



HANSARD

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

Name	Constituency	Party
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.	St. 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

Thursday, November 7, 1996

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call condolence motions, please.

Motions of Condolence

Abe Kovnats

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey),

THAT this House convey to the family of the late Abe Kovnats, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, Abe Kovnats is an individual who is well known to many in this Chamber, having served with many of us over a period of time between his election first in October of 1977 all the way through until 1988.

Abe was, of course, re-elected in 1981 and again in 1986. He served in the electoral division of Radisson. Abe was an individual who had many, many friends. He had a variety of backgrounds having worked in a family business for awhile, having worked in retail, and having ultimately run his own company in the parking business.

Abe may be best known not for his service here in this Legislature but for his experience as a Canadian Football League referee. I think it is interesting that some of his talents and some of his most memorable characteristics are ones that were probably transferable to both his career as a Canadian Football League referee and his time here in the Legislature.

I think it is safe to say that Abe enjoyed most his time as the Deputy Speaker of this Chamber and chairing of committees. On many occasions Abe had to be involved in settling of disputes. It may surprise members of the media or members of the opposition to know that we had disputes even in those days in this House, and Abe always seemed to have an ability, with a twinkle in his eye and a dry sense of humour, to be able to bring people to attention and to be able to keep control of proceedings, and perhaps to have us walk away chuckling at ourselves and at the process. But I think he enjoyed very much that ability to mete out justice and to be able to arbitrate between two opposing sides, something of course that was principal to his efforts as a Canadian Football League referee.

I must admit that I considered Abe to be a good friend. I enjoyed a great deal of social time with him, whether it was just sitting in his office and listening to stories time and time again, and Abe certainly was a raconteur. He had stories for every occasion. Talking about the CFL he used to talk about the need for showmanship in a referee's job, something I did not think about. I thought the referees were there to be invisible and just call the game, but Abe used to talk about how he would get in the face of a big lineman. He would be asking him about his family or his wife, and he would be looking to all of those in the stands as though they were having a very serious disagreement, right in his face and pointing his finger. He said it was all part of the show.

He used to say that when you were having to call, whether or not they had made a first down, and you brought the chains out that you had to give it lots of flourish, make sure that everybody on television could see it. He would bend right down over the ball even if it was six inches or a foot. Quite obvious, Abe would make sure that everybody knew that this was a very key call in the game. He had many, many stories that regaled us time and again.

Abe was a very devoted family person and certainly loved his wife, Donna, loved his three children, and always talked about them with great pride, always was concerned about them and for their well-being, and it was always a part of our discussion.

I remember Abe in the days in which I was running for the leadership of our party. He was a constant support and involved in very many of the occasions that took place in the run-up to the leadership decision as a very strong supporter of mine.

We were all shocked at Abe's passing. We had seen him, I think, from time to time on an infrequent basis but at social gatherings after he left the Legislature in 1988. He served, of course, on the, I believe it was, Licence Suspension Appeal Board and enjoyed, again, that kind of quasi-judicial application of his many skills and talents. Having attended Abe's memorial service, I can tell you that there was a cross-section of our community from all walks of life, from so many different areas of endeavour, the sporting arena, the political field, of course, the business field, and in all those areas, Abe made friends. Abe made friends wherever he went.

I remember him talking about the hobby farm he had and the vegetable garden that he constantly nurtured which was out near Menisino, I think, in southeast Manitoba. All of these things for Abe were a joy, and, indeed, I think all life was a joy. Having sat with him here in this Legislature, I know that he probably walked away with friends on all sides of the House and probably certainly, as somebody who I know did not have a mean bone in his body, was just as much respected on the other side of the House as he was here.

I recall one particular instance in which Abe was going in full flight, flourishing rhetoric, chastising the then-government of the day—we were in opposition—when one of the members opposite called out, Abe, you cannot have it both ways. He stopped in midsentence, and he said, yes, I can; I am in opposition. I think he would still be comfortable here today with that thought.

In any case, I want to, certainly on behalf of Janice and my family, extend our sincere condolences to Donna and the children, to say that we remember Abe well and fondly, and that we certainly commend his memory to all of those with whom he served because he was a person of integrity, he was a person of great devotion and dedication to duty, and he certainly gave tremendous service to the people of Manitoba in all of the various roles that he played.

* (1010)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I want to join in the condolence motion of Abe Kovnats and add a few comments to the record of Abe's contribution to our community, to our province, to this Legislature. I also want to start with the comments that were just left by the Premier because I do remember that debate in which, I think it was, Howard Pawley said, you cannot have it both ways, and Abe Kovnats said, yes, I can; I am in opposition. Now these were very honest words from the then-opposition party and from Abe Kovnats and very humorous words.

We have not, of course, followed Abe's advice of trying to have it both ways, but we certainly enjoyed the sentiment of his views and the candour under which he presented his views. We actually, as I recall it, would often quote Abe Kovnats back to the then-Leader of the Opposition whenever we thought he would perhaps try to have it both ways. We would use Abe Kovnats's wonderful comments back to the Premier, the then-Leader of the Opposition, and Abe always thought that was pretty funny because he was just telling it like it is. I guess this is one of the great tributes to Abe, that he told it like it was, and he was a very honest and humorous and warm person.

When I was first elected to this Legislature I had been a member of the public, non-profit, community-owned Bombers board of directors. He of course had this love of the CFL, having been a referee for a number of years, and he was a wonderful person to talk with and listen to in those late, late nights. We had a lot more late nights then, and he would have wonderful stories to tell. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) has mentioned about the theatre of refereeing, but he had some very interesting stories of the characters of the CFL and the kind of human interest stories that he was aware of because of his absolute position on the field of those endeavours.

He also had a great deal of support and respect for amateur sports, for physical fitness, for the role which recreation played in the quality of our community, and I think Abe Kovnats was not only a professional referee but a lifelong supporter of amateur sports and community recreation. He saw the connection, as I understood it, between recreation, physical fitness, strong support in schools and community clubs in our communities. He saw the connection between that and the quality of life and also the quality of health care. I know that he had a

lifelong support for physical fitness, sports. The Premier mentioned his business past, but I know that sports was also very, very important to him.

I too was shocked when I heard that he had passed away at such a young age; that he had passed away at 67 years of age. I was very, very shocked to hear that news, as all of us were. I know that he was a very important part of this Legislature for a number of years. He represented his constituents well. He was a good constituency person. We know that because we tried to take the seat back at various forms in different years and for some of those years, even in the sweep in 1981 of the Pawley government, the pretty big sweep of 34 seats, he was able to withstand that because of his strong connection to his community and his constituents, a lesson for all of us that we are, after all, working for the people that elect us in our own constituencies, first and foremost, and Abe Kovnats certainly kept that in mind.

He was an honest individual, as I said, and I want to on behalf of our party pay tribute to his contributions in this Legislature, to his integrity, to his honesty, to his humour, and to say to his wife, Donna, and his children, Jill, Gordon and Larry, that we too will praise the life and contributions of Abe Kovnats and pass on our condolences to his family and friends.

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Urban Affairs): Madam Speaker, I would like to just rise to put a few words on record as to my former colleague in the constituency I represent now, which was the constituency which Abe represented, which is Niakwa.

I had the opportunity to get to know Abe not only through the legislative process but before I even got involved with politics because, as has been referred to by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), Abe was very active in the community. In fact, the Winakwa Community Centre, when it was going through its formative years, Abe was quite involved with that and he became very instrumental in getting the organization going in that community. In fact he was the first sports director of that centre. I know that, as I still go to that community centre from time to time and various functions and that, his name still keeps coming up. There is a group of old directors that get together for a golf game once a year, and Abe was involved with that. It is an informal sort of tournament

of older directors and people in the area, and Abe's name has always come up.

Abe, in fact, was the fellow that got me involved with politics to the extent that when I moved into the constituency in Southdale, Abe made overtures to me. I was involved with the Southdale Community Club in its formation, and Abe got a hold of me and asked me whether I would like to serve on his executive. I had never served on a political party's executive before that, and I thought it was a great opportunity to get exposure to the political life. It is ironic how that has grown. I am now even in the seat that Abe was involved with.

Abe was also involved with other football endeavours in and around St. Boniface, but the St. Boniface Association and the St. Boniface Legionnaires, and, as mentioned, his legacy is still there. I got involved, I remember, in a few campaigns with Abe. I remember one campaign, where it was a winter campaign, with the present member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) and myself. Actually, the constituency of Niakwa was a very large constituency and it went right down into south St. Vital. It was a huge area and it was growing like mushrooms at the time and there was still the one constituency of Niakwa.

I remember Abe was way down in the south end of the constituency and there was a huge snow pile there that the city or somebody had used as a loading area. Abe decided that that was the place for his sign, so he climbed up to the top of this snowbank and stuck this big sign right up on the top of this snowbank. It stayed there because I do not think anybody else wanted to climb up there to get that sign.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): I think it was in my constituency.

Mr. Reimer: It may have been, it was so far south, but I remember that. There are other things that I remember about Abe and it has been alluded to his humour. There was one part of Abe that I got exposed to and that was his finger, because when he was making a point, the finger used to come out and you would see that finger being pointed at you. Whenever he would talk to me sometimes, not in a harsh tone or anything but to emphasize things, it was the finger that used to come out and he would make sure that I knew what he was talking about.

* (1020)

After being elected, fortunately being elected, I came to the Legislature and the exposure kept coming back to me because my first office here in the Legislative Building was Room 138. Room 138 was where Abe used to be. Some of my colleagues that sat with Abe, they would always tell me about the stories of that room, Room 138, with Abe down there and some of the other fellows and how there the camaraderie of the members used to spill over at times into various venues. I could sense that because even in the social aspects of being around Abe, he was always very outgoing, always quite outspoken, but he used to always tell me after I got elected that you have to be there for the constituents, you have to be there for the people that got you elected, be aware of them, be in the constituency, make contact. I think that these are some of the things that I am grateful for his advice, the friendships that I have shared with him, the times that I shared with him on an individual basis are memories that I will always have.

I would like to just express my condolences to Donna and the three children, Jill, Larry and Gordon, and be thankful for the time that I had and the exposure I had with Abe. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Driedger: Madam Speaker, on behalf of my wife, Mary, and myself, I would also like to make a few comments in the condolence motion for Abe Kovnats.

I guess the brightest thing that has happened to me in my political life is the friends that I have met being in politics, and Abe ended up being a very close friend of mine. I had never known Abe before 1977. I met him in the Legislature. We were seatmates. Since that time, a lot of things happened with Abe and myself, and mostly positive things. I guess during the years of the opposition is when we had a lot of fun. My colleague Jack Reimer just made reference to Room 138. If Room 138 could talk, there would be some very, very interesting comments coming out of there.

Abe liked people. First of all, he liked being an MLA. He loved being an MLA, and he was a good MLA. He was on the phone all the time talking to his constituents and everybody else's constituents very often, as well. But then what happened is he would invite everybody down to Room 138. We would sit down and we would chat.

We were a relaxed opposition at that time, and from time to time, we would even have a little libation in Abe's office. But Abe used to like to have a crowd around. He loved a crowd. So he would invite everybody down. Everybody is there talking; then Abe would get on the phone and start phoning. It was exasperating sometimes the way he operated. He would have everybody there, and then, because he had a bit of a hearing problem, he would always talk loud, especially on the phone. The longer the long distance call was, the louder he talked. It was almost like he had to take and get the message there.

We had a lot of great times. Initially, because I have gone through two constituency changes, you know, every 10 years when we review them, but as Jack mentioned, at one time, my constituency and Abe's bordered each other. When Jack made reference to where the sign was, I know, at one point, I do not know whether it was on the snow pile, but somewhere along the line, Abe had his signs in my constituency. That was when I represented the Emerson riding. Menisino happened to be part of my constituency at that time, and that is where Abe had his farm, he called it.

