



Second 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**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Party</b>
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.
JENNISSEN, 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

Monday, September 23, 1996

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

#### Rail Line Abandonment

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Jerry Boychuk, Garfield Lowe, Denis Beaudry and others requesting the Legislative Assembly to request the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Findlay) and federal Minister of Transport to ensure that communities currently using the Cowan Sub and the Erwood Sub be able to continue shipping their grain to market.

#### Manitoba Telephone System

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** I beg to present the petition of Elin Hood, Dora Scott and M. Earlsson praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Colleen Seymour, Susan Dobson and Denise Cox praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request the Premier to not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** I beg to present the petition of Jennifer Howard, Wynn Fordyce, Marcia Hamm Wiebe and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request the Premier not to sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of M.E. Clendenning, Laurie Cline and Pam Cline praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Karen Shanks,

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**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Sarah Harpe, Julie Haslen, Russell Coeur and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. George Hickee (Point Douglas):** I beg to present the petition of M.R. Moore, Maurie Currie, B. Meakin and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request the Premier not to sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** I beg to present the petition of Gary H. Nyto, Nelson Hryszak, Cal Minaker and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Christine Smith, G. Thompson and A. Reid praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Wendy Boyd, Monique Boulet, G. Roth and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of V. Johnson, Ray Wood, Claire Goldstone and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James):** I beg to present the petition of John McKenzie, Caroline McPhail, C. Neufeld and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertstland):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Ian Douglas, Robert Thompson, Harvey Purvis and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Alvin Hansen, P. Guyson, Marge McAllister and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier not sell the Manitoba Telephone System.

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**Madam Speaker:** I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk). 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:** Dispense.

**Madam Speaker:** Dispense.

*WHEREAS rail access is vital for the shipment of grain and other farm commodities in rural communities; and*

*WHEREAS the proclamation of the Canada Transportation Act on July 1, 1996, gives railways the ability to abandon lines throughout Canada with minimum notice; and*

*WHEREAS on July 2, 1996, Canadian National announced that it plans to abandon four rail lines in Manitoba including the lines from Dauphin to Minitonas and Swan River to Birch River; and*

*WHEREAS the abandonment of these lines would put the future of grain elevators at Birch River, Bowsman, Ethelbert and Fork River amongst others at great risk; and*

*WHEREAS the federal government sold CN without any conditions other than the headquarters of CN remain in Montreal; and*

*WHEREAS the loss of these rail lines will have a major negative effect upon the overall provincial economy; and*

*WHEREAS the provincial government has not made any plans to cover the costs of upgrading roads in the areas where rail lines are threatened with abandonment; and*

*WHEREAS the federal government has not committed any money from the Western Grain Transportation Adjustment Fund to upgrading roads in communities where rail lines are being abandoned.*

*WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Transportation and the federal Minister of Transport to ensure that the communities currently using the Cowan Sub and the Erwood Sub are able to continue shipping their grain to markets.*

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources):** Madam Speaker, I have two reports that I would like to table, the first one being the Pineland Forest Nursery Annual Report for the year ended March 31, 1996, and the next one being the Annual Report of the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation for the year 1995-1996.

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I would like to table the report of the Automobile Injury Compensation Appeal Commission for the year 1995-96.

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### 1996 Summer Olympic Games Premier's Travel Expenses

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, on July 25 the Premier told all of Manitobans through broadcasts that he was in fact a guest of the Pan Am Games Society, and later we found out through Premier Frank McKenna that he was in fact not just a guest of the Pan Am Games Society but that he had been a guest of IBM. The Premier should know by now that the Premier of New Brunswick has tabled all his payments back to IBM, reimbursements of the gifts given to

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the Premier of New Brunswick by the IBM corporation—room, tickets, hospitality, et cetera.

I would like to ask the Premier now, in light of the fact that he has followed the example of the Premier of New Brunswick in eventually telling the truth about who the sponsors were to the Olympic Games for those two days, will he now make public his full expenses and gifts from IBM and the reimbursements he has made?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, although I know that the member opposite does not want to understand it, I will repeat for him what I have said before.

Contrary to the situation of the Premier of New Brunswick, who was there completely on a trip related to his IBM invitation and they did pay not only his travel expenses but all of his other costs there, I was there with the Pan American Games Society who did pay for my trip, who did pay for my lodging and meals in the first seven days that I was there. On the last two days I moved into the hotel, at which time the IBM corporation had been, of course, the sponsors. I have since repaid in full all of those costs that were incurred by IBM, and that is a matter between me and IBM corporation because there is no involvement of the public in it. I have chosen to pay those costs and therefore it is a matter between me and IBM, just as it would be a matter if I went to the store to buy groceries or to buy furniture for myself personally and I paid the bill.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, the Premier knows that IBM is a corporation that does millions of dollars worth of business with this government. The Premier told the people of Manitoba that he was only a guest of the Pan Am Games Society, and only after Frank McKenna contradicted the so-called word of this Premier did we find out that in fact he was not telling the people the truth.

Madam Speaker, does the Premier of this province not think he is setting a double standard when he is telling everybody that we must disclose and be accountable for decisions we make, we must have a standard of full disclosure, which we support? Should not full disclosure and full accountability start with the Premier, especially when he did not tell us the truth on July 25? Should not full accountability and disclosure start with the Premier,

and will he now make public the IBM repayment of the gift that he received and ignored to tell us on July 25?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I repeat: The question was asked, who paid for the trip. I said the Pan American Games Society paid for the trip, and they did. The question of the two evenings that I spent in the hotel as a guest of IBM has been answered in that I have paid them in full for those expenditures.

**Mr. Doer:** I guess we have to go on the word of the Premier just like we went on the word on July 25—that only the Pan Am Games Society was paying for his expenses—on the radio. You are in the same boat as Frank McKenna, and we are entitled to the same honesty and integrity and release of information that they have in the province of New Brunswick.

\* (1340)

### Cabinet Ministers Spousal Travel

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, a further question to the Premier: On Thursday the Premier said that there had been no change in policy dealing with cabinet ministers and spousal travel policies. Can the Premier inform this House whether the travel policy in the Manual of Administration was not amended in October of 1993, amending the November 1, 1986, policies of travel of cabinet ministers and spouses?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, the policy with respect to the eligibility of ministers to take their spouses on trips remains as it has been since back in the 1980s, in fact all the way back to the '70s, which is that cabinet ministers' spouses may be in attendance with them at the public cost if there are programs that involve the spouses and if there are activities that require the spouses' presence. What changed in 1994 was the General Manual of Administration removed the requirement for advance approval from the Premier or his designate for that purpose. The fact of the matter is that ministers—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, members opposite ask questions and do not want to hear the answer.

**An Honourable Member:** No, you gave us an answer on Thursday.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Filmon:** I said the policy remains as it has for decades. It has not changed. Ministers may take their spouses. The General Manual of Administration no longer requires the permission of the Premier or his designate.

The policy remains the same as to the eligibility of ministers to have their spouses accompany them. The General Manual of Administration no longer requires them to obtain the permission of the Premier or his designate. That is fact, and that is as it should be because as ministers they have budgets of tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars under their jurisdiction. They are perfectly capable of making those decisions in accordance with the policy.

### Cabinet Ministers Spousal Travel

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** Madam Speaker, the old policy PA11272.3: Advance approval from the Premier is required.

There is no mention about the purpose of travel. There is no mention about the appropriateness of travel of spouses, nothing whatsoever about that issue. So if there was a policy, it clearly is not in the old General Manual of Administration.

Will the Premier confirm that the new General Manual of Administration policy change makes no reference whatsoever to spouses, no reference whatsoever to the appropriateness of the travel of spouses or of the spouses of other civil servants, whereas the old policy was very clear about that?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, all that the General Manual of Administration said was that the approval had to be obtained from the Premier or his designate. That is no longer in the Manual of Administration.

The policy on travel remains as it has been for decades for the eligibility of spouses to travel with the ministers.

\* (1345)

**Mr. Sale:** I will table these documents of the old policy and the new policy.

Will the Premier simply confirm that when you replace a policy of four points on one page with a policy of about 12 or 14 points on another page, where one references the appropriateness of spousal travel and the approval of it and the other one does not even talk about spouses' travel, that is a material change?

The First Minister misled the House when he said there had been no change. Will he confirm that, Madam Speaker?

**Mr. Filmon:** The member opposite talks about the appropriateness. There is no place in that former statement that talks about appropriateness. All it says is that approval must be obtained from the Premier or his designate, and it is no longer required.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Crescentwood, with a final supplementary question.

**Mr. Sale:** Will the Deputy Premier now confirm that following this nice new policy that does not mention spouses whatsoever that he and his spouse and his deputy minister and his spouse, using a combination of business and economy class, travelled at government expense to New Brunswick to an annual meeting of the Taiwanese Trade Association, a really major event?

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Madam Speaker, first of all, a visit to the constituency is very helpful. Of course, the first thing that is pointed out is that this is a government in waiting across the way in which they are dealing with issues which were fully within the policy.

The trip, Madam Speaker, that the member refers to was within policy. It resulted in our province, our city of Winnipeg, receiving the Canadian-Taiwanese business association meetings here where several businesses, government people will come to this province in 1997 to have a convention. Now if that is not opening up our



province to trade and investment dollars, I do not know what is. I think they should wake up and realize there are opportunities for this province in the international marketplace.

### Health Care System Surgery Waiting Lists

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Madam Speaker, Manitobans have one of the longest waiting lists for surgery in the entire country. Every day we hear from Manitobans waiting months and even years to obtain surgery. In 1990, the government had a report that made four major recommendations to decrease waiting lists. The only decrease that has been put in place by this government was a short-term plan that was put in during the last provincial election and then was dropped.

Madam Speaker, can the minister definitively today outline for Manitobans what steps he is going to take immediately to deal with the consequences of the longest waiting list in the country for Manitobans?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** The concern, I suggest to the honourable member, might more appropriately be described as the time that any individual has to wait for needed urgent or emergent or even elective surgery. That is an important distinction from what the honourable member talked about when he talked about a waiting list because, as the honourable member knows, the way of handling waiting lists is in transition; it is in a time of change.

The main reason for the announcement made on August 20 dealing with the reorganization of health services, one of the main reasons for doing all of that was to deal with the very question being raised by the honourable member. We would appreciate his support for the initiatives.

\* (1350)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, how can we have any confidence in the August announcements when the same announcements were made in 1990, when Don Orchard promised it in June 1993, when the minister promised it by September 1994, and when the minister promised it again in the Legislature—and it is all in Hansard—by June '95? Four separate occasions the ministers of Health have stood up and said the same thing: Central bed registry co-ordination would be put in place.

We have been waiting for seven years.

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Speaker, in each of those seven years, the honourable member should be reminded that surgeries on hips, knees, hearts, cancer surgery, MRIs, all of those things, year after year, up, up, up.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, how can we expect waiting lists to decrease in this province when the resources are not being put into it, when we are not putting in resources to surgery scheduling, where we do not have a central registry in place, though it has been promised for seven years, and when the government finds the resources to spend \$200,000 on a propaganda piece talking about waiting lists, and yet that money could be used to reduce waiting lists all across the board as they did with a \$500,000 grant during the provincial election?

**Mr. McCrae:** It would be helpful if the honourable member would begin to espouse principles like best practices. If the honourable member would get on board and support program management for our clinical and surgical services, if the honourable member would get with the program and join with the other people who are working with us to improve all these services, he would see the way. The way is very clear, and we have enough partnerships in Winnipeg and all of Manitoba to know that through measures like this we can indeed make improvements to build on the improvements we have already made.

### Youth Gangs Reduction Strategy

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** My question is for the Minister of Justice.

While the minister certainly has some very serious shortcomings, we remain increasingly impressed by one characteristic. That is her vivid imagination. So when she recently responded to our Gang Action Plan and while she apparently endorsed it, Madam Speaker, she said, oh, we have already implemented this plan.

My question for the minister is, would she—the minister never known for her modesty, I suggest—explain to Manitobans how she was able to hide from everyone, including her own department, implementation of our plan, including such programs as a specialized gang unit

in her own department, a young offender monitoring program or even demanding gang laws in the Criminal Code? How did she do that?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** As I said on the day, first of all, we finally see some constructive and positive recommendations coming from across the way that are finally in sync with what this government has put forward for some time. We have listened to the NDP over the past many years who have been far more interested in taking the easy route, far more interested in being concerned with offenders, not really caring about putting the victim back in the system. I have asked them for the past several years, where do they stand on the Young Offenders Act? I have asked them for several years to come and provide support—[interjection] Well, the member asks where our government stands on the Young Offenders Act.

I would be very happy if you would give me the time, Madam Speaker, to speak about the position that our government has taken on the Young Offenders Act, which has led the way across Canada. In fact, very specifically, we have been interested in finding a mechanism to deal with children under 12 who at this point do not come into the justice system, but the NDP have been silent on this until finally they woke up and they gave a few suggestions.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Did the minister—who, by the way, should get a grip on reality here—actually misread our Gang Action Plan when she apparently endorsed it? We did not say cut but enhance family supports, youth employment, literacy. Did she get it wrong?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** I am very happy to go through the initiatives and check off all of the ones that in fact our government has in place. In fact, I am really quite surprised—actually I am amazed at the nerve that they would come forward as if this is their idea. I can only thank them for coming forward and endorsing what this government has put in place.

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

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Where have you been?

\* (1355)

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable Minister of Justice, to complete her response.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. You know, I believe for the people of Manitoba who are paying attention today, they do not want to listen to the back-and-forth of the member across the way. They want to know that we are co-operating, they want to know that departments within government are co-operating, and I am sure they would be very happy to see members in this Chamber co-operating on such a serious problem.

So, Madam Speaker, it was announced by the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) some time ago, the Child and Youth Secretariat, co-operating departments among this side of government which are working to assist families who are comfortable perhaps in receiving assistance in Education or perhaps in Health or Family Services or Justice, there is a co-operative effort to deal with all of the issues. Members across the way have been silent on that. I believe the people of Manitoba really want to see us working together on this serious problem, rather than the grandstanding of the member for St. Johns.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Would the minister who has just made our point—you know, if she has been so serious about gang crime for so long, why is her nine-point plan on youth crime, unveiled two and a half years ago, still not implemented and why—only one of her 36 election promises on crime dealt specifically with gangs, and she just never got around to implementing that one, Madam Speaker.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** This is my point exactly. The member across the way has been taken through the nine-point plan and the implementation of initiatives. The member has seen many additional initiatives such as the \$100,000 that this government gave for a joint police operation to deal specifically with gangs. We never heard a word from them on that.

We have added 40 more police officers to the city of Winnipeg through a targeted grant. We have set up the provincial youth council on crime. We have set up the surveillance for the sharing of information. We have taken a position on the Young Offenders Act. The

position and the steps that this government has taken to deal with gang activity go on and on, and they are not finished, Madam Speaker.

I think it is very important to say that this is an ongoing issue and involves an ongoing series of initiatives. It does require us to work carefully with the police services across this province. It also requires co-operation of the federal government in changing some of the legislation. We are asking for all of that. We will keep working, Madam Speaker, in the interests of the people of Manitoba.

### Lottery Employees Labour Dispute Minister's Position

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

The Minister of Labour has gone out of his way to imply motives of the MGEU with respect to politically motivating this whole casino strike. Madam Speaker, one could speculate that if there are any political motivations behind this strike, it is on behalf of this government and, in particular, this Minister of Labour.

My question to the Minister of Labour is, what specifically makes the minister believe that the strike by the casino workers is politically motivated?

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour):** Madam Speaker, while I can refer the member to the comments of Peter Olfert in respect of the health care workers strike where he said the strike was politically, not economically, based—a similar situation here. If in fact this strike is not politically motivated, let the leader of that particular union make it clear. I for one have in fact dealt—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Toews:** Madam Speaker, I can assure you that whether or not this strike is politically motivated, I am prepared to deal with this strike in terms of appropriate intervention at an appropriate time.

\* (1400)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I would question the minister again: What specifically is the MGEU doing that is causing this minister to believe that it is the union and the casino workers who are politically motivated to try to do what to this government, or is it the political philosophy of this particular minister and this particular government in the sense that they do not want to settle this strike?

