all the countries of the world to get together and help countries in the Third World with this specific problem.

I want to thank again all the members for allowing me the leave to introduce this bill today in a timely fashion. I appreciate your co-operation, and I would encourage you to not only pass this resolution through the House today but to take the resolution to heart and approach people in our federal system to have them come on side as well. I thank the members very much for listening intently.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I rise simply to acknowledge the important event that this resolution brings to our attention, to reiterate what our First Minister (Mr. Filmon) has already said in this Chamber at the close of Question Period in recognizing the 50th anniversary of the United Nations.

I choose not to get into the detail that my honourable friend from Dauphin does because I, and I say this kindly, I think the importance is that we would like as a small measure of our continuing esteem and support for this organization to pass the resolution in this Chamber with some dispatch and have it officially recorded that we did take a few moments of this Chamber's time to do precisely that.

Madam Speaker, Canada and certainly myself and my government continue to support the United Nations. The fact that there are detractors to that organization stem largely—and it should not surprise anybody because it occupies so much of our own time. As in any large organization with a large bureaucracy, inefficiencies and waste do have to be contended with, and it bodes ill for the organization when member nations like Canada or the United States hear of and see demonstrated where these situations occur where a bloated bureaucracy lives pretty high off the hog in some of the finer restaurants of Geneva or Paris when they are in fact the organization that, precisely what the honourable member for Dauphin says, look after where they can particularly be of help in the developing Third World nations of this planet Earth.

Having said that, certainly the Conservative government, as more eloquently expressed by our Premier earlier on this afternoon, wishes to support and

associate ourselves with the general principles of the resolution in congratulating all of us in this world for having fashioned out of the despair and depths of turmoil after the Second World War this organization that is now entering its 50th year.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I, too, had the opportunity earlier in a nonpolitical statement, following the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), to pay tribute to the United Nations in their celebration of the 50th anniversary.

I have absolutely no problems in terms of stating that it is an honourable thing to pass a resolution of this

nature and that I and my colleagues in the Legislature do support wholeheartedly this resolution.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the resolution? [agreed].

The hour being 5 p.m., time to move to Resolution No. 36?

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 24, 1995

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