He had two quarter sections of land out there. He pulled an old streetcar down there, and that was his farm. He had a little bit of a garden and a shed, and Abe was pack rat. He would take everything. I think there are still signs in that old railway car from his first election. Stuff that he has out there, it would be a real treat for people to see what he has out there. Mind you, I think it has been sold at this point in time, but what a place.

So between the Leg., my life with Abe and the Leg., and at his poolside—he used to like to throw poolside parties. Some of my colleagues must remember when he used to throw those poolside parties, fantastic. Abe always had to be sort of the centre of attention, a great guy, great guy. Then, at the farm, he thought he was the MLA. They did not even think that I was the MLA out in that area. They thought Abe was the MLA in Menisino. He was the mayor of Menisino, the things that happened out there.

Then he would order trees. The whole two quarters were full of trees. Then he would order trees from PFRA, bundles of them, and then he would run around planting trees. Not too many made it, but it was always a project with him. Then he had a big garden because, in his area

that he represented, there was a bunch of market gardeners. He would get hundreds of tomato plants. He would plant tomato plants all over the place. He would have loads of tomatoes out there, and then he would start hauling them in in the fall. Mind you, half the time he could not find them because he did not get out there to weed his garden that often, but it was an interesting case.

He was an interesting man, Abe Kovnats, and I have many, many fond memories of him and will always continue to have those. I know that Donna and the family will always remember him that way, too. What a great guy. Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, I would like to add a few words to those that have already been spoken about the late Abe Kovnats, who I only met when he first became a member of the Manitoba Legislature. I never knew Abe as well as some of my colleagues opposite, and I certainly enjoyed their remarks about Abe because they do describe him as a person that I know, someone who was always cheerful and always very friendly, someone you could never dislike, really. You could never dislike Abe Kovnats.

I would say that he will go down in history, as both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have mentioned, for his famous quote about the opposition being able to have it both ways. I mean, this will go down in history. People who will write about this Assembly, historians may wish very well to pick this up, and there is some element of truth in that, I might say. No, we never follow that advice. He did impress me. He was a man of integrity and certainly a good constituency man and a man close to his people, and I know he served with dedication. The very few years that I had with him here I appreciate that he did serve his constituents and the people of Manitoba as a member of this Assembly with dedication. So I would join with the others in extending our deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Madam Speaker, I want to join with members of the Legislature in extending this condolence motion to the Kovnats family, just a brief comment about Abe because I think it is extremely important to recognize all the comments that are made, and there have been many that have certainly covered the majority of the person.

People, to Abe, certainly were his life. He was not a selfish person at all. He enjoyed life, whether it was in the Legislature dealing with his constituents, as has been indicated, on his farm and of course another favourite product and topic that he always liked to talk about were the blueberries that he was able to produce on that piece of ground and of course demonstrated his interest in life on all aspects.

Of course his involvement in sports and his dedication to making sure that we did have a major league football participation in the country were a major contribution as well. I think it demonstrates the person when it has been referred to the events that he had at his home, and I think it clearly demonstrates how important family was to him, and I would refer to it as bonding with his colleagues and of course we always looked forward to those bonding events when we had the opportunity to be there and to enjoy their home and to enjoy their friendship.

We were sworn into government in the same year, 1977, so this was a new place to me as it was to him, and my son, Ryan, had his first meeting with Donna Kovnats at the ceremony and they had just a little discussion about some of the events that were going on and Donna quite often reminds me of that, and those are the kinds of fond memories that we like to reflect on, and so I want to add my wife, Linda's, and my son, Ryan's, condolences with myself as the member of the Legislature for Arthur-Virden to the Kovnats family. Abe will always be remembered as a good, genuine person who contributed generously to the province of Manitoba.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, my first association with Abe Kovnats was, for him at least, before politics, with the operation of the Kodiak parking organization that he ran for a number of years. I also served on the board of the Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation with Abe during the time just following his retirement as professional football referee. We went through a couple of stadium expansions together.

* (1030)

I chuckled when the Premier, outlining some of the stories Abe used to tell about his career as a professional football referee and the showmanship that went along with it, so there was a fair bit of showmanship, I think, in just about everything he did, and I think that came from

his earlier career perhaps associated with the movie business. He was a character, certainly from the Progressive Conservative caucus point of view, and I think one of the folk heroes associated with this group when I first came here back in 1986.

The member for Concordia, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), is quite correct. He had an abiding love for sport of all kinds and was involved in it in just about every way that he could. In 1977, when he chose to run for the Legislature, he resigned of course from the board of Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation and we sincerely missed him at that point. He contributed a great deal.

In his time in the Legislature I did not particularly follow his career that closely, although I carried on an association with him but, at that point, I was a member of City Council and had my own political career to consider. I remember, when I first came here, I think one of the greatest speeches that he ever gave was that on the skinks and what were skinks. He talked for 40 minutes. At that time, when I first came here, coming from City Hall where the maximum speech you could give was five minutes, and if you were good and if it was an important topic and if the rest of the council agreed, you got to go to eight minutes, they gave you a three-minute extension. So coming in here into the Legislature and going from maximum speaking time of eight minutes to maximum speaking time of 40 minutes was significantly difficult, and here was Abe Kovnats, without a note, without anything, standing there talking about skinks for 40 minutes. It was a wonderful exposure to coming into this particular body.

One thing that Abe was particularly proud of, I think, was his tomatoes. Every year in January, February, he would start with grow lights. You would always wonder if it was tomatoes he was growing or whatever, but then he would come about April or May and distribute throughout the House a tomato plant for everybody so that they could partake of the wonderful tomatoes that he had started back in the late winter. As I said, there has been much said about Abe Kovnats and the life of Abe Kovnats, and while he has gone, he will not be forgotten.

Madam Speaker, I extend the condolences of myself and my wife and family to Donna and the kids. Thank you.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I simply want to associate my name with those who have already spoken on this condolence motion, having had the privilege of sitting with Mr. Kovnats during his lifetime in this Legislature. It was a privilege to have a friend like Abe. I know that he very often at this stage of the Legislature, at the closing days of the session, would invite colleagues over to their home. Abe and Donna offered a very friendly and hospitable break from our work here in the Legislature, and I think those of us who remember those days think very fondly of the hospitality that Abe and Donna extended to so many of us during his tenure as a member of the Legislature.

He often used to consult me as Minister of Natural Resources or Agriculture about his property in Piney and the planting of trees and thinking about getting into blueberry production in a serious way. As my colleague from Charleswood indicated, I believe tomatoes were his first love.

So, with those few comments, I certainly want to pass on the condolences from the constituency of Lakeside and myself having had the privilege of sitting in this Chamber with him.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Would all honourable members please rise and remain standing to indicate their support for the motion.

A moment of silence was observed.

Joseph P. Borowski

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer),

THAT this House convey to the family of the late Joseph P. Borowski, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public

service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, as someone who had the privilege of knowing Joe Borowski, it is a pleasure for me to be able to extend to his wife, Jean, and to his three daughters, Debra, Karen and Sandra, along with his grandchildren, his brothers, sisters, their spouses, his nieces and nephews, our sincere condolences and our sense of gratitude for Joe Borowski's many contributions to life in this province and in this country.

Joe Borowski was born a child of the Depression back in 1932 in Wishart, Saskatchewan, and the story of his life is one of a person who went across Canada seeking many different types of work, working in bush camps in Northern Ontario; being a partner-owner in a restaurant in Prince Rupert, British Columbia; a travelling salesman travelling to Whitehorse; working on the construction of the Alaska Highway; going back to his home area in Wynyard, Saskatchewan, where he married; ultimately moving to Thompson, Manitoba, where those of us in Manitoba would have had our initial contacts with him because I remember full well my very first impression of Joe Borowski when he protested the implementation of the provincial sales tax by the then-government of Premier Duff Roblin. He camped out on the steps of the Legislature in protest. He was a person who at that time was both a very active miner, an active member of the steelworkers union, and a small-businessman with a souvenir shop in Thompson. Those were all of the impressions that I had in the first knowledge about Joe Borowski and his appearance on the public scene of Manitoba.

I asked about Joe Borowski, the miner, from my friend Ken McMaster, who a number of years later represented the same seat that Joe had, the seat of Thompson in the Manitoba Legislature. Ken, of course, had also been a very active miner and member of the steelworkers union. He said that Joe Borowski was a giant of a man, the strongest person he had ever worked with in the mines of Thompson. I always thought about that because in effect, when you look back now on his history here, he was in this Legislature for a period of time of less than five years, yet his impact seems to have been so much greater than that brief period of time in which he served.

He was elected first in a by-election for the electoral division of Churchill, February of 1969, and then re-elected in the general election on June 25 of '69 and served until June of 1973. During his period of time here, he, of course, had the portfolio of Minister of Transportation and Minister of Public Works. I believe, and I stand to be corrected, that it was he who brought in the licence plate that used to say, Manitoba 100,000 Lakes, because Joe was a very proud Manitoban from the North. When Minnesota came out with the licence plate saying 10,000 Lakes Minnesota, Joe said, hey, we can do that one much better. It was, I think, he who coined that and brought in that licence plate.

* (1040)

He also, of course, was known for his very, very strong views—views that, I am told, brought him in conflict with his colleagues from time to time, with his cabinet from time to time, and certainly views that he carried forward later. I talk about the fact that I was privileged to know Joe Borowski. I really, I guess, met him probably the first time when I was on City Council, then later as a member of this Legislature. Joe Borowski used to come to this Legislature, as members opposite will recall in the '80s, to oftentimes speak against the government of the day, the people, the party whom he had supported. He was certainly a man of deep conviction on very fundamental issues to him.

He had at that time, of course, gone back into the private sector and for 17 years operated a health food store, but he was probably best known for his principled stands on matters of personal and moral conviction, abortion. The thing that he is best known for is the nationwide and international battle in which he fought abortion rights. I recall my shock in seeing him after his prolonged hunger strike and how this person, as I had referred to as a giant of a man, was so weakened. It has been said by many that he was really on death's door when he lost such a tremendous amount of weight in that effort to try and bring greater attention to his concerns for abortion rights, for the rights of the unborn. Joe took on many, many different issues of this nature.

I say that my relationship with him was a friendly and respectful one. I went to committee and heard him criticize bills that were being brought in by the Pawley administration. He did not play favourites. He often

disagreed with what a Conservative government might have done or a federal Liberal government might have done. At the end of the day, though, we did have a friendly and respectful relationship. In our conversations, I often received calls from Joe Borowski and returned those calls, had a pleasant chat. I stopped in on occasion to his health food store on St. Mary's Road, just said hello and maybe had a quick conversation.

He did an interesting thing, because many people will know that the Charlottetown Accord was not exactly popular in all areas of this country, not the least of which was the province of Manitoba. Joe phoned and offered to chair meetings and to act as a person who was out there on behalf of the Charlottetown Accord. So on a number of occasions when I spoke at public meetings about the Charlottetown Accord, including, I recall, one in Teulon, in the village of Teulon, Joe Borowski was the chair of that meeting and was very, very strong and outspoken in his views that this was the best way to unite Canada, to come up with a compromise solution on the Constitution that people from right across Canada could buy into. So he is a man who I know had been described as being very colourful, very outspoken. He is a man who certainly has been described as being tough and strong willed. He is certainly a man of principle. But at the same time I think he had a deep devotion to this province and this country and to the people that he served in all respects, as a member of this Legislature and as a person who took on a leadership mantle for many causes.