**Mr. Toews:** Madam Speaker, this union has made it very clear that they will take as many workers out as they possibly can. They have stated that to me in conversations over and over again. There is no other basis; there is not an economic basis. They have settled the administrative officers or the administrative lottery workers strikes within the mandate and for some reason they have left the lottery workers out to dry. They wanted 10 percent. They made extravagant promises to these workers that they knew they could never fulfill. There is only one conclusion, that this was not for an economic reason, this is a political strike.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the Minister of Labour can tell this House and tell the casino strikers, who does he believe is going to profit politically by the casino workers walking the picket line? Who is going to politically benefit from this?

**Mr. Toews:** Madam Speaker, as I have stated, whether this strike is motivated by Mr. Olfert's bid for re-election, I do not care. That is none of—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable Minister of Labour, to complete his response.

**Mr. Toews:** Madam Speaker, whatever has motivated this strike and whatever has caused Mr. Olfert to continue on this action is none of my business. My business is to ensure that this strike is ended, and I will do so at an appropriate time in terms of appointing a mediator if that is required.

I might indicate that over this weekend the parties have been negotiating, they have been involved with a conciliator and they are making progress. I am told this by both the Lotteries Corporation and by the union. That is the way to resolve the strike, by getting back to the

bargaining table and concentrating on the concerns of workers, that the workers have in respect of that.

### **Lottery Employees Labour Dispute Mediation**

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Madam Speaker, now over 200,000 days have been lost to strike or lockout in the province of Manitoba during this year. We are quickly approaching the record held by the Lyon government, and now we have a Minister of Labour who does not understand his role when he states that strikes and lockouts are okay.

The minister stated last Thursday that he hesitates to get involved in the lottery workers strike. I want to ask the Minister of Labour, what in his mind constitutes reasons for him to get involved or not get involved considering that the lottery workers have been out now for over 90 days? Does this not constitute reason enough for this minister and his department through Mediation Services to get involved?

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour):** Madam Speaker, firstly, in respect of the amount of days lost, that comes as no surprise to me when at the beginning of this year the union leaders came to me and said that was their intention, and every member of the press came up to me and said, we heard that the union is going to be having a lot of strikes this summer. It is not a surprise that, when one party specifically says that we want to go out on strike, that in fact happens and I recognize that, but I think that this is an example of why we should be working together to ensure that the concerns of workers and not union leaders are met. We need to address the concerns of workers. That is what I am concerned about, that is what this government is concerned about and that is what I will work for.

**Mr. Reid:** That is a pretty serious charge that the minister has levelled here today in the House.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Reid:** I want to ask the Minister of Labour a supplementary question, because it is my understanding that the MGEU is asking for status quo specifically on the wage issue. They are asking for zero, Madam Speaker.

I want to ask the Minister of Labour because on Thursday last week he said that the parties are very far apart and that is why he does not want to implement mediation to resolve this dispute. Does the condition that is on the table now, from my understanding of zero wage increases, specifically on that issue, not constitute fair and reasonableness on the part of the union and that will allow the minister to bring in Mediation Services to resolve the other disputes? Why is the minister not bringing in mediation on this now?

**Mr. Toews:** Madam Speaker, it is not appropriate for me to get into the details of the conciliation efforts or the position of either of those parties today, but I can tell you that the member is wrong. He has been wrong on several occasions in the past week. He is wrong again.

**Mr. Reid:** I want to ask the minister then, does he not think since his pension—he has a 7 percent pension entitlement that we voted for in this House, Madam Speaker. We have all voted for it. We have the option. This minister has a 7 percent pension entitlement.

Does this minister not think that the request on behalf of the MGEU for a 1 percent adjustment of their pension is fair and reasonable and is not far apart like this minister is trying to portray to the public of Manitoba, that the requests that they are making are fair and reasonable?

**Mr. Toews:** What I am prepared to say, Madam Speaker, is that this is a union that took its membership out seeking a 10 percent increase in wages alone. What I do want to state is that over the past week the union and the parties to the contract have in fact moderated their position. The conciliation process is working, and that is the place at the table to resolve these disputes.

As for this member, he has his facts wrong again. If he wants details of what in fact the positions are, I am prepared to provide those to him on a private basis.

\* (1410)

### **Employment Development Centres Funding**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, this government continues to cut publicly accountable training

programs and yet at the same time continues to give millions of dollars to corporate training programs such as Kozminski Ford, IBM, Northern Blower, none of which are required to be publicly accountable for the training they provide.

Could I ask the Minister of Education to explain to the House why she chose to cut the employment development centres, which enabled hundreds of my constituents to gain access to both training and jobs?

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** Madam Speaker, not necessarily accepting any of the preamble—I state that as a matter of course; the preamble sometimes has to be ignored because time must be there to answer the question. It does not mean the preamble is accepted.

I would indicate that the employment development centres, in most cases, worked very well. That is why the employment development centre in Portage la Prairie, for example, is functioning extremely well and supported to the highest level. However, the one centre in Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Employment Development Centre, was not giving the results that we were seeking for a variety of reasons. We found that of the 261 clients who were serviced there at a three-month follow-up, only 18 percent were employed. Those results are just not sufficient for the very high sums of money we were putting into it.

So we will be taking that money and redirecting it into programs that have a higher and better success rate so that we can achieve the results on behalf of not just her constituents but all constituents in Manitoba who seek that kind of assistance.

#### Success Rate

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** I want to ask the minister if she will table the study that produced those results that the Free Press reported as 20 percent and the minister reports today as 18 percent, because the people I have spoken to who are involved with these programs in Winnipeg at the community level have argued that for a number of years these programs produce success rates of 60 percent and, in some cases, as high as 80 percent. So I want to ask the minister to table that study.

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** I would be pleased to table that information.

I do not have it here, but I will. It indicates that we had 261 clients receiving training; only 55 or 21 percent went on to employment, some of which was part time, some of which was casual, and at a three-month follow-up of those 55, only 18 were still employed. We just do not think those results are good enough for the money being spent, and we are seeking to find and will have in place by the end of next month vehicles which will give better results for the money that is spent. But I will bring that information to the member.

#### Funding Redirection

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Could the minister tell the House what proportion of the employment development centre monies will be transferred to community agencies, which agencies will receive the funds and when those new programs will begin?

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** Madam Speaker, the member should understand that we are not cutting money here, we are changing program delivery to be more effective.

We will, because the Winnipeg Development Centre will be closing at the end of next month, have about \$206,000 left in that particular envelope—the new money coming in will be redirected elsewhere—and that \$206,000 will go to places such as the Literary Partners that I think the member is familiar with, to the truck driver training program and Employment Connections, which has done a sterling job of being able to help people find jobs, retain jobs and keep them over the long term. So the money will be redirected into existing programs. They have been identified, and they will see that people have access to employment opportunities.

#### Gillam, Manitoba Health Concern—Drinking Water

**Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertstland):** Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health.

As the minister may be aware, beginning today and for a period of six months, residents of Gillam and the surrounding area are being told to boil their water before drinking or washing with it and, regrettably, this problem is all too common in Rupertstland and many northern communities.

I would like to ask the minister what actions his department is taking to ensure that Gillam Hospital and also the residents of Gillam, in general, will have safe water during this period.

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** I will make inquiries and report back to the honourable member this afternoon, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Robinson:** Madam Speaker, perhaps when the minister gets back to me this afternoon, he could also report, particularly for the people in Gillam, what the department will be doing in terms of monitoring the situation and also what the department is prepared to do in considering supplying extra-pure water for the community, indeed, if it becomes necessary.

**Mr. McCrae:** I will incorporate the honourable member's suggestion into my inquiries.

### CBC Funding Reduction

**Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne):** Madam Speaker, last week CBC President Perrin Beatty announced further cuts which will mean that from 1994 to 1998 the CBC will have lost or will lose \$410 million and 4,000 employees. Clearly, the cultural and economic impact of these losses will be staggering and all Canadians, including Manitobans, will suffer.

I want to ask the Premier what actions he plans to take in response to this assault on employment and culture in Canada; that is to say, how will he hold the Prime Minister and the Minister of Canadian Heritage accountable for their red book promises?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, I have in the past and will continue to express our belief that it is important to have balanced and thorough journalism in this province to ensure that we do our utmost to preserve the culture, the culture that in many cases has evolved from Manitobans and the very talented people who are in the performing arts, in the production and filming side, music and all of those areas that Manitoba is so famous for, and that it is important for us as well of course to ensure that we get a broad range of fair and balanced coverage with respect to all of the matters that journalists cover in our province and in our country. I have met

personally with the president, Mr. Beatty, I have met on regular occasions with the regional director, Jane Chalmers, and her predecessor, and I will continue to ensure that we get that message across to those who make decisions in Ottawa.

What the member opposite, of course, has to understand is that this is a decision that is made solely within federal jurisdiction, solely made by the federal government with respect to their budgetary imperatives, and that she would do well to raise that issue directly with them and express her feelings to them where the decisions are being made.

**Madam Speaker:** Time for Oral Questions has expired.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Government Fiscal Policy

**Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain):** Madam Speaker, as autumn has officially come upon us and the leaves turn colour and the air brisk, I would like to reflect for a moment upon our government's strong fiscal performance. Manitoba has been one of the most fiscally responsible provinces since the early 1990s and now boasts the strongest balanced budget legislation in the country. We have one of the most fiscally responsible Canadian governments of this decade, and our credit prospects continue to be favourable, reflecting a very positive and impressive tradition of Conservative fiscal policies. Manitoba's economy continues to perform well, and Manitoba continues to have high levels of capital investment and one of the lowest unemployment rates of all the provinces.

Over the past number of years we have become one of the most small business-friendly governments in Canada. Through stable workers' compensation premiums, an eight-year tax freeze and some strategic reductions in key taxes, Manitoba has set a high standard that many other provinces should follow. It was stated on July 18, 1996, by Merrill Lynch that Manitoba has exceeded its original budget projections for two consecutive years and will likely maintain surpluses through the year 2000.

Filmon's administration has implemented ambitious and comprehensive legislative measures designed to produce balanced or surplus budgets annually. This

province was one of the first to rein in spending, focus on controlling public wage costs, streamlining government operations and increasing efficiencies in the delivery of public service. Going forward, Manitoba is emerging as one of the steadiest and strongest provinces in the country.

Hence, as the leaves do fall from the trees to blanket the ground for the approaching winter season, I am once again confirmed in my strong belief and commitment to this government and to the ambitious and comprehensive measures that we continue to implement in order to best provide for the long-term stability and success of this great province.

### CBC

**Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne):** Madam Speaker, 1996 marks the CBC's 60th anniversary as Canada's national public broadcaster. As a Canadian voice and presence on North America's airwaves and as a common electronic link for Canadians from coast to coast, the CBC has played a vital role in developing Canadian culture and identity. CBC is a Canadian institution, but sadly it is an institution with its back to the wall.

At a news conference last week, CBC President Perrin Beatty announced the latest nail in the coffin of Canadian public broadcasting, and though Mr. Beatty spoke as if huge financial cuts were actually gifts in disguise, a chance for CBC to pull up its corporate socks, breathe deeply, and get on with it, the truth is that the losses will be devastating—another 2,500 jobs and \$127 million from the budget.

What happened to Jean Chretien's red book promise that a Liberal government would provide the CBC with long-term stable funding? This promise has materialized as a \$410 million post-election cut. What about Chretien's pre-election promise of jobs, jobs, jobs, which by 1998 will materialize as a post-election cut of 3,500 to 4,000 CBC jobs? The truth is that Chretien and his Heritage minister, Sheila Copps, have now outflanked Preston Manning, who, mean as he is, only wished to cut \$365 million. Intent on not spoiling their perfect record, Chretien and Copps have broken their word again.

\* (1420)

Closer to home, our CBC employees are feeling despondent. Decisions regarding staff layoffs and changes in programming have been delayed until perhaps November. We can all imagine the difficulty of going to work and feeling positively about the future among reports that regional CBC offices will bear a disproportionate share of the cuts and that 45 percent or 150 of 324 local employees will be dismissed.

### South America Trade Mission

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to present good news to Manitobans concerning the outcome of the trade mission to South America that occurred several weeks ago. Thanks to two local businesses from the Gimli constituency, International Beef Genetics and Prairie Farm & Ranch Supply, along with the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Jim Downey, and 12 other Manitoba business people, the mission was a success.

Since it is expected that Chile will be signing a bilateral trade agreement with Canada later this year, Manitoba must take advantage of every opportunity to promote its businesses. Trade missions such as the recent ones to South America and Asia helped to promote Manitoba and put it on the global map as an ideal location for Latin America to do business and as a source of exported products. Bringing established local business representatives to these lands enables us to promote this province and all that it has to offer. We were able to prove that Manitoba is an ideal place to invest.

Madam Speaker, Argentina has a large grain and beef industry in need of modern production equipment, livestock genetics and technology. Brazil is also a strong potential market for agricultural equipment, as well as for grain and pulse crops.

Manitoba's best export opportunities for trade with Chile are in forest and mining machinery, light manufacturing equipment and professional services.

Madam Speaker, I cannot hear myself think here.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I also am experiencing difficulty hearing the honourable member for Gimli, and I wonder if those members who are holding private meetings would do so either in the loge or outside the Chamber.

**Mr. Helwer:** Both of these businesses located in the Gimli constituency agreed that the opportunities to do business in South America are huge and that they will be doing business with these countries in the near future. Ralph Eichler, president of Prairie Farm & Ranch Supply, made a special note of stating that Mr. Downey should be applauded for his efforts in making this trade mission happen.

Madam Speaker, I would like to commend the members of the Manitoba-led trade mission for the accomplishments made with South American business. Thank you.

### **Railway Industry—Safety Concerns**

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Leave for a member's statement.

I want to raise the issue today that is affecting not only my constituency but many areas in Manitoba and indeed the country and that is the effect that the elimination of railway services and jobs are having on rail safety. This is a concern that hit home this summer when outside of Edmonton, on August 12, there was a serious accident.

We know that recently there have been 275 jobs cut from CP and that the elimination of 3,000 jobs has occurred from CN under the current government across the way. CP, in the past, as early as '93, had a payroll of \$108 million in Manitoba. One of my constituents has written me a letter saying they believe it is time for the province to put a stop to the slow erosion of good-paying jobs in Manitoba.

The issue though before us is the impact that the loss of these jobs is having on rail safety. When they transferred 56 rail traffic control positions to Edmonton, they did not even have in place an adequate facility to deal with those jobs, and the workers there are in a large room that does not provide them the sort of concentration on their terminals. They are being forced to work double shifts or 12-hour-long shifts. They are often having to watch two terminals of track at one time. They are dealing with track that they are not familiar with when we have people in Edmonton who are responsible for track that is as far away as Thunder Bay. I know there was one fellow who said that in Thunder Bay there was a train stopped for 15 minutes in the downtown area during rush hour because they were not familiar with the track.

These are serious concerns for all citizens as well as the workers and the railway, and I would urge this government to take some preventative measures to stop this problem. Thank you.

### **Arts Industry—Government Support**

**Mr. Mike Radcliffe (River Heights):** Madam Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House today to the solid record of our Premier Filmon and to this government in their support of the arts in Manitoba. This was evidenced in the Winnipeg Free Press this weekend in a very good article. In an era of fiscal restraint where we have been faced with shrinking transfer payments from Ottawa and a population that cannot absorb any more taxes, it makes our government's consistent, steady support of arts and culture in Manitoba all the more laudable.

We have much to be proud of in our arts sector in Manitoba. We have a burgeoning young artist environment where our young people are making valuable contributions to the cultural life in our province. Such commendable cultural mainstays as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, these are renowned throughout the world for being at the top of their fields. Manitoba is also home to the Manitoba Theatre Centre, the Prairie Theatre Exchange and a number of other companies that bring a high quality of live theatre performance to our province. We have a thriving film industry that is noted across Canada for its vitality and its esprit de corps.

Our province has produced a number of nationally and internationally noted authors such as Carol Shields and Margaret Sweatman, among others. Madam Speaker, there has been an appreciation of the value of the arts in our society by the leadership of this government that has worked quietly behind the scenes to sustain the tradition of patronage of the arts in Manitoba. Today all Manitobans are beneficiaries of this visionary approach to the funding of arts and culture in Manitoba. Thank you.