I believe, Madam Speaker, that members opposite, who knew him better probably than I did, will have many other things to add. But I just want to say that it is a privilege to have known him and that I want to pass on my deepest condolences to his wife and his entire family and to say that Joe Borowski will be remembered as a man who stood firm for the things in which he believed and who made a very significant contribution to public life here. He will be remembered well.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the Premier for the opportunity and honour to second the motion of condolence before the Chamber today.

Joe Borowski, I guess, what a life, in terms of his years in our country and in our province. He was a person of compassion, of principled commitment and strong

beliefs, and I had an opportunity to meet him on a couple of occasions, and, as the Premier has indicated, he would phone with advice, with suggestions or with disagreement on various topics. He has a tremendous strength of character that we all are recognizing this morning, but it is interesting the kind of national stature he built on the strength of his beliefs and his strong positions he held. At the same time, he was a quiet individual when he was talking to you on the phone or when he was talking to you privately, a very quiet, peaceful person with very, very strong convictions.

It certainly could be said of Joe Borowski that he participated fully in the democracy in which we live. He participated fully in the debates that he felt important to himself and to his family and to his future family. He participated with all the passion and conviction he could muster on any issue of principle that was important to him, but he believed in the principle of freedom of speech. He would participate with individuals that he had tremendous differences with and he would participate in those debates in public forums and media forums with all the strength and intellect that he could bring forward to the issue, but he would leave the debates as a quiet man, a humble person, a person who respected democracy but that would use democracy to make his point and to express his position.

As the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has indicated, he was a steelworker, and I heard the same stories about how strong an individual, how kind of a real—the strength of the individual, not just the character, but the physical strength of this human being that was working in the mines of northern Manitoba, at a time, of course, prior to 1969, when there was not the kind of equipment that they have in the mines now that I still think require strength. I know I have had to try to handle those machines and there is certainly a lot more skill with the mechanical devices now, but at an earlier time, strength in the mines was so important as one of the features of being able to work in that very tough working environment.

He, as the Premier has indicated, had a store and protested the 5 percent sales tax introduced by the Roblin government. He slept out on the steps of the Legislature and brought great national attention to the sales tax, 5 percent, introduced in this Legislature by the then-Roblin government. I think he was out here for weeks. I remember watching it on TV and listening about it on the radio and reading about it in the newspapers.

So for all of us who have experienced protests both in government and outside of government, we should still remember that this is a wonderful way to express your views in a democracy, your right to dissent, your right to protest, your right to bring attention to matters.

He is an interesting person, because I think he brought the first huge protest, or personal protest, to this Legislature in a very meaningful way. There have been protests since, hunger strikes, other protests from other people, but it is interesting about Joe Borowski and his protest.

* (1050)

He, of course, was elected in a by-election in '69 and then re-elected in the general election in '69, and I am sure that the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) can have some interesting stories to tell from cabinet days and caucus days. Some of it has been reported, some of it has not, but he was certainly not a person that would fit the parliamentary mode of doing whatever the caucus decides or the cabinet decides.

I do not think we would ever call Joe Borowski, sometimes there is a term used for all of us that we are all trained seals that follow along in the direction set by the leaders, and I certainly would not believe that that is the case in our caucus, nor would I believe it was the case in the Schreyer cabinet, the Schreyer caucus, and Joe Borowski would never ever be accused of being just one of these automatons that go along with everything that comes forward, a man of strong convictions.

Of course, he resigned on a matter of principle. It does not happen that much anymore. I remember he resigned on a matter of conscience and a matter of principle from the Schreyer cabinet because he could not go along with the policy on funding choice in the medicare system. I know that this is an issue that is deeply religious, deeply moral, deeply spiritual across all party lines and across all members of this Legislature, I dare say, but he believed what he believed in, I respect. His right to dissent, I respect. His matter of principle to resign over that issue of conscience, I think, is a matter of principle for his individual decision making, his individual choice, and he chose to exercise it.

He was a person, as the Premier indicated, who would phone on issues. I experienced him on phone calls later

on, and I believe one of them was on the Charlottetown Accord. In fact I remember once, after the Charlottetown Accord was agreed to, I think the Premier was in England shortly thereafter and I felt kind of alone there for a while—I am not complaining, of course—I think I reported to our caucus that this proposal is not going to be very popular. It would probably go down in Manitoba in spite of the rolling polls. But I thought some of the things in the Charlottetown Accord were worthy of support. I did not want to join the Brian Mulroney committee, but I did want to join with the Premier in supporting on behalf of Manitobans this proposal. I thought particularly the equalization clause and some other clauses, which I believe now are at risk with provinces like B.C. and Alberta and Ontario talking about equalization if the federal government slashes health and post-secondary education, I think that this was not a bad contribution to Canada and it was a positive step forward for our country.

So I climbed out on the limb with the Premier and did get advice from the former member for Thompson, Joe Borowski, on the merits of this proposal. I regret that there was not more coverage about his position on Charlottetown and other people, other leaders of our community, that got very little coverage during the Charlottetown Accord. Actually, the debate became centred too much between the former member for River Heights, the now senator, and the Premier—[interjection] Well, sometimes being on the right side is not the correct side. [interjection] Well, you certainly did fight against an elected senate, and now we have patronage senate. So I think there are some great ironies in that.

However, we do respect the judgment of the people, I have no problem with the process. The fact that Manitoba, I think, had the second highest negative vote in the country, I think we need a Joe Borowski more in this campaign, as I was starting to make my point. I think the debate should have taken place more with citizens like Borowski or somebody else opposed to it rather than, in this case, the politicians. I think there was a great disservice, that it was just a political debate, because the public was not going to support a political debate, and it was already two strikes against the Charlottetown Accord when the Prime Minister ripped it up and it became a great big political debate rather than a debate about the merits of it.

I have strayed a bit, but, again, there was Joe Borowski, strong views, strong opinion, strong principles and willing to state them for all and everybody in our society. He had hunger strikes which, of course, as the Premier indicated, almost brought him to a point of death. We were all very worried about it, and I know his family was very worried about his health. I knew Debra, and I met Debra on a number of occasions, and she was extremely worried about her father's health, because he would do anything to bring attention to his principles and to fight for the principles he believed in. His children worshipped their father, and I know Debra felt very strongly about the views her father was taking and the conviction under which he took them, and she was very worried about his health and rightly so.

I want to say in closing, that Joe Borowski is a national figure. He is a Manitoba figure. He is a person, as we all will agree, with strong convictions and strong principles. He served a short time in this Legislature, but his contributions to freedom of speech, his contributions to debates which he felt strongly about, his contributions in the Schreyer cabinet as Minister of Highways and Public Works and Northern Affairs, I hear, were very, very positive. He was a very good minister, very strong willed. He knew that as a minister it was his job to represent the public interest. He was not there to represent the bureaucratic interest. He was not there to take the recommendations for the administration and just put a rubber stamp on it and take it to cabinet and take it to the public. He knew he was elected by the people of Thompson.

I know that one of the great strengths of Joe Borowski was, he believed he was a Highways minister sworn in to represent the public interest in Highways and Public Works, not necessarily the bureaucratic interests. Sometimes there can be a conflict, as we know, and it is the job of the minister to represent the people in the administration of the departments and represent the view of the people in the cabinet because we are elected and defeated by the people, not by the administration.

So I want to say to the Borowski family, to Jean, Debra, Karen and Sandra, that I respected the life Joe lived. We respect his fight on behalf of democracy, his contributions to his community and his ability to hold his feelings in the strongest possible way. Our condolences

to Jean and the family, and Joe Borowski will be missed. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Liberal caucus, I rise to express our condolences to the family and friends of the late Joe Borowski. I do not think there is anyone in the House who did not know Joe Borowski, even if it were only by reputation. I think it is safe to say that members of both sides of the House sometimes grumbled a little when his name came up, not because they did not like Joe Borowski, but his life was a testament of helping others, and if you know Joe Borowski, you had to respect him even if you did not like him. If we grumble, it is because Joe had a habit of standing up for what he believed in even when it clashed with the larger view of society. By doing that, Joe held us all up to a standard that was beyond the mere aspirations of mortal politicians.

If we did not always appreciate Joe, it was because he was a little stronger than the rest of us. I know, when I was growing up, Joe Borowski was one of the politicians my dad respected beyond any other politician, and his name was often used in conversations around the supper table: That is a real politician; that is how you should be someday, Gary. Well, I got into the same place, but I do not know if I am anywhere near the type of politician Joe Borowski is.

He was born in 1932, in the midst of the great Depression. Joe learned to stand up for what he believed in. At 14 years of age, he left the farm to work on a ranch and then later in bush camps in Northern Ontario. Then he went to the school of hard knocks, excellent schools, which built his character. Joe married in 1952. He started a family, became active in the steelworkers concern for mine safety. When I was in high school, I was a miner in Thompson, Manitoba, over one summer. You know, who knows what effect Joe's work had on my safety when I was a miner working for Inco in Thompson, Manitoba?

He followed his passion, and soon found himself standing up for social, economic and political causes, always representing the everyday man and woman. It was his interest in politics and social justice that led him to the Legislature, where he served as a Minister of Highways in the government of Ed Schreyer.

* (1100)

Unfortunately, Joe, even in his own caucus, because of his strong principles, decided that he had to leave and to concentrate on his health food business. Politically, he did not go away; he still stood up for what he believed in, his life characterized by personal passion, convictions and a total dedication to those causes he chose as his own. I do not believe everyone in this House agreed with all of Joe's principles, but we respected them and his passionate convictions.

I would like to offer my condolences to the wife and family of Joe Borowski. This province will miss his courage and conviction. We do not have to agree with a man to respect him. He always stood up for what he believed in. If more of us followed this example, this would be a better world, and with that, I will conclude my comments.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I want to join others in offering our deepest sympathy to the Borowski family and to say that although I only knew Joe for a few years as a member of this Legislature, I will never forget Joe Borowski and the stand he took on many issues. In fact, before I was elected in 1969, I had read about Joe Borowski and, of course, the stand he took in opposition to the retail sales tax brought in by the Roblin government and about him camping on the Legislative grounds and so on.

I was really amazed, when I was elected and first met Joe, to find out how soft-spoken he was. As the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) said, he was a very soft-spoken person, a very friendly person on a one-to-one basis. To me, it was amazing because of what he was reported as saying because he did take some very strong stands, no question, a man of strong convictions, a man of his word, a very colourful person.

In the early days of government, the excitement of the new Schreyer administration, especially the first couple of years, Joe was in the news a lot. Probably he was in the news more than anyone else in government, maybe combined. Take us all combined, and Joe had more coverage on radio, TV and the newspapers than the rest of us, because he took stands on all kinds of issues. He became like an oracle to some people. The member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) refers to his father's impression of Joe Borowski as a great politician.

Joe was often on CJOB. He listened to CJOB every day. This is what I heard. I remember one day dropping into his office. I had to see him—I was a minister, he was the Minister of Highways—about an important matter, and he said, well, he is not busy, you just drop in, but here was the radio on, CJOB. Joe was known to phone in from time to time to give his views to Peter Warren and company on whatever the issue was. Joe was known as a person who had strong views on many issues, including, I might add, the FLQ crisis, where he wired the Prime Minister a one-line sentence, which I will not repeat in this House, as to what to do with the FLQ.

At any rate, that was Joe Borowski. He did achieve in government; as Highways minister, I was very impressed with his ability to run his department. As the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) said, he ran the department, the Minister of Highways, for the people of Manitoba, and he was not going to be necessarily pushed around—that would be his words—by any senior bureaucrats as to what was the right thing to do once he made up his mind.

I recall a very personal experience when I managed to request Joe to come to Brandon to look at the old, rickety First Street bridge, which, for decades before I was elected, people who ran for office promised they would replace, this rickety, old First Street bridge, that was built for the time of the Model T. I told Joe about it, but he had to see for himself, so he flew out on a float flight because we did not have any wheeled aircraft, landed at Lake Wahtopanah near Rivers, so he saw it from the air. Then he drove over the bridge with a couple of staff. Then he stopped the car, walked over. Then he wanted to see underneath it, so he went below the bridge. There was a railway crew shunting cars back and forth, but he managed to persuade them to stop the shunting for a moment, to hold everything, so he could climb up the boxcar to look first-hand, to see this crumbling structure, and indeed it was crumbling. In fact, the metal straps that were holding the pillars in place, they themselves were splintering. It was really in bad shape.

So he said, Len, I agree, I think this bridge needs to be replaced; so we will build you a new four-lane bridge right away or how about a two-lane bridge now and maybe in four or five years another two-lane bridge in the east end of Brandon sometime? I figured, well, you know a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. I said, Joe, I will take a four-lane bridge right now. But I knew, once Joe Borowski gave his word—nothing in writing—he gave

his word, okay, Len, you got it. Within months we were tendering and advertising for contractors and so on, and, of course, it did come to pass. So this is one thing, you could rely on Joe Borowski.

But I think, as Minister of Highways, probably one of his most significant contributions and achievements was to recognize that we do have a lot of unemployed aboriginals in northern Manitoba and to use their skills and their labour to help us build northern roads, and indeed we built many northern roads under Joe Borowski. He did a great job in retaining hundreds of local people, northern people, native people in building those roads.

Of course, he will go down in history mainly for his strong views on abortion—his antiabortion stand. He became a national figure, but again, holding very strong convictions, with dedication and certainly in an outspoken manner. In fact, as it was indicated earlier, he eventually did leave cabinet because of those views, and I recall him walking out of cabinet meetings on more than one occasion because of the issue of medicare funding abortions in our hospitals.

So he will probably be remembered more for these activities of fighting the fight on antiabortion than making a contribution as a member of the House. Nevertheless, he did make a significant contribution during his tenure in the Assembly, and I would therefore close by extending my sincere condolences to his wife, Jean, and her family, and for them to know of our respect and appreciation for the contribution made by Joe Borowski.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Would the honourable members please rise and remain standing to indicate their support for the motion.

A moment of silence was observed.

* (1110)

Lemuel Harris

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer),

THAT this House convey to the family of the late Lemuel Harris, who served as a member of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in the useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, Lem Harris served in this Legislature from May 14, 1959, until June of 1969, and he was originally a member of the CCF party, later, of course, a New Democrat. He represented the electoral division of Logan. Lem Harris was born in Wales and came to Canada at an early age. He worked at Burns until his retirement and then devoted—he also devoted, of course, his time to politics in his support for the CCF and New Democratic parties.

Lem Harris was not an individual whom I knew but, in growing up in north Winnipeg, knew him by name as the representative of Logan constituency, which was immediately adjacent to the area in which I lived. So the name often came up as part of the news coverage of the Legislature, and Lem Harris was one of those who certainly was a worker and representative of strong views about labour and the needs to have a strong voice for labour in the community. So Lem Harris served in this House as a very, very respected and respectful individual. I know those were the days in which people's views were expressed with conviction but probably with a good deal more equanimity than we have seen since. We are talking about the days in which there were—I think there was more respect in general for the process and for the individuals involved.

Certainly, I want to express, on behalf of my colleagues, our condolences to his wife, Esther, and his son, Mervin, and his daughter, Judy, and express in particular, on behalf of all Manitobans, our great appreciation for his service in this Legislature, for his service to the people of Logan constituency, and his service to the people of Manitoba. Dedication to public service is very important in our society; Lem Harris showed that dedication.

He was willing to step forth, to be counted on behalf of the principles and the ideas that he believed in, and he was willing to devote a considerable period of his life, 10 years of his active life, in the midst of his productive years, to running for the Legislature, to representing his

constituents and to speaking out on behalf of issues that he believed very strongly in. So all of us are better for his service, and I want to, on behalf of members of my party and indeed all Manitobans, extend our sincere condolences to his family and our appreciation for a life of dedicated service.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Premier for the honour of seconding the condolence motion for Lem Harris.

I want to say a few things about Mr. Harris. Obviously, he has had a successful political career and, prior to that, a very successful career as a worker in our community. As the Premier has indicated, he believed very strongly that working people and their families should have and must have voices in this Legislature. He believed strongly that this Legislature should represent the diversity of occupations and groups in our society.

Of course, he was elected in 1959, 1962, and '66 for the CCF and for the NDP. These were very important years, and his contribution as part of a small but vibrant caucus were very important years for our party, our beliefs, and our movement. He, of course, was part of a caucus, and when you listen to people who were involved in that caucus, like Saul Cherniack, they were very much working and building a foundation that later resulted in the first NDP government elected in 1969. They feel, and Mr. Harris was part of a group of people who contributed to, as I say, becoming the alternative to the Roblin government, the Conservative government of the day. In everything they did in terms of representing their principles, they felt that even though they were third party in the Legislature, they must be the viable alternative for the government of the day.

Ultimately, that work resulted in the Schreyer government of 1969 being elected and pole-vaulting past the other alternative of the time, the Liberal Party, with Gil Molgat, a number of years as leader—Senator Molgat now—and Bobby Bend in the '69 election. So even though he did not sit on the government side, he sat with a group of individuals that laid the foundation for an alternative view to be eventually in government here in the province of Manitoba. They were very effective. You talk to any of the Tories prior to 1969 and they will tell you the real, quote, opposition, was—I do not want to add any comfort to my good friends over there—because they

had 12 members—[interjection] I know, I know. But they were a very, very effective opposition, because their roots were deeply in the working-class communities of the day, and of course the NDP and the CCF was and is the party of working people and their families.

Mr. Harris did not run in the '69 election. Of course, he ran in politics after his working career, but he never lost his belief in the connection between labour and NDP and CCF and his absolute devotion to working people. It is interesting to note that Mr. Harris in his obituary pays tribute to the staff of the Health Sciences Centre and pays tribute to his own individual home care worker; names Debbie Chochinov [phonetic] as the individual home care worker that worked so much with him, and then paid tribute to all the home care workers in the province. Mr. Harris's life was one of deep support for working people and their families and a deep belief that those views and aspirations and those desires for opportunities for their families and for their children should be articulated in this elected body in this Legislature. It is a life where he practised what he preached, and he preached what he believed to his last days. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): It is a pleasure for me to rise today and to add my words of condolence to the family of Lem Harris, who was, as both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have stated, the member for Logan in the Legislative Assembly for a decade, from 1959 to 1969. I have the privilege of representing much of that constituency now, although the historical name, Logan, is not a constituency still. My constituency of Wellington includes much of what Mr. Harris represented, and I have the honour of representing Esther Harris as her MLA and of Mr. Harris before his death last summer.

Mr. Harris represented the constituency of Logan, which, although the boundaries changed over the years, had as one of its characteristics being one of the staunchest areas of working-class people in the city, Weston Shops, the people of the Weston area and towards the downtown. Mr. Harris was an excellent representative of their concerns. He was first, last and always a working man, coming from Wales, which is a country of hardworking individuals. It is a hard life in Wales, and Mr. Harris came over here and never lost that understanding of the problems and the challenges that

face working people. He represented those people with great character and integrity.

* (1120)

Mr. Harris was born in 1908, which meant that he had in his life encompassed some of the greatest changes that have ever faced humankind, the world wars, all of the changes that have happened throughout the country, and he also lived while the government of Manitoba and the province of Manitoba were undergoing massive changes, changes from a largely rural to a largely urban society, changes from a society that had many immigrants blessing our province to a society now where Manitoba is having trouble getting immigrants to enrich our society, a society actually, interestingly enough, the year Lem Harris was born was the year that the Manitoba Telephone System was born, which is the first of the Crown corporations in the province of Manitoba.

We all know now that those changes are being anticipated, changes are being anticipated in some of the basics of our society. So his life has encompassed a great deal of change.

I think I would like to say that we who follow in the footsteps of men like Lem Harris follow on the shoulders of men of greatness. He was also blessed to be of a generation and to know and work with giants in the movement for social justice, such as Stanley Knowles, Tommy Douglas, David Lewis and David Orlikow, many of whom came from the central core of the city of Winnipeg, as did Mr. Harris, as he moved from his country of birth to his country of choice.

Those of us who follow that generation of giants are enriched by the guidance and the strength and the principles that they have given to us and the firm foundations that they have given us upon which to build. It has been a privilege to represent Mr. Harris and now Mrs. Harris as widow, and it has given me the strength as it has all of the members of the New Democratic Party to carry on as we face the challenges facing us, different challenges, perhaps, than Lem Harris faced, but I just hope we have the strength of character and the fortitude and the ability to maintain the principles that he showed throughout his life, whether it was his working life or his life in the Legislature.

Lem Harris made a difference, not only to this family—and it is a very large family, and I again share our

condolences with the loss of him to his family—but he made a difference to his community, the community that he represented for a decade, the community of the downtown area and the west end and Weston. He has made, and will continue to make, a difference to his community and his province through his example of the life that he led. So, Madam Speaker, I too share in the condolences given to his widow, Ester, and his son, Mervin, and daughter, Judy, on the death of Lem Harris. They can take comfort from a life that was long and well lived and a life that will live on in our hearts. Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, I would join with others in extending our condolences to Lem Harris's family. I want to just add a couple of words and note that Lem Harris came to Canada from Britain at a time when this province and western Canada was flooded with immigrants from Europe.

We all know of many people coming from central Europe settling around the province, but there was a significant influx of British immigrants, many of whom came from a trade union background. Indeed, Lem Harris comes from this British trade union background, and he, along with others, played a very significant role in the foundation of what became eventually the NDP. They played a very important role in the early independent labour party in this province and then later the CCF.

I never served with Lem Harris in this House because, as indicated, his term here ended in 1969, which was the year that I was elected here, but I did meet him, and I can tell you that as others have described, he was a very solid person, a man of conviction and a man of considerable idealism. Like many of our predecessors here, they had very idealistic convictions of improving society, certainly the idealism of social democracy.

I particularly recall Mr. Harris because he came from Wales, and I might add that both of my parents, my mother and father, came to this country from Wales. Although, as my dad will always say, he came from north Wales, and I think Lem Harris came from south Wales. There is apparently a difference. The south is more industrialized; the north is more agricultural. But, at any rate, because of his country of origin, my parents paid particular attention to his career, and they were very, very proud of him being someone from their native country, from their country of origin.

On issues, there is no question, Lem Harris took a principle stand, particularly concerned about issues affecting labour, affecting the workers, particularly concerned with social issues, and indeed he did reflect the interests of his riding. He was a true reflection of his constituents, and he served them conscientiously. So I would join with others in extending our deepest sympathy to his family.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Would all honourable members please rise and remain standing to indicate their support for the motion.

A moment of silence was observed.

Stewart E. McLean

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns),

THAT this House convey to the family of the late Stewart E. McLean, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

* (1130)

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, Stewart McLean was born and raised in Dauphin, and he went to public schools in the Dauphin area. After high school graduation, he attended the Dauphin Normal School and entered upon his first and only teaching position in a one-room school at Dauphin Plains. At the end of the school year, Stewart decided that he needed more education and went to work as a clerk in the law office and then ultimately embarked upon studies in law at the University of Saskatchewan.

During summers, he worked on the CNR to help pay for his education. Ultimately, he obtained, in 1938, his

degree in law. He articulated and was called to the bar in Tisdale, Saskatchewan. He then attempted to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force whereupon it was discovered that he had tuberculosis and was then a patient at the Saskatoon Sanatorium, where he spent eight months and met his future wife, Margaret, who was nurse at the sanatorium.