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **House Business**

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on a couple of matters of House business. The Committee on Economic Development will meet on Friday,



September 27, at 10 a.m., to consider all of the reports of the Communities Economic Development Fund, having been referred. The Committee on Municipal Affairs will meet Wednesday, September 25, at 7 p.m., to consider Bills 2, 16, 19, 43 and 44.

**Madam Speaker:** The Committee on Economic Development will sit on Friday, September 27, at 10 a.m., to consider the Communities Economic Development Fund. The Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs will meet on Wednesday evening, September 25, at 7 p.m., to consider Bills 2, 16, 19, 43 and 44.

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Speaker, would you call Bills 13, 20, 56, 34, 3, 40, 10 and 54.

#### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

##### **Bill 13—The Highway Traffic Amendment (Lighting on Agricultural Equipment) Act**

**Madam Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), The Highway Traffic Amendment (Lighting on Agricultural Equipment) Act (Loi modifiant le Code de la route (éclairage de l'équipement agricole), standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Is there leave to have the bill remain standing?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** No. Leave has been denied.

\* (1430)

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to talk briefly on The Highway Traffic Amendment (Lighting on Agricultural Equipment) Act, which is also known as Bill 13. It is a good bill and since there are so few good bills, it surprises me that members of the government are not given leave lately to speak on bills. I do not know why the gag order. I know why they would not want to talk about a number of bills, but this happens to be a good one.

The reason for this particular bill is that unfortunately in a province that is largely agricultural, there are things that happen that are not always pleasant. One of those is

collisions between farm vehicles, oversized implements and tractors, combines and ordinary vehicles that people drive, and this has caused a number of serious accidents over the years, and this issue had to be addressed. In fact, I believe that about one out of every 50 fatal accidents is one connected to collision with a farm implement or a farm tractor or a combine or an oversized vehicle, very often badly lit and very often, I might add, in two critical seasons, the spring season or the harvest season.

I believe the impetus, the direct impetus for the creation of this bill was 1994, when three Rosenort teens were killed in a collision with a farm vehicle, and I could add that this sad legacy has continued until right now. In fact, last week one of our long-time constituents, a lady was killed when she and her husband collided with a combine. These tragedies continue quite regularly, and therefore this bill makes an attempt to lessen the number of tragedies that occur on our highways when ordinary vehicles collide with farm vehicles.

A number of stakeholders and other groups got together over the years to form a committee and make recommendations, and I think these recommendations have been accepted by the minister. Just to name some of the people involved or some of the groups, beside the Department of Agriculture, was Keystone Agricultural Producers, Prairie Implement Manufacturers Association, Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, the RCMP, the Canadian Standards Association, and Technical Committee on Agricultural Equipment.

So Bill 13 reflects the need to modernize and update, because we want to avoid further tragedies, at least minimize them as much as possible. It also, I think, updates us and brings us into line with other provinces, so we strongly support this bill, even though we realize it may cause a little hardship for some farmers who have older machinery and this machinery will have to be adapted and adjusted to fit the modern lighting and marking criteria. So we are willing to support this, give it our full support, and we look forward to seeing it being passed on to the committee stage.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 13, The Highway Traffic Amendment (Lighting on Agricultural Equipment) Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Madam Speaker:** Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 20—The Highway Traffic Amendment  
(Miscellaneous Provisions) Act**

**Madam Speaker:** To resume debate on second reading, on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), Bill 20, The Highway Traffic Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Loi modifiant le Code de la Route—modifications diverses), standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** No? Leave has been denied.

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** Madam Speaker, the Highway Traffic Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act is another bill that we are proud to support. There are four major areas in this bill: definition of emergency vehicles and lighting on various emergency vehicles, traffic control, general penalties and mandatory suspensions. It is basically in the nature of housekeeping items, and we do not see any serious problems with it or have any serious issue with any part of it.

I would like to say that in the first part, the first issue is the one of defining emergency vehicles and updated emergency vehicles in the sense of recognizing modern vehicles and newer lighting systems. Secondly, there is an amendment to update and recognize recent innovations and traffic control devices. I think that was also necessary, and am I glad that the minister saw fit to make sure that was updated as well.

In association with that, there were two further amendments which will allow local governments complete control over placement of pedestrian corridors and control over issuance of temporary parking permits including permits to visitors. This appears to be giving more control to local authorities, and I cannot find fault with that democratic direction.

Thirdly, the bill deals with an increase in the permitted maximum fine under general penalty provisions. The

maximum fine would be increased to \$500 from the current \$10, and thus would be consistent with the general penalty provisions under The Summary Convictions Act and brings us in line with other provinces as well, I believe, so that is not contentious.

Lastly and fourthly, the last area of amendment is introduced on behalf of the Department of Justice. Two new criminal code offences related to auto thefts and auto vandalism are added to this section which provides for mandatory licence suspension upon conviction. Since we are plagued with a lot of vandalism, a lot of auto theft, again I think this is necessary, and we would have no difficulty in supporting that. So, again, I am pleased to say on behalf of this side of the House, we think those are two good bills, Bill 13 and Bill 20. We give Bill 20 our full support, and hope to see it advance to the committee stage.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 20, The Highway Traffic Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Madam Speaker:** Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 56—The Manitoba Investment  
Pool Authority Act**

**Madam Speaker:** To resume debate on second reading of Bill 56, on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), The Manitoba Investment Pool Authority Act (Loi sur l'Office manitobain de mise en commun des placements), standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Madam Speaker:** No. Leave has been denied.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Madam Speaker, just a couple of words on Bill 56. As with the previous two measures just debated, the opposition has no difficulty with this particular proposal, The Manitoba Investment Pool Authority Act.

It is a good idea and it comes from various local officials who, I know, have met with many MLAs, including our caucus to seek our support. It is innovative and it is something that I believe will be of great benefit to municipalities, universities, hospitals, school boards and others who have monies to invest. The idea is to enable these various local organizations to pool their monies and in effect have a professional management team invest them on their behalf, so there is an advantage of having professional management investing these funds. Also, there is an advantage by putting monies into a large pool so that you are able to get a higher rate of interest from financial institutions. I guess this is the irony of the world in which we live, that if you have a lot of money the bank is prepared to give you a higher rate of interest than if you only have a small amount of money.

\* (1440)

At any rate, these bodies, the municipalities, the school divisions, the universities, hospitals, et cetera, all stand to benefit from this particular piece of legislation. There is an area that interests me in particular though, and that is the requirement that the body that is established by this legislation will be under the purview, I suppose, of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), because in Section 20 it refers to the fact that the minister may make regulations that he or she considers necessary connection with his or her authority under this act, including—well, there is a listing of the authority, a listing of the regulations and what could be in the regulations. The question, I guess, arises as to what extent will the Minister of Finance and his department be involved in this particular agency.

It looks as though it may be some type of Crown corporation. It indeed appears that way, although on reflection I am sure it is not a Crown corporation because the board members will be coming out of the urban association, the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities and the Union of Manitoba Municipalities. They will be the bodies, as I understand, who will be nominating persons to the board that will be

responsible for running of it, but nevertheless the Minister of Finance has this power of passing regulations which will have some influence and bearing on the agency. So the question remains as to the relationship of this agency and the government through the Minister of Finance, but that is a detail. Generally, as I said, we have no problem with the bill and in fact we think it is a great idea. From the official opposition, we are quite prepared to see it pass on to the committee stage for further consideration.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

The question before the House is second reading of Bill 56, The Manitoba Investment Pool Authority Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Madam Speaker:** Agreed and so ordered.

#### **Bill 34—The Contaminated Sites Remediation and Consequential Amendments Act**

**Madam Speaker:** To resume debate on second reading of Bill 34, The Contaminated Sites Remediation and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi concernant l'assainissement des lieux contaminés et apportant des modifications corrélatives), on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing?  
No, leave has been denied.

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** Madam Speaker, I rise on this side of the House as the final speaker on this particular piece of legislation for the opposition. There have been some concerns raised about this legislation by my colleague the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli). In general, though, we on this side of the House approve of this legislation. We realize that Bill 34 deals with the process of trying to address or mediate the many contaminated sites that we have here in the province of Manitoba and the associated cleanup costs.

In the 1995 State of the Environment Report for Manitoba, it stated that there are over 600 contaminated

sites that are identified in this province, and, unfortunately, new sites are added to the list on a regular basis. It is good that they are added to the list, but it is unfortunate that there are contaminated sites here in the province. Contaminated sites could be water, or they could either be soil, as in many cases.

I know of a situation in my own community, and that is the contamination of the aquifer in the Rockwood area, a contamination that happened in 1992, I believe, or 1993, where it was revealed that Bristol Aerospace had been following quite unsafe practices in dealing with some of their cleaning solvents in their plant. Unfortunately, the aquifer in that area was contaminated by the solvents.

I recall an article in the Stonewall Argus at that time in January of 1992 where the geologist for the Province of Manitoba, Lockhart Gray—and this is a quote: This is probably the worst water contamination situation in Manitoba.

That was a very serious issue, Madam Speaker. I understand that there are steps taken now by both the provincial and the federal governments and the Rockwood plant to try to clean up that water in that aquifer, but it also raises the issue of further contamination of that aquifer and particularly this minister's licensing BFI to construct a landfill site over the very same aquifer that was contaminated a couple of years ago.

We have to monitor that situation. I know that it is of great concern not only to this side of the House, but residents in West St. Paul, residents in the Rosser area, as we should be very concerned about the quality of our drinking water.

With this act, the minister has, I think, set a good example by the process in coming to the legislation. They released a discussion paper and a draft on the bill. The bill was circulated, and individuals were given the opportunity to comment, and I know that they have.

Some of the issues that are important that this act will deal with are, for example, that municipalities will no longer be responsible for remediation of a site that they acquire through tax sale. That I know has received widespread approval, widespread support by different

municipalities. I believe the Union of Manitoba Municipalities has given their support to the legislation and has provided their approval to the government of this legislation and of that particular clause within it. As well, creditors will not be responsible for remediation of a contaminated site. That, of course, would be a lending institution, a bank, credit union and so on.

The act also encourages mediation. One could argue that perhaps it is not a strong enough position to take, but it does encourage mediation and negotiation in regard to apportioning cost for the cleanup. If this method does not work, if they do not come to an agreement using mediation or negotiations, the Clean Environment Commission can apportion costs based on the polluter-pay principle and that is a new amendment to the act. The Clean Environment Commission can hear appeals from either side and can apportion costs based upon the polluter-pay principle, and we do support the concept of polluter pay. Obviously, if a company or an individual was to pollute a site, they should be responsible for the remediation of that site. The unfortunate thing is that the associated cleanup costs could be quite high. In the case of the Rockwood plant, I do not know if all the costs are in but I am sure it is close to a million dollars to actually remediate and clean up that site.

Also in the act, there will be changes to the powers of the Clean Environment Commission which allow it to review mediation proposals, hear appeals of decisions made by the director appointed under the act and conduct hearings to determine which parties are responsible for cleaning up a site. Persons with specialized knowledge in site contamination or remediation, with the permission of the minister, could be appointed to the commission. So it broadens the role of the Clean Environment Commission in dealing with this particular issue, and they are allowed to seek out individuals with specialized knowledge, with expertise in site contamination and remediation but only with the appointment of the minister could they be appointed to this commission.

Another important aspect of the act, and again one that we do concur with, is the establishment of a registry of contaminated sites. As well, there will be a notice on land titles and notices will be given to municipalities which have a contaminated site within their municipal boundaries. Once a site that is identified has been set aside for remediation, once that site is remediated, a

certificate of compliance will be provided. I understand that in this particular legislation there is a stronger cost recovery measure through what is called a government super lien. I understand that the government will go to the top of the list in case a business was to declare bankruptcy, a business that has been identified as a contaminator of a particular site, so it allows for a super lien on behalf of this government.

Some of the concerns we have is that a suspected polluter hires his or her own investigator. Although the director may order further investigation, the concerns we have here is that someone may go out and hire a company to investigate itself that would bring back the desired result that that individual or company would want.

\* (1450)

Another issue that had concern to us is that a certificate of compliance may be issued by the director if a security is held with the director, stating that the remediation will occur. This would allow larger companies, companies with more financial power, to simply provide the director with a security, with a deposit of cash, and would be issued with a certificate of compliance. What they are doing is stating that in the future we will remediate the site. We have some concerns with that, that it pits the wealthier against those who do not have the financial resources.

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

Another concern is that there is quite a generous grace period to correct defaulters, so if you are in violation of the act, if you receive an order to remediate a particular site and you do not do that within the time, this act is providing you with an extra 21 days grace. Even though you are currently in violation of the act, you are still given an extra 21 days to correct the fault. We feel that is fairly generous.

What is lacking in the legislation—and perhaps it would be better raised, I suppose, at the national level—and that is the need of the so-called super fund, the fund that exists in the United States to deal with orphaned sites. If a site is identified but there is no polluter identified, whether through bankruptcy or death or just the inability to find the actual polluter, the site becomes orphaned and

it is the responsibility, I understand, of the province then to remediate the orphaned site. Now if there was this so-called super fund—now in the United States it is funded by a tax on chemical manufacturers and petroleum refiners, I believe, who are two of the manufacturers that this fund is placed upon. A fund is collected, and it is used to remediate orphaned sites throughout the United States.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we understand that when the bill does go before the House, before the committee stage, we are quite hopeful that there will be individuals come forward to add their additional comments. My colleague and myself, we placed some concerns on the record today, in particular, the fact that a polluter will investigate his or himself, a certificate of compliance will be issued by a director of securities, who has left the fairly generous grace period for defaulters. These are some of the concerns that we have. Like, for example, the polluter-pays principle. I mean we certainly do support the concept, but if a polluter is financing their own investigation, I would suggest that it be in their own interest to demonstrate the results that they want in the review. We feel that this principle works better if it pertains to remediation and compensation but not to monitoring.

The certificate of compliance should only be issued when the remediation is completed otherwise, as we mentioned earlier, those with money can leave a security but may fail to clean up a site for an indefinite period but still possess a certificate of a compliance on that particular site. Again, dealing with the 21-day grace period, considering that these individuals are already in violation of the contaminated sites act, a 21-day grace period is, in our opinion, fairly generous.

Again, we feel that perhaps the chairperson of the Clean Environment Commission should be allowed to appoint anyone they wish instead of the minister dictating who they appoint. We feel the chairperson of the Clean Environment Commission should have the ability to appoint someone, as opposed to the minister simply dictating that upon the commission. Finally, we are concerned that the director, of course, may establish guidelines but these guidelines are not binding.

So, while we recognize it is important for this government, important for all Manitobans, to begin to deal with this issue of contaminated sites—as I mentioned there are

600 and some have estimated that there could be up to 1,000 contaminated sites here in the province—we recognize that there is a need to do that. We recognize that this legislation begins to attempt to deal with that, and so we on this side of the House do support this legislation. We support this legislation on second reading. We are also very much interested in hearing the concerns that will be raised when this legislation comes before a committee stage of this House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to conclude my comments. Thank you, Sir.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 34. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**An Honourable Member:** You bet.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Agreed? Agreed.

### Bill 3—The Surface Rights Amendment Act

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), The Surface Rights Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les droits de surface, standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Deputy Speaker—[interjection] Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the former Mr. Speaker.

Bill 3 we have already had at least one speaker on, and we are, at the end of my very brief comments, prepared to pass this bill on to committee.

Basically Bill 3 allows the elimination of the 72-hour waiting period between the signing of an oil lease and the actual drilling. My understanding is that all parties that were involved in this legislation have agreed that enabling the seller and the buyer to waive the 72-hour waiting period between the signing of the lease and the actual drilling is a flexibility that is desired. Unlike in some other jurisdictions, if the buyer or the seller, most likely the seller, wishes to, they may still retain the 72-hour waiting period.

We are in support of this bill and believe that, unlike many of the other pieces of legislation that are before this House, most particularly bills that are being presented by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) and the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh), this bill has listened to the parties involved and has retained the rights of people while allowing for some flexibility. I do wish the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Education, among others, had paid attention to the process that engendered Bill 3.