After discharge, being unable to go into the armed forces, he went to Ottawa doing some legal work for the government in civilian selective service. When the war ended, he came back to Manitoba, working at a law firm in Winnipeg and then ultimately in Dauphin. Stewart became very active in civic affairs, firstly as a member of the Dauphin Ochre School Board. In 1955, he became mayor of Dauphin and then, in 1958, became a member of this Legislature, and he was, of course, re-elected in the general elections of May 14, 1959, December 14, 1962, and June 23, 1966.

He served as, firstly, Minister of Education from June of 1958 until December of 1963, and those are my first recollections of the name Stewart McLean. It is interesting how the Minister of Education, when you are in the public school system, is a name that has an impact on your recollections, and Stewart McLean certainly did.

He served, of course, as one of the senior ministers in the Roblin administration throughout that period of time of 11 years, from '58 to '69, and in fact ran for the leadership of the party in the leadership race of 1967 with many other of the leaders of the Roblin administration. He was unsuccessful and left public life after the election of June of 1969. Because he was, of course, a well-known lawyer and one who had such experience in the making of laws as an 11-year cabinet minister, he was appointed later that year as a judge of the provincial court in Saskatchewan, serving in Yorkton and Regina. Ultimately, he retired from the bench in 1983, and the McLeans went back to Dauphin, to their home town, and he became a resident of Dauphin for the most part when he was not down south.

He certainly was a person who was kind and friendly and, to me, a very supportive person. I met him on numerous occasions. I met him during the leadership campaign of 1983, and, subsequently, every time I went to Dauphin and there was any public meeting, he was there. I saw him, of course, on numerous occasions at various funerals for some of his colleagues who had been

members of this Legislature, Walter Weir's funeral, in particular, I recall. At all times, I found Stewart McLean to be an individual who, I think, we could be proud to call a colleague, who had served prior to us in this Legislature, had served with distinction, and who continued to make a difference in his community and his province in everything he did. He remained an active Mason, Shriner, Rotarian and a person who was always there in the community as someone who could be counted on to do the things that the community needed. He was a kind and generous man in all respects.

Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to be able to speak about Stewart McLean and to say that it was a privilege for me to know him, and that we appreciate very much the devoted service that he made to public life in this province, and that we certainly want to express our sincere condolences to his wife, Margaret, to his surviving granddaughter and his sister and to his many nieces and nephews and cousins.

Stewart McLean was a distinguished Manitoban who served well in this Legislature, who served all Manitobans and, indeed, as we see, served people of Saskatchewan because of the fact that he was, in effect, in a public service role on both sides of the border. We remember him fondly. We appreciate his contributions, and we express our sincere condolences to his family.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I want to join with the Premier in the condolence motion for Stewart McLean.

As the Premier has indicated, Stewart McLean was elected four times to this Legislature. I think it is safe to say that he was one of the pillars of the Roblin cabinet and Roblin government, one of the very strong members of that cabinet, of a very strong government, a government, I believe, that will, when the history is written, will be reported in very favourable terms, in terms of its ability for it to take Manitoba from the '50s to just prior to the '70s in terms of modernizing the province, the infrastructure, the intellectual infrastructure, the social infrastructure, quite a progressive group of Progressive Conservatives. They would now be called red Tories. but certainly he was one of the pillars of that group. I do remember, and I know the member for Lakeside, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), will correct my memory. I am just going by memory now. It

is not in the file, but I do recall that as one of the pillars he did run for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party. I am just trying to remember my history, but I believe that the member for Lakeside was a leadership candidate. [interjection] He was not. Then I think I have the—[interjection] Later on. Okay.

I do remember the member for Lakeside running, but I do remember George Johnson was a leadership candidate. Stewart McLean was a leadership candidate. I believe Gurney Evans was a leadership candidate, and George Johnson. I knew George Johnson was one, and Walter Weir. There were four of them, were there not? [interjection] And Sterling Lyon, who ultimately became Leader in 1975. These were very, very talented individuals of the party, very, very quality human beings who had tremendous stature in our community.

The Premier mentioned hearing about Stewart McLean. I remember, as a young person growing up, hearing about him, hearing about his various portfolios of Education and Justice particularly. I do not recall Public Works, but I do remember his role in Justice and Education and being quoted in the media of the day extensively on the issues of the day.

I know that his colleagues and people in his community felt he was a person of honesty and integrity for the Dauphin constituency, for the Dauphin people, who certainly had elected him because of his strong standing in the community prior to him running as a Progressive Conservative candidate in 1958. He was the mayor of Dauphin. Prior to that, he was a school board member. He enlisted in the war effort on behalf of Canada and had a role, a civilian military role, in that effort. He was a very, very strong person of the Dauphin community and a person of great stature in the Roblin government.

* (1140)

He is also a person that maintained a great interest in public affairs. He appeared before the Meech Lake Task Force committee. I recall the Fox-Decent committee, being a member of that committee. I remember, I think Dauphin was one of our first stops in our regional meetings, and Stewart McLean one of the individuals that presented before that committee. He was as sharp as could be in terms of what he thought Meech Lake would do to this country of Canada, and his recommendations to

not proceed with Meech Lake as part of his view of the future of Canada in terms of the proposals within it.

He maintained a strong opinion on public affairs every time I saw him. I met him again at the funeral of George Johnson just shortly after the 1995 election. I recall him talking about the town hall debate that took place between the Conservatives and the NDP and the Liberals, and he was commenting on this new rookie that had been elected in the Dauphin constituency. He thought this new person, he would do pretty well as a young person; he would be a strong spokesperson. He will do pretty well as the MLA. I am sure he worked hard on behalf of his political party before then. He respected the ability of people to speak out on behalf of the constituencies, and he had bestowed a bit of a compliment to the new member from Dauphin. I think, if he felt the opposite, he would have told me because that was the way Stewart McLean operated. He was a pretty straight-shooting kind of individual, and he always told you what he felt.

He has had a tremendous history in this province and in this country of Canada, both Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I know he has a legal history as well as his legislative history, but I want to say to his wife, Margaret, and his family that we join in sympathy on the passing of Stewart McLean, and we celebrate a veritable pillar in our community in terms of the legislative achievements that he has achieved in the province of Manitoba and the great strength which he brought to the many portfolios that he was given by the Roblin government and by Premier Roblin through the 1958- to-1969 period. It is truly a very rich life of public contribution and one which we pay tribute to today in this condolence motion.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I am privileged and honoured to second this condolence motion in memory of the life and the work of Stewart McLean. It was my privilege in 1966 to join that aggressive and progressive group that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) just indicated that would form government of which Stewart McLean certainly was a senior and hardworking member.

Stewart McLean served in many different capacities, Public Works, Attorney General, Minister of Education, and I would suspect that if you were to ask him today, his contribution to bringing into the 20th Century our

education system was probably his biggest contribution to public service. By that I mean, it was under his tenureship that the first major consolidation of the hundreds and hundreds of one-room schoolhouses that still dotted the landscape of Manitoba came into being, and that was a very difficult undertaking, an onerous undertaking. It was decided to allow communities, districts a free vote on the matter, which meant a great deal of work on the part of the then-Minister of Education, ministry officials, that had to convince the general public in a given area that it would be in their interests to consolidate the many small schools into the larger units that would then enable the Education departments to provide the kind of—or come closer to providing quality and equity in educational opportunities throughout rural Manitoba. It was a massive undertaking that the Roblin administration undertook, and Stewart McLean was part of that. As I said, I think if you were to ask him today, if that were possible, he would consider that one of his greatest achievements.

I know one of the great disappointments that he and Margaret had to endure in life was the loss of their only child, a daughter, I believe, in a tragic car accident. That, as all of us can imagine, was I am sure a loss that was felt much more deeply than those of us who remember him and who worked with him really appreciate.

As the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) was speaking, I was trying to recall the last time I had an occasion to visit with Mr. McLean, and that would have been during the last election at our candidates' headquarters office when he, even despite his advancing years and, I might say, what was apparent to me, ailing—you know, his health was deteriorating—but he continued to show his interest in public service, his interest to the service of the party that he chose in his life to serve with such distinction. Certainly, for me, as a very young and rookie Minister of Agriculture, to join that illustrious company, it was a great, great opportunity, learning curve for myself, one which I will always remember.

Perhaps on one lighter note, in remembering the life of Stewart McLean, is that he was about the only person that I know in Manitoba that could drive from here to Dauphin and avoid major highways, do that all on gravel roads. You see, honourable members, Stewart McLean was a very conscientious and active constituency worker, and he was forever back to his constituency, and that

meant travelling sometimes higher than the posted speed limits would allow. His driver's licence, it would appear, was always in some state of jeopardy, and he would come back after a weekend and he would explain to Duff Roblin what he had been up to over the weekend in Dauphin, but how he had to kind of stay off the main thoroughfares in the event that perhaps Her Majesty's finest, the RCMP, were to add yet another demerit point to his driver's licence and he would lose it entirely. Those were some of the sides of the otherwise hardworking Stewart McLean that the general public often failed to see.

It is my extreme privilege to associate myself with this condolence motion. Stewart McLean served this province, this country well, with distinction, one that we could all emulate.

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today in the House and pay tribute to a former MLA for Dauphin. Being the current MLA for Dauphin, I would like to express to Mr. McLean's wife, Margaret, the appreciation that the folks in the Dauphin constituency have for the work and the contributions made by Mr. McLean, not only in his time as MLA representing our area, but in the time preceding 1958 when he decided to take up provincial politics.

When Mr. McLean died on April 13 of this year the people in Dauphin were given the opportunity to talk quite freely about the contributions that Mr. McLean made to our area. You could hear comments such as, Mr. McLean was a man who made a difference, and of course politicians who put their name forward and serve the people hope that they do make a difference, and the people of Dauphin understand perfectly and credit Mr. McLean with making a difference for their lives in our area of the province.

Mr. McLean has a reputation in our community as being a genuine man, honest and sincere and that he is a real gentleman. The other phrases that were talked about concerning Mr. McLean were that he was a very devoted MLA. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) has pointed that out just previous to me, and it is absolutely clear to the folks around Dauphin that Mr. McLean was very devoted to their needs and their concerns. Perhaps the most compelling of the statements that my

constituents say about their former MLA, Mr. McLean, is that he was very community minded.

* (1150)

This was evident well before he entered this Legislature. Well before 1958, Mr. McLean was born and raised in Dauphin and attended school in Dauphin and later taught school in Dauphin and, as he did that, he was very involved with his community surrounding him. Mr. McLean, when he went to join the forces in World War II, was turned down because it was discovered then that he had tuberculosis and that denied him the chance to fight on behalf of his nation. What he ended up doing instead was spending some time in Saskatoon at a sanatorium, but I guess there is always a silver lining in a dark cloud, because that is where Mr. McLean met Margaret, his wife, who was nursing there at the time, and later they were married.

Mr. McLean was Dauphin's MLA from 1958 to 1969, and then after that he was appointed a provincial court judge in Saskatchewan, so in that way he continued to serve the public. He continued to show his devotion to serving the needs of people whether they be in our area of Dauphin or whether they be in other parts of Canada.

So, Madam Speaker, it is with pride and with honour that I stand here today and say on behalf of the residents of Dauphin and the constituency to send condolences to Margaret and to Mr. McLean's sister and granddaughter and express our thanks for his service to our part of the world and to his contributions as an MLA to the province of Manitoba. Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Would honourable members please rise and remain standing to indicate their support for the motion.

A moment of silence was observed.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I wonder if there is a willingness of the House not to see the clock.