With those few comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are prepared to pass Bill 3 to committee.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 3. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Agreed? Agreed.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples):** On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask for leave to put a few comments in regard to Bill 3, if I may, some very short comments.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is there leave for the honourable member to put a few short comments on the record on Bill 3? [agreed]

\* \* \*

**Mr. Kowalski:** Thank you very much. In regard to Bill 3, I understand that this bill removes the current 72-hour waiting period that currently applies to oil and gas corporations who own mineral rights to a section of land. With this provision the landowner can still demand the 72-hour period but the onus for any such action is now squarely with the owner.

In a perfect world this might be a good piece of legislation. To remove the 72-hour waiting period when landowner and driller agree will end what appears to be a waste of time, but, if the landowner opposes drilling, he or she may not even be aware they do not own the

mineral rights on their land. The removal of the 72-hour waiting period may hinder their ability to protect their land.

\* (1500)

Do drilling companies really sit around for three days doing nothing while they get permission from the owner? I think not. They will call ahead if there is any agreement with the owner. What they want is the ability to show up on the doorstep of the unsuspecting landowner and then start drilling.

The minister's comments are a dead giveaway about where the impetus for this legislation comes from. It comes from the oil and gas companies. The minister describes this legislation as being user-friendly. A better description would be corporation-friendly. Saskatchewan and Alberta have no waiting period largely because they have a very powerful oil and gas lobby. Manitoba does not need to follow these examples.

We are looking forward to the committee stage, where I am sure there will be representations about this bill. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** As previously agreed, Bill 3 has passed second reading.

#### **Bill 40—The Pension Benefits Amendment Act**

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** We are now moving on to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Labour, Bill 40, The Pension Benefits Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les prestations de pension, standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** No, leave has been denied.

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to speak on Bill 40, The Pension Benefits Amendment Act, and I would like to dwell on the following topics: What is the bill all about? What are the substantive provisions of Bill 40, The Pension Benefits Amendment Act? I would like to consider also

the various types of pensions that exist, public and private, and also to project the pattern of change or direction about pension plans in this rapidly changing world, economic and social and political conditions.

If we read Bill 40 as to contents, the substantive content is contained in Section 2, which rewrites Section 11(1). It authorizes the minister in charge to enter into agreement with any other level of government, particularly the other provincial government or authorized representative of provincial governments in Canada or even of the national government in Ottawa or either with one or of any of these provinces or a number of them in the form of multilateral agreements.

It authorizes the minister to provide for the reciprocal registration, audit and inspection of various pension plans as well as to do the reciprocal enforcement of the specified legislation or laws or statutes affecting pension plans. It also authorizes the honourable minister in charge to authorize the pension commission or the superintendent of pensions or any other authorized representatives of any other province or jurisdiction in Canada or a number of them, or of the national government of Canada, to exercise any power or to perform any duty of the pension commission or superintendent of pensions.

The bill also authorizes the pension commission in Manitoba or the superintendent of pensions in Manitoba to exercise any of the powers or to perform any of the duties of the pension commission or the superintendent of pensions or any other authorized representatives of the other provinces or jurisdictions in Canada or of the national government in Canada in Ottawa itself, as well as to establish an association of pension commissions in Canada and to authorize such organization, the association of pension commissioners, to exercise any of the powers or perform any of the duties of the pension commissions if the agreement so provides.

In other words, this is an enabling legislation which authorizes the minister to enter into such agreements in order that there may be a common set of rules governing the various types of pensions all across this country of ours.

This bill also authorizes the minister who may enter into agreement where such agreement will provide, that

where a pension plan is subject to The Manitoba Pension Benefits Act, the local statute in this province, and it is also subject to the enactment of any other statute of any other provincial government in Canada, or even the national government in Ottawa, to enter into such agreement either not to apply the Manitoba rule or the Manitoba legislation, the Manitoba pension benefit, but to apply the pension or statute or legislation or part of legislation of those other jurisdictions or the national government in Canada, or, the other way around, to apply The Manitoba Pension Benefits Act and not the legislation of other provincial jurisdictions or of the national government in Ottawa; also to establish the conditions under which such choice of appropriate legislation will be made ahead of time so that either the Manitoba or non-Manitoba provincial jurisdiction statutes of legislation will apply under given sets of conditions. That is basically what this statute is providing for the consideration of this Legislature.

Let me now go to the second major topic which I would like to dwell upon, which is the kind of pension schemes or pension programs that obtain or are available to all major jurisdictions. What do we mean by a pension plan? To simplify, any pension plan, whatever its form or nature, is simply an arrangement, a social scheme, a social arrangement, that serves as protection for people against the risks of old age or premature death or their being disabled or invalid—disability. In general, these are the three events that we can talk about that could trigger the operation of a pension scheme or a pension system in order to meet the necessities of human beings in such a situation of old age when they can no longer secure income through gainful employment because of age, or because they have premature death, and they can, of course, no longer meet the economic obligations to their dependants, like minor children or a widow, as well as when they become disabled, whether partial or permanent or total disability, that prevents them from maintaining themselves through gainful employment.

In general, whether pension plans provide for old age or for premature death or for cases of disability, we perhaps can classify pension schemes or pension plans basically into what I shall call categories of public pension plans. The public pension system we have an example of in this country is the Canada Pension Plan. In the case of the province of Quebec, they have their own Quebec Pension Plan. This is basically financed by

contributions of workers in the rest of Canada and in Quebec. As they earn their wages and their salary as employees, they are required by law to make contributions to provide for the eventualities that we have mentioned. When the time comes when they get old, the time comes when they die prematurely or when they become disabled, there will be an income stream that will be available to take care of the needs of people dependent on them, either themselves or their dependants.

\* (1510)

Of course, the Canada Pension Plan is sustained by contributions of the members of the plan. All the workers who work in all the various provinces in this country are supposed to have some deductions from their salaries, and this goes to the Canada pension fund. Of course, that fund is supplemented in general by general government revenues in order to make it viable and workable. This is acceptable to devote a certain portion of public revenue for the sustenance of such national pension schemes such as the Canada Pension Plan, provided that the taxation by which those revenues are raised, the scheme, the system of taxation can be considered as progressive in nature.

A system of taxation is called progressive rather than regressive when such a system of taxation to raise public revenue is based on the ability to pay on the part of the various groups of taxpayers as individuals or as groups. The advantage of that is that the source of funding for the Canada Pension Plan would be more or less stable, and it will be based on a fair tax system if the tax system is based on the ability to pay. In other words, we tax those people who are more able to pay a greater portion than those who are least able to pay in order to accumulate all these funds to support the Canada pension system.

Of course, aside from the national public pension scheme, which we have known as the CPP or the Canada Pension Plan, if you are employed by some private company or by some private agency or some other group in society, they may have devised their own private pension plans, their private pension system. These are the private pension plans of private employers.

The workers who work for these various private employers, whether they are municipalities, companies, corporations, Crown corporations, whatever nature these



private employers are, they are also required to deduct contributions from their workers. The worker will make the contribution, and the usual practice is for the employer to match the contribution of the worker. These two sources of funding, the employer contribution and the employee contribution, are accumulated in the private pension fund of the company.

Of course, if there is still room, what you call the RRSP room, in your scheme, you can still buy the Registered Retirement Savings Plan certificates or whatever securities. You can supplement your private pension by buying some RRSPs. This makes money that you contribute secure from the tax system by putting it inside the RRSP. Your money will grow faster because, in addition to the benefit of not being subject to taxation, it is also earning interest and building up income. This interest and income are inside the RRSP, and they are also safe and secure from the tax grab of the government of the day. In that sense, you are building up for some security in the future should the eventuality arrive that you get old, or you get disabled, or you die prematurely, to take care of your widow or your dependants.

So that is one advantage of buying RRSPs or Registered Retirement Savings Plan units on the part of citizens, because they save money in the sense that this portion of their earnings is not subjected to the tax system, as well as the interest earned inside. Wherever they are invested, the money that is inside, if they are invested in securities or whatever, will also be nontaxable.

In all this basis, we have witnessed the operation of the principle of contribution. It is the employee who makes the contribution, and the employer also makes the contribution. Let us call this the contribution principle. That had its genesis a long time ago in England in the design of the British social welfare program. A certain Sir William Beveridge, who influenced the post-World War II design of the British social welfare program, had regarded the contributory principle, he calls it, as a very useful principle to follow in the design and creation of pension systems.

What are the advantages of the contributory principle whenever a society or a community or any corporation or organization, agency, public or private, should design any

kind of pension plan? Why is it desirable that we follow the contributory principle rather than simply provide general taxpayers' money to fund the pension system, as in other countries? The fact that the future beneficiary of the pension plan is contributing his or her own resources to fund the pension scheme is a constant reminder to them; every payday some portion of their salary is deducted. It is a constant reminder to them that, although the state or the government acting as agent of the state is responsible for the general welfare of all the people, the state or the government should not be considered as a free dispenser of gifts with no effort on the part of citizens. Citizens must, first of all, contribute their effort, their labour, their contribution to the pension scheme that will take care of them in old age. This is an indication that the individual should also be held responsible for his own future, for his own old age, and in that sense it constantly reminds him, whenever a portion of his salary is deducted to be put into the CPP, that he is also working for his own future, for his own security as a person.

Of course, being aware of it has another advantage. He is always aware that he is paying into the plan, and, therefore, he should have a basic interest in the integrity of the plan. He should see to it that the plan is well administered, the plan is well funded, the plan is secure and safe, so that when he needs the plan to help him in the time of old age or in the time of disability there will be some money available to help him in his personal life.

The only problem here is that due to advances in our society, especially in our knowledge of dietary requirements in our health care system, more and more people are living longer and longer. There are many, many senior citizens now increasing in number as far as the society is concerned generally in western society.

How old had people been living all along? A long time ago, in 1985, I cited the case of the Guinness Book of Records of the oldest living person recorded then, who was one named Pierre Joubert of France, who lived up to 113 years. That was way back in 1991, but then that record was broken. There is a new record now in the Guinness Book of Records, where there is a Japanese named Shigechivo Izumi. He lived up to 120 years. That is more than a century—120 years—and this seems to be the pattern in our society. People are surviving and they are living longer and longer, not necessarily in good health, but their life has been lengthened.

\* (1520)

So there is a problem emerging in Canada as a whole. We have to take care of these people. Where will we put them? We have to feed them. We have to provide them with basic necessities of life. Therefore, it is all the more essential that we should have a stable, well-sustained pension system, but in times of depressions, in times of economic difficulties when people are getting laid off and there are more and more workers who can no longer work, even if they are willing to work, and in times of economic difficulties there will be less number of people working. If there are less number of people working, there will be less number of people who will be contributing to the Canada Pension Plan, and if there are less number of people contributing, there will be less and less funding to sustain the Canada Pension Plan. That will put in jeopardy the future not only of the senior citizens of this country but of everybody, because if there is less input into the funding of the system, naturally there will be less money available when most of them are drawing from the Canada Pension Plan.

We have to take care of these people whether they are 65 years old or older and, as I said, the percentage of people who are old is increasing. It used to be, 12 percent of our total population are 65 years or older. It seems that by the year 2010, which is a decade away from now, the baby boomer should have retired and, at this ratio of increase, there would be at least 25 percent of all Canadians who will be elderly citizens. Can you imagine that? Twenty-five percent of the total population in Canada are 65 or older. How many will be drawing pensions? All of those people will be drawing pensions, and on what financial basis? On less and less money, considering the deficits that we have in the central national government as well as the provincial jurisdictions of the various provinces in this country.

Indeed, it was in the year 1994, that was the first year ever that the Canada Pension Plan first ran a deficit in all its 128 years of existence, that was in 1994. From there on we can say that we have a problem in our hands. The senior will be thought of by everyone as an expensive burden to carry in this society despite the fact that the young generations are opting out for large houses, fancy cars, expensive holidays. They are not having children anymore, or, fewer children. Naturally it will impair not only the retirement of seniors but also their own

retirement when they are no longer contributing as new generation of Canadians into the sustenance of this security system on a national scale, on a national level. Right now, it is worth mentioning here, that the birth rate in Canada for those western traditional white segment of the society now operates only about 2.1 children. So they are reproducing less and less and naturally less and less of them in the total demographic composition of Canada.

Not only are the seniors increasing in number, because of the pollution in our environment, because of certain toxin in the air we breathe and the number of the vicious habits of some people who will go out even in the winter to smoke a cigarette to kill themselves slowly, all these habits and all these things are contributing to premature death of some otherwise healthy workers. When the workers die prematurely, they have widows to sustain. Our burden, again, in our society, in our welfare system, the children, the young children, the minor children have to be taken care of. We have to allocate a portion of our resources for a segment of our population who are in need. So we have the survivors of pensions plan or system. You know, if your spouse dies and has a private pension and you are a spouse of a member, at least there is one half available perhaps to sustain you the rest of your life if you have never worked yourself. This is part of the old generation. Usually the housewife does not work. Only the head of the household worked. He is a member of a private pension system and the wife has to be provided for, and if he leaves some minor children, they also have to be sustained. So we have survivor's benefits, widow's pension and things like that.

Some people, unfortunately, may be involved in accidents like an automobile accident, or because of a sport like the hockey games, they may fall the wrong way and hit their spinal column and they become disabled. When people get disabled we need also to have some income stream to sustain them when they can no longer produce work or can no longer have a salary of any kind or be able to be employed in any gainful occupation. We have disability pensions on a national grand scale as well. So all these schemes in society are provided for so that human beings may be able to preserve themselves and their integrity as human beings may be protected.

Now, I have talked about the public pension system, like the Canada Pension Plan and like the Quebec Pension Plan. Now let us talk about the private pension

plan of private employers or private companies. Generally there are two grand types, what they call the defined benefits pension plan, and the other kind is the defined contribution pension plan, more popularly called money purchase pension plan; and of course there is the third kind, which is a combination of the first two kinds, what they call the hybrid type with a component of the defined benefit plan as well as a component of the defined contribution plan or the money purchase plan.

What are these types? How do we know which is which, which we have in our private pension scheme? The so-called defined benefits pension plan is one where the benefit or the return that will come to you later on is based on your years of service with your employer and with the salary that you receive. That is the basis for the computation of your benefit, the number of years you serve the company or the employer and the level of salary that you have. They usually have a formula.

\* (1530)

The second type is the defined contribution plan. It is called also the money purchase plan. This is a type of arrangement where the benefit that you get later on, the return you get from your pension plan is not based on the number of years but the number of contributions, the number of dollars you have contributed to the plan. In other words, you purchase benefits, future pension benefits. The more money you put in there, the more units you can purchase, the more you will receive when the plan matures. Of course, when the money is accumulated inside the defined contribution pension plan, the managers of the plan, the trustees of the pension fund, they will be busy investing this accumulated pool of money in some securities, in some other investment opportunities, and they will be producing investment income. The original contribution made by the member of the plan in the contributory pension plan plus the income derived from the various investments that they made will be the basis for the benefit that you get as a member of the defined contribution pension scheme.

Maybe the best system is the hybrid one, the combination of what they call the defined benefit—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

**Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I too am pleased to put words on the record in regard to the amendments to The Pension Benefits Act. It is my understanding that the main purpose of the amendment is to give the minister responsible for The Pension Benefits Act legislative authority to enter into agreements with the federal and provincial governments which will simplify and streamline the regulation of pension plans for employers operating in more than one jurisdiction. Presently Canadian employers operating in more than one jurisdiction are required to administer their plans in accordance with up to 11 separate pieces of pension legislation. While the laws are similar, differences exist to make the process expensive, time consuming and cumbersome to the administrator.

Under the proposed arrangement, the pension plan would be subject only to rules of the jurisdiction in which the largest number of plan members are employed. I believe such an arrangement would significantly simplify plan administration and reduce costs to employees and for employers who have sponsored pension plans.

For sometime now, employers have been pointing to the rising cost of compliance as a major reason why the number of employer-sponsored pension plans has been in decline in every jurisdiction in the country. As the ultimate beneficiaries of pension plans are working Manitobans seeking to enjoy a financially secure retirement, the government recognizes the value of reducing unnecessary regulatory overlap and duplication. Achieving this goal will allow this government to create an environment in which employers are encouraged rather than discouraged to offer pension plans to their employees.

In closing, I would like to say action to promote the expansion and establishment of employer-sponsored pension plans is long overdue. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this amendment represents a significant step in that direction, and I commend it to this Assembly. Thank you.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that debate be adjourned.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), seconded by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr.

Chomiak), that debate be now adjourned. Agreed? [interjection] If the honourable minister speaks, that will be the closing of debate.

#### Voice Vote

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The motion to adjourn debate has been put to the House. Someone said no. Order, please. [interjection] If the honourable minister speaks, he will be closing debate. They have made a motion—

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

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Wellington has a motion before the House at this time.

All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** In my opinion the Yeas have it. The motion stands.

#### Bill 10—The Pharmaceutical Amendment Act

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), The Pharmaceutical Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les pharmacies, standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

Did you want this to remain standing? Is there leave for this matter to remain standing?

**An Honourable Member:** Leave.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Leave? Leave has been granted.

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I welcome the opportunity of having the chance to discuss this Bill 10, The Pharmaceutical Amendment Act, which consists of three one-sentence paragraphs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, often during the course of debate on bills like this, bills like this kind are referred to as housekeeping or administrative in their nature. But, you know, while I believe the government and the minister in his comments with respect to this bill made those types of statements and alluded to the fact that this was administrative, or perhaps housekeeping legislation, I feel otherwise. I would like to put on the record my concerns and those concerns of my colleagues and, I think, of a great many Manitobans with respect to legislation of this kind.

On bills of this kind, generally, we are not to refer to the specifics during the course of this debate, but I want to refer generally to the philosophy of this particular bill and tell you why we are opposed to a bill that is supposedly of an administrative or of a housekeeping nature.

What the bill proposes to do is to take power from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council and transfer the power to the minister. It allows the minister by his own decree or by fiat to make changes to the formulary and to deal with the prescription drug formulary and designation of what drugs are interchangeable.

Why are we concerned, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. Could I have the two honourable members that want to carry on this conversation across the way do so in the loge? I am really having difficulty hearing the member for Kildonan.

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Good. The honourable member for Kildonan, to continue.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And why are we concerned? We are concerned because we

have seen two distinct patterns emerge in health under this government. The first is a massive reduction of resources, programs available to Manitobans with respect to health.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we saw this year the destruction of the best prescription drug program in the country through the best—

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** North America.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I stand corrected by the member for Wellington. The best prescription drug program in North America was destroyed by this government this year without public consultation, without study. The minister simply came in and slashed the budget and slashed the program this year.

Secondly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have seen the whittling down of programs and of services available to the public over and over again, something I like to refer to as a net reduction. Not only is there a reduction of the basic programs, but any alternative available to a patient or to a member of the public has been eliminated as well or is nonexistent.

When programs are eliminated like prescription drug programs, what alternatives are available? The patient still has the symptoms. The patient still has the difficulty. What is available for that patient or that person? Generally, two courses of action are open. Firstly, some kind of user pay scheme that has been implemented by the government; or, secondly and even more dangerously, no program or no alternative service is available. We have seen a net reduction of programs and services in the health care field by this government over and over again.

But there is something more insidious that has been going on that I resent very, very much. That has been the taking of power away from the Legislature, the taking of power away from even the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. The repositing of that power in the hands of the minister, by fiat, to function as I have often said in this Chamber, the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) functions like the CEO of some big corporation. That is exactly how he would like to function and not have to go through this Legislature, not have to go through the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

\* (1540)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this bill does is it says, no longer to make these changes under The Pharmaceutical Act will the minister have to go to Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. Now the changes are made by decree, by fiat, by the minister. If you look at the legislation that has been put in by this government all across the board, we have seen—and it is ironic—increasingly, power given to the minister to make declarations and to have that power removed from the auspices of the Chamber and removed from the auspices of Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, sitting in the hands of the minister, allowing the minister—and it has been said very, very many times with respect to health—to function as a little dictator. That certainly is apparent in the other act, The Regional Health Authorities Act, where the minister maintains all the power to do what he or she wants without any opportunity for members on this side of the House to question, without any opportunity for members of the public to discuss with the minister what the minister is doing.

What this simple bill does is take power from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council and put it in the hands of the minister to make whatever decrees the minister wants to decree. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even if we had confidence that the minister was capable of providing proper direction in health care, even if we are confident that this minister would be improving the health care of Manitobans, we would be against this kind of directive, because even if the minister was functioning to provide for better health care, still the very principle of taking this power and putting it in the minister's hands without recourse to the public is a dangerous, dangerous precedent to be made.

Let me give you one example. A similar amendment was made to the prescription drug program several years ago, and what did that mean? That meant the Minister of Health no longer had to function under Order-in-Council to make the changes to the Pharmacare program. That allowed them to sneak through the changes. That allowed them to sneak through the cuts and the total destruction of the prescription drug program in Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At least in the past, we in the Chamber and the public had recourse to view the results as a result of a public document provided by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. We no longer have that

right, so by stealth, by the removal of the ability of the public to have recourse to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, the minister has taken that power, put it in his own hands, is able to make decrees to dismantle programs, to destroy programs, to remove programs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even if the minister was inclined to improve the situation, even if the minister and this government were of the kind that were doing something to make health care better in this province, I would still be against this kind of amendment. Even if the government was the kind of government that knew what it was doing in health care, I would still be against this kind of amendment, because giving this power to the minister without recourse to the public and without providing members of this Chamber an opportunity to debate is bad policy, it is bad philosophy, and it makes a sham of the parliamentary system.

You know, it strikes me as ironic that this government, with the philosophy that it has that is against government, that wants to remove government, has taken more power into the hands of cabinet and the ministers and allowed them to function by fiat and by decree than, I suggest, any other government in the history of the province. We have seen more legislation where power goes into the hands of the minister and is taken away from the Legislature or taken away from Order-in-Council and gone into the hands of the minister than any other administration. Is that not something ironic, that a government that says, we do not want to be big government, we do not want government in the people's hands, is the very government—I should correct myself. They say, we do not want big government, and we do not want to be intruding into people's lives, is the very government that is taking more power into their hands than any other government in provincial history, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think that is a bad precedent.

I think, even if we were inclined to believe that the government was doing a good job of health care, I would say we were against this kind of amendment because of the principle it establishes, because what it does, Mr. Deputy Speaker—and we saw examples of it in the Pharmacare program. Before they destroyed the Pharmacare program this year, we at least had recourse, before the best prescription drug program—[interjection] The member for Rossmere (Mr. Toews) will have plenty of time in this debate to discuss the merits of their new

prescription drug program, and I hope he takes the occasion to discuss with his constituents what has happened to the prescription drug program, because I think, if he had recourse, like many of us who have been in the Rossmere area, to talk to constituents, he would discover that they are not pleased with what he and his colleagues have done to the prescription drug program.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I indicated earlier, we saw what the government did before it destroyed the prescription drug program. At least we had recourse every year to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, to the Gazette and to the publication of what level and rate the deductibility was set at.

That was a matter of course. The public had access to it. We knew ahead of time. By stealth, by the removal of the authority from Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to the minister, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we no longer had recourse to watch and to determine what deductibility increases would take place. You know, I had many occasions in the last year where members of the public or members of the media or people from the drug industry—that is, pharmacists and others—came to me and said what is the deductibility going to be, and I had to say I do not know. I do not know because it is no longer published. It is no longer accountable. We no longer get notice of these changes, and that change, that inability for the public and for members of the Legislature to determine what was happening in prescription drug programs, led ultimately to the total destruction of the program in this budgetary year.

So it is very apparent that this is a very difficult amendment for us to support. Now, the government has the majority and they will be able to put through all the legislation they want, but this is not the only piece of legislation where we see this principle being put into practice. We have seen numerous, numerous pieces of legislation that have been brought forward to this Chamber and passed by this government with a majority that have moved power directly into the hands of the minister. Recently changes, for example, to taxi board rates that used to at least be accountable, which the public had access through Order-in-Council, or even through representation in this Chamber, that was changed. Now it is in the hands of the minister. The changes to the prescription drug program, totally in the hands of the minister, and I dare say the most draconian

of all, The Regional Health Authorities Act that makes the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) a virtual—

**An Honourable Member:** I do not believe that for a minute.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Downey) says he does not believe that. He ought to read the act. He ought to read the act that makes the Minister of Health a virtual dictator with respect to health care under The Regional Health Authorities Act. The member for Roblin-Russell ought to know better. I have never seen legislation like this or like The Regional Health Authorities Act that directs so much power, Mr. Deputy Speaker, into the hands of the minister, and that is not good. All politics aside, that is a bad precedent to set for the parliamentary system.

More and more we see power taken away. Less and less do we have an opportunity to either debate in this Chamber or outside this Chamber issues that affect Manitobans, and the more that happens, the more we whittle away at this parliamentary system, the system of representative democracy, the more harm we do to not only ourselves as elected representatives but to the system as a whole. If we do not have the opportunity to debate these fundamental issues in this Chamber, if we do not have an opportunity to go and discuss them with our constituents, then we are doing a disservice to the community. We are doing a disservice to the principles upon which this system has been founded, and that is a system where the public, through their elected representatives and otherwise, have an opportunity to discuss fundamental issues in this Chamber and outside of this Chamber.

By taking power and putting it directly into the hands of the minister and allowing the minister by fiat to make all of the decisions allows for (a) no public discussion (b) no improvements and (c) allows the minister to do whatever the minister so desires. That is not the way the system was structured, but that is the way bills like this and changes like this are taking this system.

\* (1550)

That is wrong, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we are saying we are not going to support legislation of this kind that increasingly moves power into the hands of the minister.

Now I think the minister could make all kinds of arguments, all kinds of arguments in favour as to why he or she wants this particular power. The minister did not in his statements referencing this bill—but the minister might argue that for example he needs his power to make swift decisions and to make swift decisions with respect to some forms of appeal regarding the formulary or some other matter of that kind. That is an acceptable argument. But the point is, the minister did not. More importantly, the minister has the ability to make those changes through Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council just as readily as he does by sitting at his desk and by fiat making decisions off the top of his or her head. That is the wrong principle, and that is something that we cannot support.

We certainly have in this Chamber and we certainly have in the last few years ample evidence of the problem when we allow ministers to do that. In health care the minister and the government have made mistake after mistake after mistake in health care. We have seen one vogue leading to another vogue and one new theory of how their health reform is going to work leading to another new theory leading to another new theory. What has been fundamentally missing from that is the dialogue and the discourse and the ability of the minister to perhaps listen to other suggestions and to listen to the public as to how to change the system.

The only time we saw movement from this government with respect to health care was the recent announcements or determination by the government to close hospitals when the public rose up against the government by the thousands and by the thousands and rose up by the thousands and told this government, we will not have our hospitals closed. It took protests of thousands of people to change the government's action in that regard.

Would it not have been better for the government to have gone to the public first to talk to the people involved rather than go through the situation of having people having to rally by the thousands to change bad government policy?

And so you see, in there is a message, and in that action and in that recent history is a lesson for the government.

The longer, the more you cloister in your offices and make decisions sitting with a couple of bureaucrats and

a couple of consultants and make decisions off the top of your head, the more frequently you do that, the more frequently we see decisions like that.

No better example exists, I might add, of that, than the infamous Connie Curran, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the infamous Connie Curran, who was brought in by this government and supported and paid the sum of \$4 million plus \$800,000 in expenses, tax-free, to the American consultant to come to the Minister of Health and tell the Minister of Health how to run health care.

Manitobans rose up in rage, and rightly so. And therein lies the problem. The minister sits cloistered with a few high-priced consultants and a few bureaucrats and makes these decisions, and that is wrong policy. This bill only seeks to further that direction by giving power completely to the hands of the minister.

I have told the minister on many occasions that health care is not a dialogue, it is a monologue disguised as a dialogue. This bill and the implications of this bill and the principle only serve to weaken the position of the government and only serve to further isolate them, to further isolate the ministers from the reality of what is happening out there with respect to health care and what is happening out there with respect to the public.

Just over the weekend the poll was released with respect to health care. It serves to illustrate how out of touch the government and the minister are and how the implication of this bill will further put them out of touch.

The minister's response to the poll that showed that Manitobans were overwhelmingly against their health care reform was to say, we need more PR. We need more public relations. We need Barb Biggar out there doing more PR for us. That is the wrong answer, and that is the danger of when they become so cloistered and so captive of the consultants and so captive of that small little group of advisors, whoever they are, advising the government. That is why this legislation is bad. It does not allow for public discussion and public discourse of these issues. So the government ought to take a lesson from what happened in Manitoba the last few months when the public rose up against the home care privatization, when thousands of signs were put up in the member of Rossmore's (Mr. Toews) constituency, when thousands of signs went up in River Heights and other areas of the

city; the government ought to have learned that they ought to start listening to the public and not sitting on high and making their declarations, whether it is the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) attacking unions or whether it is the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) attacking—good heavens, attacking everyone in the health care system. They ought to listen, and this bill does exactly the opposite.

This bill says, we are no longer going to make these changes through Order-in-Council. We are no longer going to publish these changes. We are no longer going to allow the public to have input as to what changes we are making. We are going to do this by ministerial fiat. We know better, and that is the mark of danger in a government. That is a mark of a government that is completely out of touch, and that is a danger, not just for this government, but for any government, but, more importantly, for the people of Manitoba. This is bad policy. This is bad precedence. This is bad for the parliamentary system. This is bad for representative government. This is bad for health care.

Changes like this, as insignificant as they look on paper, have wide-ranging ramifications down the road. When they made this change to the prescription drug program, the similar change, we no longer had access to the changes. We no longer knew what was going on in terms of the deductibilities. We no longer had access to that information, and what did the government do? It slipped in without discussion, without consultation, and it gutted the best Pharmacare program in North America. That happened because of a legislative change just like this. Just like this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and now the government is proposing to do it with a form.

The government has made lots of changes to the formulary recently. I must advise this House that a lot of people who practice health care in this province do not agree with the changes made. What recourse do they have? They have absolutely none. Because the minister makes it by fiat, the changes go through. Doctors cannot write the kinds of prescriptions they believe they should write. Patients cannot get access to that and that is by—[interjection] Oh, the members, and I really look forward to members opposite who are now bleating from their seats. I look forward to their comments on this, and I look forward to defending what they have done in health care and defending what they have done in the prescription drug program and defending the changes.



I defy them. I challenge them to come forward with names of people that say that these are improvements, that what they have done in terms of the formulary and otherwise has helped the system. I know the member wants to blame the media. I know the minister likes to blame the health care workers. I know the member for Rossmere likes to blame the unions, but if they looked in the mirror they would find that the concern about their health care changes are widespread and cross all segments and all boundaries of society.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if they were truly in touch, legislation like this would not have to come forward. If they were truly in touch, they would have the strength of their conviction, and they would say, when we make changes, we will make them public. We will allow for public discussion; we will let the public know what we are doing. But, by virtue of these changes, they are not doing so, and by virtue of that this is bad legislation. Like some of the other health legislation we have seen in this session, it is something that members on this side of the House cannot support and will not support.

So I indicated that the amendment is only three paragraphs and that it appeared to only be housekeeping or administrative, but the implications of this legislation are far broader and far greater in implications than the three paragraphs suggest, and every Manitoban now who has a drug removed from the formulary are changed. Every single individual, and they will be the thousands, will not have recourse and not have advance knowledge of those changes. Every time some drug is moved on and off the formulary or some drug is interchanged or some decree goes up in the ministry as to what will be applied and what will be covered and will not be covered, Manitobans will not have access to that. They will not have access to that information. It will come down by decree from the minister and not only is that bad health care, that is bad politics, that is bad government, and that is simply something that members on this side of the House urge the government to look very, very closely at.