Madam Speaker: Is there a will of the House for the Speaker not to see the clock at twelve noon? [agreed]

Joseph P. Borowski

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I wonder if there is leave to revert to the condolence motion for Mr. Borowski.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to revert to the condolence motion for Mr. Joseph Borowski? [agreed]

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I appreciate that leave has been given, because I most definitely wanted the opportunity to make a few statements about the contribution of Joe Borowski not only to the province but particularly to my own home community of Thompson. I want to credit a number of people, particularly Joe Borowski, for my interest in politics. When I first got involved, I first started following politics, I would have been about 12 years old. I still remember the by-election that took place in 1969 when Joe Borowski ran for the Churchill constituency. That was the last time the Churchill constituency included the City of Thompson.

It was quite interesting because it was also an election in which we had a very, very close result. The father of one of my classmates was running, Dr. Blaine Johnston, [phonetic] who later ran as a Liberal in 1973, passed away far too early, very tragically in the mid-1970s. It was interesting because I think the result in that election was about 16 votes, 16-vote margin. When you consider the massive size of the constituency, it was razor-thin, and I can comment on razor-thin having been elected myself by a 72-vote margin, and I must admit there was a lot of trepidation over Joe's election.

Joe had a rather interesting background. He had worked at Inco being a miner and he had run a souvenir shop, and he had been a political activist as well. He camped on the steps of the Legislature. In fact, Joe pioneered in bringing protest to the Legislature.

He fought against the sales tax which had been introduced by the government of the day, and he fought for self-government for Thompson. At that time, he was one of the leading people in our community in getting self-government. We had been basically, in the early

years, run by a very competent administrator, but people felt it was time-coming of age for Thompson. To put it bluntly, Joe was pretty outspoken. When he was elected in 1969, I guess people expected many things, and Joe sure delivered when it came to being outspoken.

What was interesting, the reason that this election had taken place was over the resignation of Gordon Beard at the time, and we ended up with an interim period. There had been a number of by-elections at the time, and it was interesting, because I know people were shocked and surprised with the election of the Schreyer government in '69, but if there was any forerunner of it, any indication of things to come, it was actually in Thompson. Gordon Beard actually did run again in 1969 in the general election and was elected as an independent. So you ended up with the situation that Gordon Beard returned to politics and, lo and behold, that trend that had been started ended up in the dramatic election of the Schreyer government, the unexpected election of 1969. Lo and behold, Joe Borowski was not only the MLA for the new constituency of Thompson, but he was in cabinet, and guess what portfolio, Madam Speaker—Highways.

It is interesting too, because I know a number of people who were involved in politics at this time have gone on in terms of other roles. Many people may not be aware, but the Deputy Minister of Labour, Tom Farrell, was the PC candidate in 1969, and I know Tom can talk about Joe and Joe's style of election campaigning. As I mentioned before, it was the same way Joe always was. He was outspoken.

You know what the big issue was in those days, Madam Speaker? It was highways. In those days, we had a gravel road, 391, that went through to The Pas, connected into The Pas. It was basically a 700-mile trip to Winnipeg. Highway 6 did not exist in those days. There was no route through the Interlake. To get to the airport there was a one-lane war surplus Bailey bridge which you could only have one lane at a time. It was quite a source of frustration. As for Highway 391, well, 391 was the kind of highway that if it was spring or if it was fall, if there was any kind of rain, you just could not get through it.

I remember the first time going into Thompson, and I remember my mom when we were driving up. We turned off onto the highway; and she thought there must be

something wrong. She said, this must be a farm road or something, this cannot be a highway. Sure enough, it was Highway 391, and sure enough we got stuck, I think two or three times in our '64 Buick Le Sabre driving up to Thompson. Needless to say, that was a big issue for people in Thompson.

Well, Joe got in, and at that time the previous government had paved 20 miles of 391 just before every election, and actually they just paved another 20. You can actually drive past Paint Lake before you hit the gravel. Joe said, the NDP said at the time, that is enough. We are going to do the whole thing. You know what happened in a two-year period? They paved all of 391; they put in Highway 6. I still remember it being built in early '70-71. They got rid of that war surplus bridge across the Burntwood and put in a two-lane bridge which is there to this day. I was about 13, 14 watching this. When I was 17, I had no doubt that I wanted to get involved in politics and I had no doubt which party, and a lot of it was because of Joe Borowski, Ed Schreyer, Len Evans, people of that day who took the North's frustration and did an amazing number of things in a very short period of time.

Joe was also known for a number of other things, too. I do not know what grade Joe completed in high school, but he never made any bones about the fact he was self-educated. What was interesting was I talked to people at the time about Joe's style in Highways. Joe would often ask the questions that a lot of people would never think to ask and anybody who has known Joe or sat with Joe knew that Joe never had a shortage of questions to ask or opinions to express. But, you know, he would do things like—I remember there was a big thing about lines down the middle of highways, why not? Up until that time, a lot of the highways did not have the lines down the middle. Joe said, well, why not? You know what, there was not a good reason—at least not good enough for Joe—and Joe did the very basic thing and put that into place.

* (1200)

Joe did a lot of other things in the department too and I talked to people who worked in the Highways department. If you want to talk of the time at which the department moved into the modern era, that was it. That was from 1969 on. We were not exactly Nova Scotia where the highways crews changed every election

depending on who was elected, but I know a lot of people who said that it was not until Joe Borowski came along that the Highways department really started moving into the modern era and a lot of things were done in that period.

Well, Joe was outspoken and whether you agreed with him or not, you had to respect that and I remember when Joe moved on to other issues. He was pretty outspoken on the War Measures Act. I do not think that I agreed with him at the time. Of course, in his later life he was very involved in the abortion issue and starting speaking out on that, actually while he was still the MLA for Thompson.

You know what was interesting at the time was right up till 1973 when the election took place even, I think, when Joe had long since moved on to these other issues, there were people who regardless of whether they agreed with him or not on that, they wanted him to be MLA for Thompson. In fact, he did run in that election—people may recall—but in Winnipeg and unsuccessfully, but if he had run in Thompson I think he would have, if he had wanted, could have been MLA for Thompson till the day he died. I probably would not be here today. Joe Borowski had that amount of support for what he did in a very short period of time working with the Schreyer government and making a commitment to northern Manitoba.

As I reflect on that, I wanted to indicate when I learned the news that Joe had passed, I had the opportunity to talk to a number of people, and even people who had their fights with Joe, all of them said one thing about him. He was a man of integrity. He said what he thought and meant what he said, too. I talked to one of the reporters who asked me if I knew anything about Joe Borowski—I guess they thought as MLA for Thompson I might know a little bit—and I said to him, know anything about Joe Borowski, he was my inspiration in politics in a lot of ways and certainly in the constituency role. I think Schreyer as Premier and Joe Borowski as constituency representative, I do not think you would have two better role models. Why would Joe be a role model for me? He represented his constituents. He put Thompson first. When I was elected by a similarly narrow margin in 1981, I told a lot of people that Joe Borowski's shoes were pretty big to fill, but I would try to do my best to do what he did, represent his constituents, put Thompson first.

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

You know, history is always the best judge of how well anyone does in terms of the long-term prospects and whatnot, but I know how people will judge Joe Borowski, and what I think is the most important court of public opinion, and that is in Thompson. When you mention Joe Borowski's name today, anyone who was around in Thompson those days, 1969, you will never hear a bad word. People always remember the accomplishments of Joe Borowski and the historic things that he did to make sure that Thompson was put on the map.

I wanted to say that, and I wanted to pass on my condolences to his family. I was in school in Thompson around the same time, I know, as one of his daughters, well actually both, but a few years behind, so I did not know them directly. I knew of them more. But I know one thing, after his passing, I wanted to do one thing, and I was thinking of sending a sympathy card, but I thought the best thing would be to make the comments that I have the opportunity to make today to his family and his wife, because, you know, Joe Borowski is remembered in Thompson. He will always be remembered, and it is ironic in a way because we recently renamed the Burntwood bridge after a trapper who was very responsible for the original days of Thompson and discovery of the nickel mine, and I support that.

I hope there is some opportunity sometime somewhere to, I do not know, name part of Highway 391 or Highway 6; if ever there was any sense of naming a highway in any honorary way after any individual, Highway 6 is Joe Borowski's road. I do not know if that is possible, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Maybe there is something we can do at that level, but the minimum we can do, as we speak today, is say that Joe Borowski will long be remembered by members of the Legislature and by the people of Thompson.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I may have leave just to make a brief comment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for Inkster have leave?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Speaker, unlike many of the members inside the Chamber, as we go through the condolences, I am not as familiar with the many personalities that have been talked about in such a wonderful way. What I wanted to do was just to express my heartfelt condolences to the family members and friends of the late MLAs and just to list them—Abe Kovnats, Joe Borowski, Lem Harris, Stewart McLean, Peter Masniuk, Ric Nordman—and again just to commend them in terms of how they had contributed to the province over the years and to express that on behalf of my colleagues inside the Chamber. Thank you.

Peter Masniuk

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns),

THAT this House convey to the family of the late Peter Paul Masniuk, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty and the useful life of active community and public service, and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege for me to be able to express to Peter Masniuk's beloved wife, Rose, and all of his family our sincere appreciation for all of his public service and our condolence to them in their loss.

Peter Masniuk was born in Manitoba in February of 1920. Later, he moved just down the road to Narcisse and had a very interesting, fruitful, productive life and a life that certainly is characteristic of tremendous dedication to the service of the people of this province and this country.

His early days saw him working in construction, later for his brother Nick at a grocery store, eventually to the CNR. That career was interrupted when he enlisted in the armed services, the 12th Manitoba Dragoons in the armoured car division from 1942 to 1945. He

immediately after the war returned to employment with the CNR and moved to various places throughout the province.

In every place that he moved, he demonstrated a commitment to service and leadership. He was, for instance, instrumental in having a new curling rink built in Victoria Beach. He later moved to Hodgson where he became president of the Royal Canadian Legion and helped build the new legion hall. He later moved back closer to his original home in Inwood, and he continued to work with the legion, remaining as president for a total of five years, zone commander for five and a half years and deputy district commander. In fact, he was honoured for 50 years of service by the legion not too long ago. He was president of the sports club, president of the town improvement committee, exalted ruler of the Elks in 1971.

Of course, Peter is best known for his public service as an elected member, firstly of this Legislature as the Progressive Conservative member for Fisher constituency in 1966 to 1969 and then as a member of Parliament in the House of Commons from 1972 to 1979.

What I found fascinating about Peter, because I met him in my early days in this Legislature at various Progressive Conservative events, was that, even after he left the service of the people as a member of the Legislature and then a member of the House of Commons, he went back not only to his job as foreman of the CNR, but, ultimately, he became the reeve of the LGD of Armstrong for seven years, from 1985 to 1992. Peter Masniuk continued to have an abiding interest in public life and a desire to represent people in elected public office. He concurrently, during some of those years in the eighties, was a housing officer with the Manitoba Housing Authority, but he enjoyed life.

* (1210)

I found him to be a very kind, very, very pleasant man who I always enjoyed being with. Rose was always with him. I know that I had the privilege of presenting him and Rose with an honorary life membership in our party, but they attended numerous public functions and were always people that you were happy to see, happy to be with. I will always remember him fondly for those various meetings, for his words of encouragement, his

words of support and for a service ethic that I think was unparalleled. He really was a person devoted to his community, to his province and to Canada.