\* (1600)

This is only the first of many changes like that. I have already indicated that we have seen changes like this in The Regional Health Authorities Act. We have seen changes like this in The Ambulance Services Act—and we

will have more to say about that later—and we have seen changes in numerous other acts, including labour acts, including highways and transportation and other acts where power moves from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, power moves into the hands of the minister. Power moves into the hands of the minister and allows the minister to by decree make laws that ought to be part of the role and function of this Chamber and part of the role and function of the public who, after all, on whose behalf we are working, on whose behalf we are supposed to be trying to do the best for.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope I have made clear to members opposite why we are very opposed to legislation of this kind, why we think it is bad legislation, and why we think the government ought to take another look at this legislation and other legislation. The public of Manitoba, particularly in the area of health care, looks to this Chamber and looks to the government to provide the best possible health care that is possible, and we have not been getting it. One of the reasons we have not been getting it is because the minister has tended to take power completely into the minister's hands and makes laws and rules and regulations by decree and allows for no input and allows for no discussion.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

If members opposite were to get this message, they would realize that in fact it is in their own interest not to have legislation of this kind. It is in their own interest to listen to the public. It is in their own interest to allow for public discussion. Only that way can we have improved legislation. Only that way can we improve the situation with respect to health care in Manitoba. But I hope that these appeals to not fall upon deaf ears, and I strongly urge members opposite to reconsider their position with respect to this legislation and other aspects of legislation that we have seen in this session that take power and put power completely into the hands of the minister and exclude not only this Chamber but the public in general.

So with those few words, Madam Speaker, I will look forward to discussions by members opposite with respect to this act.

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Madam Speaker, I simply have to rise and put a few words of comment on record on Bill 10.

I think it is important to note, as the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) indicated at the outset in remarks that he made, this is a very small bill. It is really a three-line or four-line, or four-clause, four-line bill. It is not as broad and all consuming as he suggests it is. If you read the bill and if you read the amendment that it will make to the act, it will simply mean that the bill will allow the establishment of an advisory committee to be appointed by the minister instead of appointed by Order-in-Council.

This Legislature has no say in the establishment, as the honourable member for Kildonan might want this House to believe, or might want others to believe that might read his speech at some point in time, has no powers. This legislation has no power over this bill whatsoever except to amend it. The cabinet has no authority other than to appoint the committee, and it will be an advisory committee, to the minister. This bill simply changes the process of the appointment of the committee.

The honourable member for Kildonan stood here for almost 40 minutes and talked about a bill that is really, in essence, not very meaningful. However, it does put some of the responsibility of the appointment of the advisory committee in the hands of the minister instead of Order-in-Council. From that perspective, I think it adds efficiency to the system of the business of running the government.

So, Madam Speaker, I simply wanted to indicate that those of us who sit in this House will make those comments and will speak to any one of the bills that are being misrepresented by members opposite in the debates in this House, because I think it is extremely important that we, as members of government—whether we are in the back bench or a front-bench minister—guard against the misrepresentation that we heard here a little while ago in the representation, or the explanation of Bill 10. So I would just caution members opposite that when they do speak to legislation, that they do represent it correctly because some historians, or maybe even our own children, will sometime sit down and read the speeches that we make in this House. Therefore, I think it is most appropriate that we honestly represent our opposition to a bill or our support for a bill.

**Madam Speaker**, I certainly would recommend that we support this bill because I believe it leads towards a

much more efficient application of the provisions within the legislation. Thank you.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, just very briefly, I understand that this act transfers responsibility in essence for two pharmaceutical regulation procedures from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to the Minister of Health. The minister will now be responsible for the formulary advisory committee and will have the authority to make regulations governing the designation of interchangeable drugs. These amendments complement those made in 1994 to The Prescription Drugs Cost Assistance Act.

Madam Speaker, the New Democratic critic had made some comments with respect to it which I think the government should be somewhat concerned about. With having said those few words, we are quite prepared to see it go to committee.

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** On a matter of House business, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Oh. I will deal with this bill first then.

As previously agreed, this bill will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett). Agreed? [agreed]

\* (1610)

### House Business

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Speaker, earlier today the House passed on second reading Bills 3, 56 and 34. I would like those bills referred to the Committee on Municipal Affairs who will sit on Wednesday, September 25, at 7 p.m.

**Madam Speaker:** For clarification, Bills 3, 13, 20, 34 and 56? Is that correct?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Speaker, 3, 34 and 56 will be referred.

**Madam Speaker:** Okay. The Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs to meet Wednesday evening,

September 25, at 7 p.m., to include the bills passed today for second reading, Bills 3, 34 and 56.

### **Bill 54—The Municipal and Various Acts Amendment Act**

**Madam Speaker:** To resume debate on second reading, Bill 54 (The Municipal and Various Acts Amendment Act; Loi concernant les municipalités et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives), on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Leave? There is leave to permit the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona. [agreed]

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak about The Municipal Act, Bill 54.

I would like to start my remarks by saying that from what I understand from the minister and from other people that I have spoken with, this bill is a result of extensive consultations throughout the province with almost every stakeholder that would have something to say about The Municipal Act. I will come back to the “almost” part in a few moments. We agree with the government that The Municipal Act as it currently stands is an unwieldy document that does not reflect today's realities, and, in principle, agree with many of the changes that are being proposed in The Municipal Act.

Because it is such an extensive reworking of the entire area of municipal affairs, there is a potential for problems to develop. I would just urge the government, in listening to our concerns as have been raised in second reading, and also when the bill gets to committee stage, both to listen very closely to the concerns that are raised by us in the House and by the public presentations and to be open to amendments at committee stage. I believe that amendments will be forthcoming at committee stage, and I hope that the government will be open to listening to those amendments so that The Municipal Act can begin its life as well thought out and well put together as possible.

Again, we support the principle of producing a new Municipal Act, and we will be very interested in what the

committee hearings engender when this bill goes to committee.

I, however, do have major concerns in one area of The Municipal Act in my role as Urban Affairs critic—that is, with the section that deals with the formation and dissolution, amalgamation and annexation of lands that are currently within the city of Winnipeg boundaries. My reading of Bill 54 shows that in order to form, dissolve, amalgamate or annex lands in the province of Manitoba, whether they be municipalities or the city of Winnipeg, there are three possible scenarios. One scenario is the scenario where one municipality wants to form, dissolve, amalgamate or annex portions or all of another municipality, or a municipality wants to be created in its entirety.

The second scenario is if the City of Winnipeg wants to annex or amalgamate land outside the city of Winnipeg. The process and procedure for that part for the city in that situation is exactly that of municipality to municipality. In Section 4(2), the city is treated as a municipality for the purposes of annexing any lands outside the city of Winnipeg. So that is the second scenario.

The third scenario is the one that is causing me, and causing members of City Council in the City of Winnipeg, some serious concern—that is, if a municipality outside the city of Winnipeg wishes to annex land that currently is in the city of Winnipeg boundaries. There is a very different procedure in place for that third scenario. It is not only a different procedure, Madam Speaker, but it is a very much shortened procedure. The procedure for the first two scenarios is very clearly laid out in 10 or 15 pages of Bill 54. We do not, at this point, upon first reading of this, have any problems with this. As a matter of fact, it appears to us to be a clarification of the process and a simplification of the process. The proposals to amend or dissolve or form or annex or amalgamate municipality to municipality, or the City of Winnipeg to amalgamate or annex a portion of land, can be initiated by the minister, which is a new thing in the act, by the council of a municipality, or by a petition signed by at least 30 percent of the affected municipalities.

Once one of those three initiating steps has been undertaken, then the proposal goes to the Municipal Board, and there is a clear outline of the requirements for

the content of the proposal and who will be consulted before it goes to the Municipal Board, which, to my mind, is very clear and very succinct and excellent. There is a requirement to share that proposal, no matter who of the three parties initiated it, with all of the affected bodies, and it states very clearly how that sharing is to be undertaken.

After this proposal goes to the Municipal Board, the proponent, the person or the group that is making the recommendation or the proposal to form, dissolve, amalgamate or annex must meet with the affected parties and undertake a consultation process, as outlined in the Municipal Board proposal, and the proponent must prepare a report and file it with the Municipal Board. The consultation process must be very clearly outlined in the proposal to the Municipal Board, and there must be a report to all of the stakeholders from the proponent so that everyone who is potentially affected knows the implications and the ramifications of the proposed formation, dissolution, annexation or amendment.

There is a time limit for providing the public with time to respond to the proposed report. It is a very complete, clearly defined, not in regulation and not at the behest of the minister, as so much of this legislation coming before us this session is, but it is clearly stated in the act itself. That is a very positive thing, I think, and again it may be that communities will have problems with this, but my reading of this section and these sections dealing with municipalities to municipalities is that it is a very clearly defined set of requirements that are there. So communities and municipalities will know what they are required to do. It is a very open and democratic and transparent process, and it allows for everybody to have input for consultation and dialogue to take place. That is the way it should be. That is the way, if a municipality wants to deal with another municipality, it will be undertaken. That is also the way it will be if the City of Winnipeg wants to annex a property of a municipality that is outside of its current boundaries. For those purposes, the City of Winnipeg will be seen as a municipality and will have to go through exactly the same open and transparent process as other municipalities will.

However, Madam Speaker, there is the third scenario, and this is a scenario that is causing many people in the city of Winnipeg a great deal of concern. There are not 10 or 12 pages clearly outlining a process when the city

of Winnipeg is at risk for amalgamation by a municipality. No, there are two and a half pages, two and a half pages instead of 10 or 15 pages. It is full of ministerial control and it is full of may's rather than shall's. It is a very, very different proposal.

The government says that actually this change to the formation of rural municipalities and annexation of land from the city of Winnipeg is better than in the current Municipal Act for two reasons.

I will not deny that the two elements that are currently in this section are better than what it was before. The first is now, electors on their own cannot initiate an annexation request. It must come from the minister or the council of the municipality or 30 percent of the electors in that area, so that is a tightening up of the current proposal.

And there is a study required that was not in the original thing, but unlike the clearly defined, clearly laid out, exhaustive requirements for municipality-to-municipality annexation or formation or amalgamation, the elements that deal with another municipality wanting to annex city of Winnipeg land is very different. The study only says that the cabinet must not make a regulation about the formulation of land, taking of land from the City of Winnipeg and giving it to a municipality unless a study of the impact of the proposed formation or the proposed annexation is conducted and made public. It does not say anything in this part of the act about who shall do this study, who shall be consulted, how it is to be made public. None of that which is in the rest of the act is in the act as it relates to land from the city of Winnipeg being annexed by another municipality.

\* (1620)

Why is this? This is the question that people have in the city. Why is there such a difference in the process for amalgamation and annexation when it comes to the city of Winnipeg than there is when it comes to municipalities? [interjection] The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ernst), who used to be the Minister of Urban Affairs and who used to be a city councillor, says that the reason the process is different is because they are different.

Yes, they are different. You know how they are different, Mr. Minister? [interjection] Through the

Speaker to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs—I apologize. Madam Speaker, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs states that the reason the act sections are different is because the city of Winnipeg is different. Well, it most certainly is. The city of Winnipeg includes two-thirds of the population of the province of Manitoba. It seems to be that the city of Winnipeg, which is the engine that runs this province, which must be a healthy community for this province to survive, should have at least as much protection as the R.M. of St. Andrews or the R.M. of Rosser when it comes to protecting its land. But, no, this new piece of legislation allows a municipality to make a proposal to the government, and it does not even say who in the municipality, I do not believe—no, it does not—it does not even say who in the municipality can make this request. There is no protection for the city of Winnipeg. Now, the argument could be made, well, there is more protection than was under the former act because of the two changes that have been made.

Well, there were major changes made to the process for annexation and amalgamation and formulation and dissolution when it comes to municipalities in this new piece of legislation. Why was the same courtesy not, if you will, extended to the city of Winnipeg? No, the city of Winnipeg under Bill 54 is open to raiding by any of its surrounding municipalities who might wish to amend their own land and take in parts of the city of Winnipeg. There is no protection, there is virtually no protection for the city of Winnipeg. Not only that, Madam Speaker, for an amalgamation, an annexation or formulation or a dissolution to take place between municipality and municipality, it must go before the Municipal Board.

But in the section dealing with the city of Winnipeg, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, i.e., the cabinet, may refer the matter to the Municipal Board and may request the board to consider and make special recommendations on matters that cabinet considers relevant to the proposed alteration.

So cabinet can decide even after a study has been done, cabinet can decide that there are certain elements that should be looked at by the Municipal Board. But cabinet does not even have to take this proposal to the Municipal Board. The R.M. of Headingley, for example, could ask the province of Manitoba to annex to itself the land that

includes John Blumberg Golf Course and Assiniboia Downs under this piece of legislation. All the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, all the cabinet has to do is to order a study, with no parameters for the study, no statement whether Barb Biggar would do the study or KPMG would do the study or Connie Curran would do the study, to be made public. To be made public how, Madam Speaker? To be made public in the back pages of the Gazette? To be made public in the Legislature? To be made public to the council of the City of Winnipeg? It does not say. The cabinet can do what the cabinet wants to do. It does not have to go to the Municipal Board. Nobody but those 18 members has to make a determination. It could be that a huge chunk of the city of Winnipeg land could be annexed to a rural municipality with, if they are all present and accounted for, 18 cabinet members making that determination, with no input from the people who are mostly affected by it, i.e., the residents and the City Council of the City of Winnipeg.

Now, Madam Speaker, I will give the government credit. I will give them the benefit of a doubt. This was a hugely complex bill to draft. Perhaps, because there was so much legislation that had to be drafted this spring, and this is such a complex piece of legislation, perhaps the government simply made an oversight. Hard though that may be to believe, the government could have made an oversight. Hard though that may be to believe, the government could have made an oversight, and I am hoping that oversight will be addressed in committee hearings or perhaps the government, in their debate on second reading on this piece of legislation, will inform us prior to our going to committee hearings on Bill 54 just whom they consulted—who they consulted, whom they consulted with, with whom they consulted to come—[interjection] I was a teacher too—up with this part of Bill 54. Why did they only make two minor changes to the annexation of City of Winnipeg land when they made extensive overhaul in the other municipal annexation and amalgamation sections? Why did they do that?

Now, the relations between the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg are probably at the worst they have ever been, which I find interesting, seeing as how there are so many former city councillors sitting in cabinet. However, the relationship between the City of

Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba is in a dreadful state, due in no small part to the fact that the province has refused to deal with, on a partnership basis, with the City of Winnipeg, the community that drives the engine and the social elements and economic elements of this province.

Two-thirds of the people of the province live in the City of Winnipeg. Why has this government refused to deal fairly, and in a true partnership way, with the City of Winnipeg on this and virtually every other issue that has come before them? These are questions that I would like the government to answer, preferably prior to committee hearings because, if the government would please put some rationale on the record on this particular part of Bill 54, then maybe we could go into the public hearings with a better understanding of what is going on here, but if that does not occur, Madam Speaker, we could only suppose, based on their dismal record of working with the City of Winnipeg—

**An Honourable Member:** Dismal?

**Ms. Barrett:** Abysmal, dismal, horrible record. We can only base our findings on the terrible record that this government has with working with the City of Winnipeg and conclude that this is not a genuine oversight on the part of the government, but they deliberately have made a situation such that, with virtually no public input, with absolutely no public input, from the City of Winnipeg, the City of Winnipeg can be dismembered at will by 18 cabinet members on the part of this government. Talk about democratization and accountability, there is absolutely no accountability on the part of government for this section of The Municipal Act, and I would urge the government again to make it clear where I am wrong, if I am wrong.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Wellington will have 11 minutes remaining. As previously agreed, this will also remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

The hour being 4:30 p.m., time for private members' hour.

\* (1630)

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

### PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

#### Res. 9—International Banking and Trade

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe),

WHEREAS the provincial government has introduced many initiatives intended to establish Manitoba as a trade and transportation corridor between North America, northern Europe and Asia; and

WHEREAS there is a tremendous developing potential for businesses to trade with Russia; and

WHEREAS Moscow Narodny Bank Limited, one of the world's leading Russian-owned banks, has chosen Winnipeg as the site of its first North American office; and

WHEREAS Winnipeg was chosen as the location for the bank because of its status as the grain capital of Canada, its proximity to commodities such as oil and gas, minerals and forestry products, its climate and the province's commitment to developing trade links with Russia; and

WHEREAS Russo-North American trade is expected to double, particularly in the area of hydrocarbon co-operation projects, agricultural goods and services, construction, power engineering and pharmaceuticals; and

WHEREAS the Moscow Narodny branch positions Winnipeg as a major economic gateway to Russia and northern Europe.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the government of Manitoba in its continued efforts to provide the necessary infrastructure to strengthen and foster international trade.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Helwer:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to present this resolution because export diversification is a major

building block for economic growth in Manitoba and, since our province has a small domestic market, it must rely on increased exports for job creation in order to generate the wealth and to maintain the quality of life for all Manitobans. The future of our province will be determined by our ability to expand the confines of the products and services that we export as well as the various markets that we export these products to.

**An Honourable Member:** Pork.

**Mr. Helwer:** Yes, pork, you are right. Manitoba's midcontinent location offers a diversified industry and growth-oriented business community with all the expertise and resources that are needed for developing export markets.

Manitoba's stable economy also is balanced by progressive resource industries, an advanced manufacturing sector, world-class service and also high technology companies, all of which present unique opportunities for new value-added ventures. Such diversity helps Manitoba's economy absorb fluctuations felt elsewhere on the continent, and Manitoba's entrepreneurs are strongly export oriented and they are very experienced in selling in the world market.

**An Honourable Member:** Indeed they are.

**Mr. Helwer:** When it comes to hogs, Mr. Minister, you agree with that, or any agricultural products.

The diversity and quality of the products made in Manitoba are recognized around the world.

Unquestionably, Madam Speaker, Manitoba is a major distribution hub in Canada because of its geographical location. In addition to Manitoba being in this ideal position within Canada the province also has the potential of being a major gateway between North America, northern Europe and Russia. Not only are we encouraging Manitoba companies to offer their expertise to world markets, we are also promoting the competitive advantage of our geographical location and our international trade corridor infrastructure such as the northern port of Churchill and our airports, railways and highways. Two key trade corridors that are being developed are the Arctic Bridge trade corridor, which will establish trade via Churchill and the northern ports of

Russia, as well as the midcontinent trade and transportation corridor within North America.

Russia alone has a population in excess of 150 million people. Since the country is experiencing some major economic reforms toward a market economy, Manitoba is making great efforts to establish economic relationships and alliances, as this Arctic Bridge project. The Moscow Narodny Bank established Russia's first North American representative office in Winnipeg last year because of the city's geographical location and also its status as the capital of Canada's grain industry and its proximity to major resource and manufacturing industries and also the province's commitment to developing trade links with Russia.

The Manitoba government's international trade and investment agency is active in developing trade opportunities between companies in Manitoba and companies in Europe, Russia and Asia. Gateway North marketing agency and also the Moscow Narodny Bank are also working in co-operation with Manitoba Trade in pursuing international trade and establishing Manitoba as an international trade corridor. Thus, Manitoba's major transportation and trade infrastructure like the northern Port of Churchill, various airports that we have, excellent highways that we have and the railway links including the bayline, will provide the necessary links to strengthen and promote international trade.

Another trade corridor is being pursued by Winnipeg. Currently, this project is in its final stages of developing an international air cargo service linking Winnipeg with Europe and Asia. This potential link would provide significantly improved access to Manitoba's exporters.

External trade has been of vital importance to Manitoba's prosperity. Madam Speaker, our economy produces more than it consumes. Various developments have created unprecedented and virtually unlimited opportunities for Manitoba businesses to compete in world markets, and some of these include the progressive and necessary changes that have been made within the trading industry through agreements such as the NAFTA, North American Free Trade Agreement, the Canada-U.S. Trade Agreement and those involving the removal of tariff and nontariff barriers through the World Trade Organization. Also, these include the rise of free markets in the former Soviet Union and increased interest in free

enterprise in China and also the competitively valued Canadian dollar.

Manitoba's success abroad in the area of trade thus far has helped to create thousands of jobs and also to win strong international credit ratings and continues to grow and diversify. Each billion dollars earned from new exports directly and indirectly creates 10,000 new jobs. Creating new jobs for Manitobans and providing a high standard of living is the ultimate objective of our government's activities in the trading area. Export trade can only spring from a business community that is dynamic, financially stable and aware of broader economic trends.

Madam Speaker, it has been the objective of the Manitoba government to promote the province's diversification of products. The quality of these products and the many entrepreneurs who are responsible for them within the world market. So I would remind all honourable members that the Manitoba government has had an excellent record thus far promoting and maintaining excellent trading relations with countries such as Africa, South America, Asia and Europe.

Just last week, or a couple of weeks ago, our Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) took a trade delegation to South America. I had two businesses from the Interlake go on that with the minister, and they had nothing but good things to say about the Manitoba Trade delegation in South America, in Chile. They look forward to more good things like this happening.

\* (1640)

Also, Madam Speaker, coming up on October 23, 24 and 25 there is a conference being sponsored in Gimli, as a matter of fact. It is called "NAFTA and the Rural Economy." At that conference they are going to talk about Canada's new rural economy and some of the opportunities that are available in rural Manitoba. They are also going to talk about the Canadian trade and NAFTA. Also the trade corridors, they are going to talk about it in theory and in practice. They are going to talk about the North American context, the Red River corridor, the central North American trade corridor, Northern Plains Development commission and things of that nature.

I think this conference is going to be very well attended. It is very important to businesses in Manitoba. As a matter of fact, I have one business located in Gimli that is going to make a presentation there about trade in rural places by rural people. This is Faroex, who is managed by Ken Church in Gimli, and is going to make a presentation there about doing business in rural communities.

They are also going to have international perspectives on trade facts. They are going to have a Mexican view of NAFTA from a fellow from the University of The Americas in Mexico. Also, they are going to have a U.S. view of NAFTA from some people from the University of Missouri, from St. Louis. We are also going to hear about Canadian view of NAFTA. All these things are very important to trade in Manitoba, whether we trade with Russia, with Asia or with other countries, but it is important.

It is important also to be competitive, and at this conference in Gimli we are going to talk about the new co-operatives and the globalization, the competitiveness, how to gain by trading and also agriculture in transition.

When we talk about agriculture in transition, we talk about the hog industry, we talk about the grain industry, we can talk about the Western Grain Transportation and how that is going to affect Manitoba, and the opportunities that is going to create for other industries. I think it is going to be a great opportunity for us to talk about some of these things, and that we must take advantage of our ideal location in Canada, and on the globe, and establish Manitoba as a trade and transportation corridor between North America, northern Europe and Asia.

Employment levels within the international trading industry will increase substantially as a result of the Manitoba government's initiative—[interjection] Oh, I am sure—to promote the Russo-North American trade.

I believe that it would be difficult to debate this important resolution otherwise. So I hope that all members will examine the resolution carefully and will come to the same conclusion that I have and vote with the government on the bold initiative to establish Manitoba as a major distribution centre in the world market. Thank you, Madam Speaker.



**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Madam Speaker, yes, there are some positive things about this resolution. Oh, but there are one or two negatives or one or two areas where we feel that this does not go far enough.

Madam Speaker, I guess I have a question about—no problem with working with Moscow Narodny Bank. That is a positive step. We applaud that. When the resolution talks about Russo-North American trade and working across the polar route to deal with the growing markets in Russia, that is fine, but I think there is a very large potential market that is not spoken about in this resolution and one that it is kind of surprising and a bit disturbing that this area has not been discussed in this resolution. It was not talked about when the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) was speaking to this resolution. When he was talking about Europe, northern Europe and he was talking about South America and Asia, he left out a very large potential market, a market that has connections, deep and abiding connections with the province of Manitoba, that is deeply rooted in the history of the province of Manitoba, one of the groups of people that made Manitoba the province that it is today.

I am speaking of Ukraine. I wonder why. I wish that the member for Gimli had, if not in this resolution per se, in his words spoken about the potential for working with Ukraine. Ukraine has more people than France. It has the potential—[interjection] Members opposite are rightly stating that the Premier has gone to Ukraine. There is no question about that. I am just saying that it is important that we recognize when we talk about trade potentials, particularly in that part of the world, that we not forget Ukraine not only for its economic potential but for the connection that Manitobans feel with Ukraine, the history that is bound up in the history of our province and with the people of Ukraine. I think it is important that we recognize that, and I see the member for Gimli nodding. So I appreciate that recognition that we need to think about Ukraine as well.

I do have a couple of other concerns about the resolution as stated and the comments that the member for Gimli has put on the record about this resolution. It is in the fourth WHEREAS. It says, WHEREAS Winnipeg was chosen as the location for the Moscow Narodny Bank Limited because of its status as the grain capital of Canada. Well, Madam Speaker, currently Manitoba and Winnipeg may be seen as the grain capital

of Canada, and there is a very important reason why that is the case currently, but the possibility may—the probability that Winnipeg will not be seen as the grain capital of Canada in the future looms as a spectre over this entire province. The member for Gimli talked about how his government's objective is to get new jobs, to provide expanding exports, to work with agriculture in transition, and he spoke about hogs and grain.

Well, Madam Speaker, over the last several months, a very small but vocal group of farmers and/or grain transporters and/or business people who have an interest in grain sales have spoken out and have gotten a lot of press and have caused a lot of consternation in the agricultural community throughout western Canada. Their group is called, they say Farmers for Justice, and some of the farmers, the vast majority of the farmers across the Prairies, who do not believe in the extremism of Farmers for Justice, call them farmers for just us, two words. I think that is a very true statement about this small but vocal group.

But, Madam Speaker, this small but vocal group also has a fairly powerful ally in the government of Alberta, which is trying desperately to kill the Canadian Wheat Board. Several members opposite are on public record as supporting what will, in effect, be the elimination of, the death of the Canadian Wheat Board if this small group of farmers—[interjection] This group and the government of Alberta are threatening the very existence of the western grain farmer. They are threatening the very existence of the western grain farmer.

If the Canadian Wheat Board does not retain its authority of single-desk selling, it will be gone. It does not matter how on the fence the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of the Province of Manitoba wants or tries to remain, because his backbenchers have spoken out in favour of the elimination of single-desk selling from the Canadian Wheat Board, and everybody who knows anything about the whole concept knows that if you eliminate single-desk selling, the Canadian Wheat Board will be emasculated and soon eliminated. And then, Madam Speaker, the language in this resolution will be for naught because Winnipeg will not be the grain capital of Canada. We will lose 500 good-paying jobs in the city of Winnipeg—500 jobs, direct jobs, without all the spin-offs of that. The impact of the loss of the Canadian Wheat Board single-desk selling is incalculable.

\* (1650)

Madam Speaker, the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) also speaks about the ability to transport our products in that Winnipeg is centrally located. It absolutely is centrally located. That is why Winnipeg is such an important thing for everybody to be working toward, but one of the elements that I think that the government needs to be more proactive on, has not done as good a job as it should have, is the support for the Port of Churchill. Now, granted, if we lose the Canadian Wheat Board, we will not need to worry about the Port of Churchill because there will not even be a single grain ship coming, but I think it is important that the government take a very serious look at its lack of support for the Port of Churchill.

One other element, Madam Speaker, is that in the resolution portion of this document it says that the Legislative Assembly support the government in its continued efforts to provide the necessary infrastructure to strengthen and foster international trade. Well, I would like to suggest that the best, the most basic, necessary infrastructure to increase and enhance our position in foreign markets is the support we as legislators and the government as government provide to all of its citizens in its daily life in its provision of education services, in its provision of health care, in its provision of social services.

If we do not have a well-educated, healthy, socially strong citizenry it will not matter how much we have in Winnipeg, it will not matter how much we have in Gateway North, it will not matter how much the Port of Churchill is open, it will not matter how many trips the government takes throughout the world to try and promote Manitoba as an exporting province. It will not matter because there will not be the infrastructure in the province left to support that.

Now, I know the member's for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) resolution, when it talks about necessary infrastructure, is not talking about infrastructure in this context. It is talking about the economic, the trade delegations and this kind of stuff. I do think, Madam Speaker, it is important to look at the infrastructure in another category, and I think we have pointed out time and time again that this government is doing an abysmal job. It has failed in providing that necessary infrastructure for all Manitobans

to be able to participate fully in whatever economic progress there is that has been made.

The member talks about the ultimate objective of this government being new jobs. Well, the statistics show that we have not created net any new jobs. We are losing jobs. The jobs we are losing at CN, at CP are high paying, steady, good jobs, and the jobs we are getting are \$7 an hour telemarketing jobs, if that, with high turnover, low training. They are not the kind of jobs that allow the people who have them to have any disposable income. Consequently we lose 100 jobs at \$20 an hour and you gain 50 jobs or even 100 jobs at \$7 or \$8 an hour. The economy of the province of Manitoba loses.

So it is not only the number of jobs that is stagnating and declining, it is not only the number of people who are looking for work, it is not only the number of people who actually have jobs, it is the quality and the calibre of the jobs that people in Manitoba have that is of concern, that does not allow for the necessary infrastructure to be a solid province to really take advantage of global markets, to really take advantage of what is out there in Russia, in Ukraine and the Pacific Rim, Central and South America and northern Europe. We do not take care of our own citizens. If we continue to reduce money to programs that help people get their basic education and help them to get job training like the EDC programs that the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) has just cut, if we do not continue to support those programs, if we instead continue to put education money into Bob Kozminski's car operation as a direct result of a large number of donations to the Conservative Party, that is not the kind of training and education money that we need to spend. That is not the place where that money should go. We should be, as the government is fond of telling us, the pie is getting smaller. The pie is getting smaller. It is incumbent upon the government, if we are going to have the kind of province that will allow us to take advantage of trading opportunities, we have to have an educated, healthy, social safety net for all of its citizens. This government is talking on the one hand about export opportunities. At the other hand, it is taking away all of the bases upon which we have the right as citizens of the province to expect are in place by this government.

What are they putting in its place, Madam Speaker? They are putting in place government by ministerial fiat, and I do not care whether it is a New Democrat

government, a Liberal government or a Tory government or a Reform government, there is no place in the parliamentary democratic system for government by ministerial fiat. We have shown not only in legislation but in the actions of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) in their flip-flops over policy on travel, this kind of thing, their inability or their unwillingness to be straightforward with the people of Manitoba that you cannot put that kind of power in the hands of a minister without accountability, without the people of the province being able to take a look at what is happening. This is a secretive, undemocratic, autocratic, oligarchic government, and it is imperative that this government take a look at the way it is operating and what it is doing, because it will never be a trading province. We will never be able to take advantage if we do not get our own house in order first.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to rise to support the resolution presented by my colleague the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) and to compliment him on bringing forward what I would say is a positive resolution, something that is extremely important to our province and something that, quite frankly, can cause, I would think, political parties, politicians to put forward their positions on where they stand, particularly as it relates to trade and trade activities from the province of Manitoba.

So I think it is important that we do take the time to debate this. However, I would hope at the conclusion of the debate we are able to put the question just to see if we do have the support of the members opposite as it relates to trade and trade activities.

In that context I think it would be important for the opposition party, the New Democrats, particularly as it relates to the whole question of trade and trade agreements. They were adamantly opposed, if one were to recall, to the country of Canada and the province of Manitoba being involved in the Free Trade Agreement with the United States and NAFTA and, if I am incorrect in that statement, I would challenge any one of the New Democratic members to stand and say so.

\* (1700)

That takes us to the next projection and, of course, I will do everything I can and this government will do

everything we can to make sure that the NDP never gets into office, Madam Speaker, so that in fact they would be put to the test, but let them go to the public of Manitoba, if they are so opposed to free trade and so opposed to the agreements that are in place, go to the public of this country and say that if they were elected government, they would withdraw the province from a Free Trade Agreement with the United States or a NAFTA agreement with the United States and Mexico. Let them be bold enough to have the courage of their convictions to go forward and have that conviction placed clearly on the record as it represents trade.

Well, if they were to do that, what they would be doing is throwing in the face of a success story that will go down in the history books as the absolute right thing to do in the signing of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States and with NAFTA.

Let us look at what has happened with the province of Manitoba as it relates to the trade with the United States. Our trade had gone up since 1990 to 1995 by a hundred plus-100 percent, from \$2 billion to \$4 billion, in trade of sales to the United States. That is a tremendous increase of sales to that country. Let us look at some of the debates that we have come forward from the other side. They continually say that our imports have gone up as well. Our imports have been basically buying production equipment so that we can in fact process the goods that are produced here in the province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, what do those exports do? Those exports create jobs. The work that we are doing in Manitoba—and I will use the example that does not get talked about enough, and that of course is the work that is going on out at Carberry at Midwest Foods, known as Nestle Carnation at one time. Today they are exporting a tremendous amount of potatoes that are produced in the province, processed in Carberry, jobs created in Carberry, to be sent to the United States. They sell the majority of their product to a U.S. market. Those are jobs that we have today that we did not have prior to the Free Trade Agreement.