So I want to express my sincere condolences, my gratitude on behalf of all Manitobans and particularly members of our party for his devoted life of public service. I want to say to his wife, Rose, to his daughters, Gail and Judy, to his sons, Raymond and Bill, to his grandchildren, great grandchildren, sisters, brothers, nieces and nephews, all who mourn his loss, that they have much of which to be proud for the service of Peter Masniuk to the people of this province.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to join with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in this condolence motion and our deepest sympathy to Peter's wife, Rose, and to the children.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not know Peter, but I have read about his contributions to Manitoba and to his community. He is certainly a person who has had a tremendous life in terms of contributions to his local community, to his local constituents, to the activities that make the quality of living in our province so great for all of us, the quality of activity that is available, of friendship that is available, social activities that are available to all of us.

You can see through Peter's total career, a career of community dedication but also one that appreciates hospitality, whether it is the legion or the curling club or other activities that he is involved with over the years, you can read through the lines that he is a person who enjoyed his neighbours, enjoyed his friends and participated with them.

Of course, he was elected to this Legislature in 1966-69 and I believe he was elected to the House of Commons in 1972. He was elected as a Progressive Conservative and, as the Premier has indicated, he was rewarded by his own party with the honorary life membership.

I think it is fitting in recognizing all his other elected jobs in his own community, in his legion, that he is a person that was respected and entrusted by his local communities, whether it is in this Legislature or in his community-elected roles, as the Premier has indicated. He is also a person that was appreciated.

I think it is interesting and noteworthy that Peter suddenly passed away while dancing at a community event in Arborg, which was celebrating his 50th anniversary of contributions to the Legions of Manitoba. All of us want to live on this earth and all of us will, at some point, cease to live, but it is very interesting that Peter tragically died so early in his mid-70s but was participating in an activity of dancing, which he loved, at the Arborg Centre where he was being appreciated for his 50 years of contribution to the legions of Manitoba, a very good life for his community and a life worthy of the praise in this condolence motion this morning.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): I am privileged to second this condolence motion commemorating the life of a former colleague, Peter Masniuk, that this House is sending to his family.

I suppose those of us who have had the privilege of engaging in a number of elections always tend to remember our first election, and that is how I remember Peter Masniuk best. I first met Peter Masniuk as a fellow Interlaker in that very first election that I experienced, along with Peter Masniuk, as the candidate for the then-constituency of Fisher. That campaign proved to be successful for both Peter and myself, and I am honoured to be able to say that it forged a lifelong association between Peter Masniuk's political career, both in this service to the people of Manitoba as a member of the Manitoba Legislature and further on as a member of Parliament for that part of the province.

One of the things I think that those of us who have had the opportunity of experiencing this is to be able to work co-operatively with somebody else that is in public service but at a different level, and the highest compliment that I can pay to Peter Masniuk on this kind of occasion is the manner and way in which he always worked on behalf of his constituency, always sought the support of those who were in a position to work co-operatively with him, as I often was, in various administrations and various cabinets. This was true for Peter whether he was in the first instance an MLA for the constituency of Fisher, when he became an M.P., and as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) already noted, he did not quit his public service. After having served on the national scene, he came back home to the LGD of Armstrong and put in another significant stint of service as reeve at the local municipal level, and in all of those offices that he

held, it was my great joy and privilege to work co-operatively with him and to experience the genuine feeling of responsibility he felt for serving those who had entrusted him in these different public offices.

Throughout these many years, of course, it has been my privilege to have known the family well: Rose, devoted support and campaigner for Peter in his many elections, his children, Judy and Gail, son, Raymond; and, of course, I have the ongoing privilege of having their youngest son, Bill, still continue to serve me as an executive assistant in the Ministry of Agriculture, particularly and more importantly, in my constituency work.

* (1220)

Peter Masniuk brought to the Conservative caucus an element, quite frankly, that we needed. As a longtime career worker with the CNR, a strong understanding, affiliation with the railway union, he brought a union voice into our caucus which solicits a smile from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer). But I think he understands what I am saying, that it was important to bring into the Conservative caucus that Peter so loyally served, made up of a diverse group of individuals, but not always having that segment of society fully represented. Peter did that admirably.

Peter also brought, as the First Minister indicated, as a result of his lifelong association with the Canadian Legion, resulting from his service to this country during the time of war, an understanding of the concerns, the legitimate concerns, of the Canadian Legion. These two elements, his union background, his association with the Canadian Legion, were very significant contributions that Peter made to the caucuses that he served, sometimes too easily overlooked when one is not given the opportunity to serve in Executive Council.

Peter, both in his parliamentary and his legislative career, served as an upper benchman, as we now call them, with distinction, with the interest of his constituents always uppermost in mind. For me it has been an extreme privilege to have worked with Peter Masniuk during his career and to have him as a friend and neighbour in the Interlake, an association that I hope I will continue to be able to enjoy with his family for the rest of my life. To Peter Masniuk, to Rose, to his family, the children, my very best wishes for their continued future.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of my wife, Adeline, and the people of the Gimli constituency to extend our sincere condolences to the Masniuk family on the passing of Peter Masniuk on October 1, 1995, just over a year ago.

Between the years '66 and '69, Mr. Masniuk was a member of this Legislature under the administrations of the Honourable Duff Roblin and also the Honourable Walter Weir, and as the MLA for the constituency of Fisher, which is now known as the Interlake constituency. He was a very influential member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture. During his term in the Manitoba Legislature, he was responsible for some of the grain projects in the Poplarfield and the Fisher Branch areas of the constituency as well as worked very hard on initiating the construction of several drainage projects in the whole Interlake area.

His political career did not end after serving his term as the MLA. He became the member of Parliament for Portage and then later became the reeve of the Local Government District of Armstrong. Mr. Masniuk was very well respected by the people of Inwood and by the people of the Interlake area and especially the LGD of Armstrong.

On a lighter note, Mr. Masniuk was very influential in getting me involved in politics originally, and I spent many hours in the Masniuk household with people like Ed Masters, the honourable member for Lakeside, discussing the different politics of the day and it was always very interesting. Mr. Masniuk was certainly involved in many projects, many community organizations; he worked very hard in the Legion and many organizations.

Mr. Masniuk rose from being a section foreman with the CN Inwood Subdivision to becoming an MLA and an M.P. and later as reeve. Mr. Masniuk and the Masniuk family should all be very proud of the accomplishments of Peter Masniuk, and he should be commended for all he did for the Interlake area.

Mr. Masniuk will be missed by all his colleagues and by the people of the LGD of Armstrong. So, on behalf of my wife and the people of our constituency, the Gimli

constituency, I would like to extend the most sincere condolences to Rose and to the Masniuk family and to the members of the constituencies which he represented. Mr. Masniuk was committed to public life in Manitoba and was dedicated to the people of Manitoba through each position that he held. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): I am very honoured to rise and extend my condolences and say a few words about Peter Masniuk. I had the opportunity and pleasure of meeting him in 1988 not long after I had moved to Riverton and got to know him a little bit better after 1989 when I was elected mayor of Riverton. Mr. Masniuk was the reeve of the LGD of Armstrong. We got together a few times because of the committees that we were part of and the efforts that both of us were trying to do for our local jurisdictions.

Mr. Masniuk was a fun guy. I enjoyed being around him. We had our differences when it came to local politics a few times, but the one thing that I enjoyed about Mr. Masniuk was that after the agreement or disagreement, or whatever that we might have a little discussion about, everything was forgotten and we would go on and enjoy ourselves on an entertainment basis and have a few soda pops and discuss just life and what went on in the area.

He was very committed to the area. I knew that prior to knowing him and meeting him, and I saw that after I was elected. When I was elected in 1990, Mr. Masniuk encouraged the fact that I was going to run. He encouraged that and he said, good for you. You are doing something that you want to do, and you are doing something that hopefully you will be able to continue the work that you have done for not only your community of Riverton but for the whole area. But he warned me; he said it is a tough job. He would explain to me his position as an MLA and then further on as his elected position as an M.P.

* (1230)

We discussed those things, and through that discussion along with discussions with other politicians prior to seeking the election in 1990, I was encouraged by that and I thank him for that. He was always straight up and forward with me. If he had something to say to me, he said it.

The other thing I always appreciated about Mr. Masniuk was the fact that his door was always open to me as his elected representative for the constituency of Interlake and Inwood and the LGD of Armstrong being part of it. He always said, if you are coming through Inwood, do not dare drive by without stopping to see if I am home. I did that once—

An Honourable Member: How long was it before you got out?

Mr. Clif Evans: Quite a while, but in between we did of course discuss the important issues that were important to Mr. Masniuk, to Peter, what was important to him. He would say, Clif, don't forget the constituents, don't forget the necessary things that are needed in our area.

He talked about gas with me, he talked about the highways, he talked about drainage and he talked about life, and life as a politician, and what it meant to the family of a politician, a very sincere and dedicated man to his wife and family. Rose was there for him all the time.

A few times that we did get together in a social way, Peter was full of fun, always wanted to have a good time and have fun. It sort of rubbed off on the others around him when we had that chance to socialize. I remember a little story after I was elected. There was a drainage problem, and Peter and I talked about drainage problems in our area. He was a reeve and the constituents went to Peter to say, we have a drainage problem, we have water in our fields. He said to the constituent, well, I will do what I can, but it is a provincial drainage system, and I think you should go and talk to your MLA, call him and have him come over. These are the words that the constituent told me and I remember them still. He said to the constituent, call Clif Evans, he is our MLA; I know he will try his best to help you and he has a wonderful wife.

Peter had the opportunity of meeting Linda during events and always complimented, and that is what I appreciated about Peter. He treated others the same way, women and wives and children, and supported them as much as he supported his wife, Rose, and how Rose supported him. He appreciated that and I appreciated it, too, because he always complimented, he always asked about my family. He always talked about my wife, whatever opportunity he had. He always asked how my

children were doing, so I appreciated that from Peter. I appreciated and very much know that he did do an awful lot and the best that he could do for his constituents and for his family.

So with those few words and I know that there is more that I could say, but I just want to extend my sincere condolences and sympathies and best wishes to Rose and the rest of the family on behalf of not only myself but of my wife and children, and we wish the Masniuk family the very, very best. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Madam Speaker, I want to rise to join with the members of the Legislature in extending condolences to the Masniuk family. I will not repeat the many attributes that have been put on the record about Peter, but just to express the friendliness with which Peter always was able to be approached, whether it was as a reeve of the municipality, whether it was at a political event or whether it was just in any other social occasion, was his outgoing and openness for discussion and dialogue.

Of course, it would be unfair of me not to mention the contribution that he and his wife made as a team, and it always was a pleasure when my wife, Linda, was with me to be there together, and if she was not there with me it was certainly always questioned as to why not. That was always important to us, and I want to again express my appreciation and acknowledgment of the contribution of Peter Masniuk to the public, to his work and effort not only in the Legislature but to the services of which he provided in all his community activities.

I am pleased to express our sympathy from my wife, Linda, and son, Ryan, and the constituents of Arthur-Virden to the Masniuk family. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt this motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Would all honourable members please and remain standing to indicate their support for the motion.

A moment of silence was observed.

Ric Nordman

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh),

THAT this House convey to the family of the late Ric Nordman, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service and that Madam Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege for me on behalf of all Manitobans and indeed on behalf of the members of our party to be able to remember with fondness and with gratitude the life and service of Ric Nordman, both here in this Legislature and elsewhere.

Ric is known to almost all of the members on our side of the House as a personal friend, someone that we were very proud to have served with. He was probably one of the kindest, most gentlemanly people that you would ever meet and at all times was friendly and someone who you just enjoyed being with.

Ric had three careers, in essence. He as a very young man enlisted and served in Canada's armed forces from 1940 to 1945, rising to the rank of lieutenant. He then spent 45 years in the hospitality and travel industry, including owning and operating several restaurants, a nightclub, a drive-in, three private clubs, a banquet room and a travel agency. He owned and operated businesses in the food service industry in California as well as in Manitoba, and he then went into his third career, which is that of public life, having served for three terms as the city councillor for the St. Charles ward of the city of Winnipeg and then two terms as a member of this Legislative Assembly representing the provincial constituency of Assiniboia.

My privilege was to sit with him both as a member of City Council, and I was with him between 1975 and '79 and then as a member of this Legislature from 1981 until 1988.

When we remember Ric, we remember somebody who was devoted to public service because not only was he an elected public official but he was always volunteering in the community. Two different terms he served as president of Kirkfield Park Community Club. He was a founder and long-serving council member of Messiah Lutheran Church. I remember being at Messiah Lutheran Church for the 50th wedding anniversary celebration of Ric and Kay.

He also, of course, was very, very energetic in the Icelandic Festival celebrations each and every year up at Gimli. Ric's traditional role was to chair the pancake breakfast, and he and Kay would be there serving the pancakes and the sausages and cooking from early in the morning. They would be setting up at five-thirty, six in the morning, and going through until the breakfast ended at close to noon for the days of the festival weekend. He was on the board of directors, of course, of the Icelandic Festival Committee.

* (1240)

He was on the board of the St. James Canadians Junior Hockey Club, on the board of Rainbow Stage, where he was certainly a very active and energetic supporter because one of his sons in particular, Greg, was a very talented musician and singer. Ric, I think, generated that interest in music and that support for public entities. He served as a member of the Winnipeg Enterprises Board. He served as member and vice-chair of the highway transport board for almost eight years. He was always lending a hand to so many different public service organizations, including his charity of choice, muscular dystrophy.

You cannot think of Ric without thinking of Kay because the two were inseparable. I know of no two people who were as close to each other and as devoted to each other as Ric and Kay were. They were married for 52 years. There is no question they were each other's best friend, and whatever they did, they did together. If you got one of them to commit to support you, you got them both, all the time. Those are the things that we will remember most fondly and most strongly about Ric. I know that we had the pleasure of having Ric and Kay at our son David's wedding and involved in some of the social celebrations, and they were absolutely thrilled at the fact that David married the daughter of one of their

good friends, a fellow Icelandic-Canadian who grew up in the Glenboro area with Ric.

My memories at all times of Ric will be fond memories of this kind, gentlemanly-like person who did so much for so many people throughout his life. It was my great privilege to bestow upon Ric and Kay the honorary life membership of our party because above all Ric was a loyal person, loyal to our party, loyal to me as Leader, and his devotion and service to me in times of need and times in which support was important is something I can never, ever forget. So I want to pay tribute to Ric with as much gratitude as possible for his life of devoted service to everyone whom he touched. I want to extend not only our condolences to Kay but to Grant and Greg and their spouses and, of course, his wonderful grandchildren, Kyle, Rene, Drew, Christian, and Rory, to whom Ric and Kay were so devoted and are so devoted.

I just want to express our gratitude for his service and devotion to the community and to all of the various organizations and people that he touched and say how proud I am to have been a friend and a colleague of Ric Nordman's.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I, too, want to join the Premier in the condolence motion before the Chamber today and offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to Ric's wife, Kay, and his sons, Grant and Greg. Grant, of course, I think many of us know for his involvement in the chamber of commerce of the St. James-Assiniboia region.

The term "still waters run deep" I guess is very true for Ric Nordman. He was a quiet individual. He was not a person who spoke often in the House, as I recall, between the '86 and '88 period, but he had a tremendous presence in his community as the Premier has outlined. He has been very involved in community activity throughout his life, and he had a great deal of credibility with the constituents that he served and elected him both to City Council and this Chamber. The Premier has noted his successes in business. I always remember him in terms of his travel agency and did not know he had as many businesses as he had when I read it in the obituary of Ric Nordman.

He was a quiet guy, no pretenses at all. He was a very, very humble individual. He was a person who was honest, and I respected him a great deal. I, obviously,

know his son is in a different political party, but I think he is also a person you could see was trained in leadership and was obviously part of the tradition of the Nordman Family and the roles he was playing in the St. James-Assiniboia business community.

I also know that he was very involved in sports. St. James Canadians hockey team has been referenced by the Premier. Of course, that hockey team, I have had friends play on that team and I believe Billy Moir has talked about the Nordman Family before. Billy Moir was an old friend of mine before he left for Toronto and played on the hockey team for a number of years. Of course, many young people had a lot of success in that hockey team and playing for that hockey organization.

The Premier has noted his contributions in the community, the cultural community in terms of Islendingadagurinn and having attended those events in the past on a few occasions, I do not know whether I had the pancakes and sausages, but I do know the hospitality and the culture of the Icelandic Festival on the long weekend is one that all Manitobans, all Canadians, have an opportunity to participate, enjoy. I was speaking to a group of western Canadians on Friday evening at Hecla and I did suggest that they all come back for the Icelandic Festival, Islendingadagurinn, because I think they would really appreciate our culture here in Manitoba and one of many festivals celebrating our heritage.

I want to offer our condolences, as I say, to Kay and Grant and Greg and all the family and say to the Nordman Family that Ric Nordman had a tremendous career of community, business and elected contributions and our condolences are with the family today. Thank you.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise along with my colleagues in the Chamber and pay my tributes to Ric Nordman. I was intrigued listening to the Premier speak and how closely my intended comments parallel with what the Premier himself had said. I think it does indicate the strength of the characteristics of Ric's personalty that so many of us would have the same conclusions and the same message that we would like to include in our condolences.

I live in the same community as the Nordman family. All of us who live in that area of Westwood and those

who live in the Crestview area, the area that Ric represented both as a city councillor and as an MLA, felt that Ric was a wonderful role model for a good friend and neighbour. I think that in my opinion no finer thing can be said of a person than that he would be a good friend and neighbour, and Ric was seen that way and known that way to all who knew him in our community, and there were many who knew him. He was a gentle man with unassuming ways and a tender heart, often moved to tears at situations and circumstances that he would witness. He was an honest man. He had integrity, and no one who ever knew him could legitimately question his sincerity, his interest in and his concern for his constituents.

Both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have emphasized what a good constituency MLA Ric Nordman was, and I could echo that. I could tell you categorically and absolutely that Ric Nordman always returned phone calls. I made enough of them to him myself to be able to confirm that you could always count on Ric to get back to you or to be present if he was available at events that you wished to see him there for. He was a very likable fellow, and, again, from personal testimony, I can indicate that my husband and I campaigned for Ric in a couple of elections and in going door to door. That was one consistent thing that people would say, I really like Ric Nordman. It was a very common comment. The other common comment that we would get from going door to door was, Ric Nordman is a good man. Again, to be called a good man in an era when politicians are reviled by almost everyone, I think, speaks volumes for the integrity of the man.

Ric was a gentleman in the fine, old-fashioned sense of the word. He was well mannered and courteous. He was a devoted family man. I think all of us who know them have to mention Kay when we talk about Ric because Ric and Kay made a wonderful team. Their devotion to each other was obvious. They were indeed inseparable and more than that, their care to their extended family, the care they provided to Kay's mother, the love that they have shown to their children and grandchildren, again, serves as a role model to all of those who believe that a strong family unit is the basis for the building of a strong society. They lived that example. I know that Kay without Ric will have many good memories but miss his presence.

Ric Nordman served our community both as a councillor and as an MLA for many years, and he will be remembered for his service as the truly good man that he was, and I offer my condolences to Kay and to the family on this occasion.

* (1250)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): I am very pleased on behalf of my wife, Mary, and myself to put a few comments on the record on the condolence motion for Ric Nordman.

Ric was, in my earlier comments, related to Abe Kovnats. Ironically, Abe Kovnats and Ric Nordman are both—we are doing condolence motions in one year, and both of the individuals were very close friends of mine, developed through the political affiliation that we had with them. Ric was a seatmate of mine when we were in opposition. In fact, we were sitting back there and ironically both in Kovnats' case as well as Ric' case, both of them could not hear that well, had a bit of a hearing problem. Ric being such a tremendously nice guy, I could not resist from time to time to play little pranks on him. First thing when he would come into the House, he would sit down and put on his earphone, and from time to time I would crank it up to maximum and then when somebody spoke he would get up half out of his chair. He always knew who had done it of course. He was just such a terrific guy.

As the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said, and others have said, a tremendous personality. What can you say much about a guy like that? I always said to him, Ric—and he was so very proud of his Icelandic background—I said, Ric, you are almost good enough to be a Mennonite. He would say, Driedger, you know what, with a little bit of work you too could be an Icelander. We had that sort of a relationship going and he was just a super guy.

I just wanted to say that Mary, myself and Kay and Ric, when there were public functions we invariably would end up drawing to each other whether it was a PC fundraiser, any other functions, we would always sort of get together and have a good time. I just want to say to Kay and the Nordman family, Ric will always be in our very fond thoughts and it has been my privilege to have been affiliated with him. Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the remarks that have been made about Ric Nordman. I had the privilege of being with him in this Legislature for a few years and always knew of Ric to be a very friendly guy, personable, certainly unpretentious and very easy to strike up a conversation with. It was always just pleasant to be with Ric Nordman.

I knew he had a business background. I did not realize he had such a wide experience in business. I always thought of him being in the travel business, being a travel agent. I learned a little bit about that from him.

At any rate, I just want to take this opportunity to recognize the contribution that Ric Nordman made to the people of Manitoba, and to his constituency, and to express my sincere sympathy to his wife and family.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I, too, want to add a few comments about Ric Nordman with whom I had a long association starting back in the 1960s, perhaps when he was manager of the Breezy Bend Country Club.

There were I think three major forces in Ric's life. His family, his church and hockey. The things that were most important to Ric were not I do not think the question of his involvement in politics, something for which he is probably best known, but his devotion to his family. They did not have an easy life; they struggled. No matter what they did, they seemed to struggle and certainly never became wealthy as a result of any of his major endeavours in his life but that family stuck together. His service to council on which I sat with him for a number of years, his service to the community of St. James-Assiniboia, both through the community club and, of course, his beloved St. James Canadians hockey team were well known and documented by the Premier (Mr. Filmon). His contributions to sport in general and to the community centre, to St. James Canadians and to all of the good things that he did within the St. James community will be well remembered and well respected, are well respected today, for what he did.

His service in the Legislature was longstanding and something that he held in very high regard. We will fondly remember Ric Nordman, and we offer our condolences to Kay, to Grant and to Greg. Thank you.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): I rise to join with members of the Legislature in extending condolence to the Nordman Family. I just will further add that Ric Nordman was an individual who was absolutely genuine in everything that he approached. He was himself at all times.

Of course, I will repeat what I said earlier, that both Ric and Kay became very good friends of Linda's and mine, and it is that kind of combination that makes it a life that is a little bit easier in the political arena and acknowledge the fact that they were a team. Of course to their two sons, again who are very strong and upstanding citizens as well, the leadership that their father and mother have demonstrated for them is well important to note, because it is a life of which it is difficult for family when they are involved publicly, but I think they carried out that responsibility in a very proper and in a manner in which they should be very proud.

I know how proud they felt of their father and just will add again on behalf of my family and the constituents of Arthur-Virden our condolences to the Nordman Family and the contribution of Ric to public life. Thank you.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Speaker, I would like to add some remarks in memory of Ric Nordman. I would first of all only remind myself that it is actually since Ric left this Legislature that, through he and Kay, I became much more closely associated with him, frankly, than during the years that we shared space and were seatmates in the Legislature.

Ric was a sincere, honest, hardworking gentleman who I am proud to have known, and on behalf of Heather and myself I want to add my condolences to Kay.

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

Would honourable members please rise and remain standing to indicate their support for the motion.

A moment of silence was observed.

As previously agreed, this House will now recess until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 7, 1996

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