Madam Speaker, there is another area, and of course this is where the member for—where is she from? She is so all over the map that it is hard to pick out where she is from. Wellington. That is right, Wellington. When she

stands and demonstrates or displays her knowledge on the farm community, I hope she gives a few more speeches, because what she will do in demonstrating the lack of knowledge that she has about the farm community will make sure that my colleagues who represent rural Manitoba will also be here for a long, long time to come. The example today that they are talking about is the Canadian Wheat Board. I believe it was some six months ago they were berating my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), for making what I would say is a very progressive move as it relates to the marketing of hogs in this province. What the Minister of Agriculture did was to say to the hog producers of this province, if you want to market your hogs through the central marketing system, please feel free to do so, but if you want to market your hogs to somebody that either wants to build a new hog plant or to contract with you, please feel free to do so, adding stability to the production of our hogs. [interjection]

Madam Speaker, again the member for—and again I cannot recall where she is from. She is all over the map, too.

**An Honourable Member:** St. James.

**An Honourable Member:** How can you forget?

**Mr. Downey:** St. James. Well, it is very easy, I can tell you, Madam Speaker. It is very easy.

Madam Speaker, the point I want to make is that we have seen an increase in our hog production in Manitoba that will market pork and pork products into the international marketplace creating jobs for the people of Manitoba. Now, how does that fit into a Free Trade Agreement or a trade agreement? What we have is under the NAFTA agreement, a panel that has established that if the Americans challenge our marketing or our production of hogs as it relates to competitiveness, that can go before a panel of experts to be judged as to whether or not we are unfairly competing in their marketplace. We have been, our hog producers have been, to that panel three times. We have won three times, and so what we now have is clear access to the U.S. market for a product that is high quality, job creation and value-added.

Madam Speaker, again, the New Democrats were opposed to us having that mechanism as a farm

community available to us to resolve trade disputes. What happened pre-Free Trade Agreement or NAFTA agreement as it related to the grain industry in Manitoba? We had many producers in our province who said, we will be swamped by the U.S. moving grain into Canada. We will be vulnerable. There is no way that we will be able to survive.

What has happened, Madam Speaker, since the NAFTA agreement, since the signing of the trade agreements with our grain producers? Well, what has happened is we have seen our producers clamouring to get access to the U.S. market. In fact, they want to circumvent what has been the traditional marketing agency, the Canadian Wheat Board, to get to that market. That is how anxious they are to sell their grain products into that market.

While it is not my intention today to get into the debate as it relates to the pros and cons of the Canadian Wheat Board, I would like to have the opportunity at some time to do that, because I believe what is happening in our society is there is a greater understanding of what has to happen, a greater understanding with the majority of farmers, a greater understanding with the majority of politicians in this Assembly but, again, unfortunately, the Opposition party, every time they open their apparatus that they use to talk with, I cannot remember what that is—[interjection] Okay, the orifice. When they open their mouths to talk about Canadian agriculture and the farm industry, they clearly place their foot fully in their mouths.

A good example the other day was when the Leader of the leaderless party, the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), got up—[interjection] Yeah, Don Orchard used that phrase, and I think it pretty well suits, and I think we should continue to use it. The honourable member for Concordia, Madam Speaker, is a more appropriate way to say it, and that is how I will refer to him. When he got up and came after our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and our government for not putting our position forward on the Canadian Wheat Board and the marketing of wheat and barley, our Premier made an excellent response. Number 1, he said, some change has to take place. Such things have to change—and I want the members opposite to listen—that our producers of wheat in this country should be able to mill that wheat into flour without having to pay a freight cost from here to Thunder Bay and a freight cost

back, which makes it absolutely impossible for them to compete in the world flour market.

Are we not better, Madam Speaker, grinding our wheat to flour, creating jobs and selling flour to the world as well as wheat? You bet, and that is the major change that has to take place. Those are the kinds of things our farmers just cannot understand, why they cannot grind their own wheat to flour and sell it in the international market and be competitive. It just makes absolute common sense. You should be able to do it. There is not any marketing agency or any agency that should deny us the opportunity to do that. It just is not there.

So I want the members opposite to explain why they are denying jobs in the flour milling industry in this province, Madam Speaker, tell us why they are denying that by their intransigent position. Again, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) led with his chin and, of course, wore the egg on the face that followed. Again, he wanted to maintain the status quo, no change to the Canadian Wheat Board. The next day, what did we see in the headline in the Free Press? That 92 percent of the farmers of western Canada want some change in the Canadian Wheat Board. Now, is it the same old story, that everybody is out of step except our member of the Legislature from Concordia? I guess it is.

So the point I want to continually make, Madam Speaker, as it relates to this resolution is that the resolution that is presented here pointing out how important trade is, how important it is for the development of Manitoba businesses to go into the international marketplace and trade, whether it is in agriculture, manufacturing in Manitoba—manufacturing in Manitoba continues to grow and expand and the members opposite keep talking about jobs. Well, I can name at least two industries right off the top that today are crying for people to work in them. The garment industry—by the way, the garment industry was supposed to not make a go of it as it related to the trade agreement; they were going to be put out of business. The garment industry has grown dramatically. In fact, they continually need people to work in the garment industry, and those are jobs that are good, good work environment, and well-paying jobs.

**An Honourable Member:** Did you ever work in a sewing factory?

\* (1710)

**Mr. Downey:** The member says, did I ever work in a sewing factory? I am sorry, I have not worked in the sewing factory, but there are job opportunities there. Has she toured a garment industry recently to see the kinds of opportunities?

I have been contacted by manufacturers in the metal industry. They are in bad need of people to work in the metal industry, particularly as it relates to the manufacturing of farm machinery. There is a need for people to work in the manufacturing sector in those kinds of jobs. I am not saying that they are the best jobs, but they are not the worst jobs, because we have workplace safety and health regulations to develop rules and regulations and standards.

So, Madam Speaker, let the members opposite present their ideas and their thoughts to the world as it relates to how they look at trade and let them have the courage to put on the record that they would want to get out of the NAFTA or the Free Trade Agreement. I do not believe you will hear them say that they would, but let them at least have the courage to stand and do so.

What the member talks about, I just want to touch a little bit about how important it is to present Manitoba to the international marketplace. You know, the members opposite for some reason think that it is wrong that we should travel and we should present ourselves to the world. Do the members not want to stop and think why the Moscow Narodny Bank is here? The Moscow Narodny Bank is in Manitoba, in Winnipeg, because of lobbying that I did as the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism to get the Moscow Narodny Bank to come here, an extremely important infrastructure to the support of trade.

Madam Speaker, I was berated by the member for, again, Crescentwood, I guess it is, for getting the Canada-Taiwan Business Association to come to Manitoba to have a conference here next year, which will be extremely important for the introduction of those investment people to come to our province to look at the opportunities and to intermix with our business people.

Again, I am not saying that it was absolutely because I was there, but it was part of the reason that it is coming. Again, that is an important action.

The world is open for people from Manitoba to do business with. I believe it is my job and my responsibility to be there to present with the business community what we have to offer.

Madam Speaker, let the members go to the international marketplace and say, we do not want to have our province and our business people, let them stand out on the streets and say, oh, yeah, the whole issue is that Mr. Downey took his spouse with him which, by the way, actually cost the taxpayers less than if a special assistant had gone, but that is okay. [interjection] Let them laugh. No, let them laugh. The other point is that as the results of all the missions that I have been part of, I am quite prepared to stand and publicly point out the results of those trips.

Madam Speaker, again, I would like to see the question put on this resolution prior to the time being run out. Thank you.

**Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James):** Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to talk about the provincial government's commitment to infrastructure, which was one of the major reasons why we are pleased to acknowledge that the Moscow Narodny Bank Limited has chosen Winnipeg as a site, and we congratulate that. One of the reasons that they chose Winnipeg was its infrastructure, and that is what I am going to be discussing today.

Winnipeg is renowned for several things, including its infrastructure, including the fact that it is the grain capital of Canada—for the short term anyway—our proximity, it says in the resolution, to oil and gas reserves. Madam Speaker, I do not think they were speaking of our own since we have fairly limited hydrocarbon reserves, but we are fairly close to Saskatchewan and Alberta. We have a very modest oil field that we in fact export totally and import our own hydrocarbons into Manitoba. The other thing cited is our forestry and mineral resources, and I will take the opportunity to expand on the value of our mineral resources and the jeopardy that we face with very shortsighted planning of this government.

In addition, I think what is significant is what was missed in the resolution. People from Slavic countries, Russia and the Ukraine, have a certain tie with Manitoba.

Having that heritage myself, I would suggest and concur with the soon-to-be minister from Wellington, my colleague, who cited the fact that the tie of our heritage between Ukrainians and Russians, Slavic people who settled in Manitoba at the turn of the century. It is a strong tie, and we often hear of visitors who congratulate the cultural diversity that we have in Manitoba and the strong sense of cultural ties that we have with the old country.

Some of those ties—and I am pleased to see that the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) is here, because policies that encourage bilingualism, Madam Speaker, are important, and it is a form of infrastructure. Unfortunately, continuous cutbacks by this Conservative government have meant that programs like the Ralph Brown Ukrainian bilingual program are losing students. Why? Parents can no longer afford to bus their children there. Programs are being cut. The very programs that we consider an asset are now being downsized, and we are losing because of a shortsighted program of fiscal restraint, particularly in areas that some ministers on that side do not consider important. Perhaps public education is not important. I would argue and I believe that part of the infrastructure that attracted this Russian bank is the fact that we have a strong linguistic and cultural community that we were building, and now, unfortunately, we are eroding.

In terms of infrastructure, Madam Speaker, a lot of what is discussed is housed in Manitoba's North, and in Manitoba's North we have a strong and proud heritage. It includes vast resources of timber. It includes significant mineral resources that we see right now in a boom period, and we are very proud of that. Although the Minister of Mines (Mr. Praznik) will often take what seems to be an incredible approach claiming that he has stimulated mining, rather, I hate to inform the minister that it is actually commodity prices that drive most exploration programs. It is commodity prices that are stimulating the mineral industry in Manitoba. That is a fact of life, and it is unfortunate that this government has decided in the short term to, for instance, sell off the Manitoba Mineral Resources corporation, a corporation that helped to support Manitobans when commodity prices were low, at a time when it could be used as an interventionist, at a time when we needed to put something into Leaf Rapids, at a time when our communities were facing perhaps shutdown.

It was a vehicle that we used as a responsible government to stimulate an industry and keep our mineral resources strong in Manitoba. Today, if we look at Manitoba's mineral resources and the mining industry, we are in a crisis. When we look at the Flin Flon, Leaf Rapids area, the resources in that area are in jeopardy because of the very shortsighted program, decision by the federal Liberals to sell off the CN line, and now we hear that it is possibly going to be abandoned.

\* (1720)

Now, the Conservative members on the other side take great pleasure in that because we can obviously see this was a huge error on the part of the federal government, a huge error, and this government, in fact, is doing the same thing when you look at the selloff of Manitoba Mineral Resources, when you are selling off the Manitoba Telephone System, when you are shortchanging the North in what is really an attempt—Madam Speaker, the sell-off of the Manitoba Mineral Resources is clearly a political response, because the sale of the MMR occurred in March '94. That \$22 million was put into their election budget to create a so-called election surplus when in reality we lost an important resource. We lost part of what we consider our infrastructure, and it was a very shortsighted decision, similar to the decision by the federal government to sell CN Rail.

Now, as a province, we are in a situation which impacts not only on Leaf Rapids, possibly the whole mineral belt—Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids, Sherridon, Flin Flon. If the Flin Flon smelter does not have enough resources, that will put that smelter in jeopardy. So we all know the situation in Flin Flon, or at least I hope that the members on the other side understand the positioning of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting in Flin Flon, that a secure supply of ore is essential, and now we are seeing that that is potentially in jeopardy because of a very shortsighted, I believe wrong decision by the federal Liberals.

Now, when we look at what this government is doing in terms of infrastructure, I am going to talk about the North. Infrastructure in the North is an investment indeed because, when you consider what this government is gaining from the North, it is very, very minor. You gain hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenues, mining revenues, forestry revenues, hydro sales, and what

you invest in the North is minimal, so there is a great deal of work that we can do in infrastructure, and we can be proud of the New Democratic government for building the infrastructure in the North, for building the roads in the North, for building the hydro dams that we benefit now and for stimulating a mineral industry even through tough times.

Madam Speaker, I believe one member on the other side talked about infrastructure and mentioned roads. I am not sure that the members on the other side have taken a trip up North lately. The investment in the highway structure in the North—[interjection] The members from the other side perhaps like to travel by private jet to South America rather than travel by road to Flin Flon or Thompson or Gillam, but the fact is that the amount of money that they invest in the North is only—

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Portage la Prairie, on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Minister of Government Services):** Madam Speaker, I think it is only fair to put on the record the fact that in terms of charters, the previous government had twice the size of the government fleet and twice the size of the air fleet and actually exercised twice as many opportunities to utilize that fleet as this current administration. So, when the member makes blank statements like that, truly, she should be making sure that they are accurate, I think.

**Ms. Mihychuk:** On that point of order, Madam Speaker, my issue was the fact that this government believes that it condones the travel by a deputy minister's spouse, ministers' spouses, on junkets on government jets. I was talking about that and, in fact, that air travel was preferred over road travel.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable Minister of Government Services did not have a point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Pallister:** On a new point of order, Madam Speaker, it is well known among members, I believe, of the party opposite that a number of their government

ministers did travel abroad during their term in government which, of course, was a horrendous injustice to the people of Manitoba that they were ever in power, but the fact is that they did. A number of their former colleagues did travel abroad and did include their spouses in that travel, and it is well known to members of this party opposite that those people did not compensate the people of Manitoba for such travel, and they should not hide from that fact in this House.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable Minister of Government Services does not have a point of order.

The honourable member for St. James, to continue with debate.

**Ms. Mihychuk:** On the point of order just raised—

**Madam Speaker:** No, there is no point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Ms. Mihychuk:** A new point of order, Madam Speaker, the record must be cleared. If the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Pallister) is suggesting that members of this side of the House travelled with spouses, I say, name them.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for St. James does not have a point of order.

The honourable member for St. James, to continue debate.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert):** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I do believe that the honourable members are abusing the rules of points of order. A point of order is to be raised when there is an infringement of the rules of the House, and I think we should be bringing that to their attention.

**Madam Speaker:** I thank the honourable member for St. Norbert for that advice. The honourable member for St. James, to continue debate.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Mihychuk:** Madam Speaker, I just want to conclude my comments by saying that when we look at

Manitoba's infrastructure, we can be proud of a history of investment in the North which attracted international businesses and, in this case, a bank to Manitoba. The fear is that the very institutions that we invested in as Manitobans co-operatively are now being eroded, are being sold off and are being dismantled by the Progressive Conservative government of the other side, and when we talk about investment in the North, it means that we all benefit, including the residents of Winnipeg in the south, and that is a recognition that we need to take.

Manitoba roads are in a deplorable condition when you look at the northern region. In fact, I believe that they are investing about half of what the budget used to be in the '80s. When I had the opportunity to meet with executives of Inco last spring, one of the major concerns that they had was that the deterioration of those very infrastructures were impacting on their community of Thompson. We see in Thompson today a terrible situation where the corporation has decided to lock out the workers in a situation that will impact on all of Manitoba. That is why I was saying that when you look at the Flin Flon belt we see what is potentially in jeopardy because of a very shortsighted and wrongheaded decision by the federal Liberals. When we look at the labour strike caused by this government's aggressive attitude towards labour, the huge number of days lost by Manitoba workers is indeed unfortunate. When you talk to Manitobans, that is the last thing they indeed want to see.

What we want is harmony, and we want co-operation. When you talk to the members and the executive of Inco, and I had the opportunity last spring, they are concerned about their school system. They were concerned about the funding levels that they were getting for health care. They were concerned about the amount of money put into highways and the basic infrastructure of the North. That also includes the Manitoba Telephone System which, for northern Manitoba, is a fundamental infrastructure program, and we urge the government to maintain that valuable asset.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for St. James will have three minutes remaining.

The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, September 23, 1996

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