

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

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable George Hickes  
Speaker*

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Eighth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
MURRAY, Stuart	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Carman	P.C.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SALE, Tim, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
SMITH, Scott, Hon.	Brandon West	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
Vacant	Fort Whyte	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 24, 2005

**The House met at 1:30 p.m.**

### House Business

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, there is an unexpected delay in the plane back from the AMM convention this morning and it is expected that the additional ministers will be in the House by about 2:15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, could you just canvass the House to determine if there is leave to move Oral Questions to after Grievances? Second of all, that following Grievances we conduct Government Business until 2:15 p.m., at which time we will enter into Oral Questions and then Government Business will continue after Oral Questions. If we just move Oral Questions to after Grievances, then that means that Members' Statements then will be done before Oral Questions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there agreement? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** On Members' Statements?

**Mr. Speaker:** No. So, there has been agreement to the process to be Routine Proceedings and then go to everything else except Oral Questions, and Oral Questions will be at 2:15 p.m. That is what the members agreed to. That is just for clarification purposes.

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### Bill 206—The Liquor Control Amendment Act (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Prevention)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member from River Heights, that Bill 206, The Liquor Control Amendment Act (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Prevention), will be now read for a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, fetal alcohol syndrome disorder is a brutal disorder that destroys lives in Manitoba. It affects so many children. The purpose of this bill is to ensure that there is labelling, and, where possible, ensures that there is a posting of warning signs where alcohol is either sold with a .05

content or higher in a Liquor Commission, or in a bar facility, or a restaurant facility.

I would ask that members of this Chamber recognize the importance of this legislation and treat it in the same fashion that we did with the member from Carman's bill in regard to our initiative to have province-wide banning of smoking. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion. *[Agreed]*

##### Bill 204—The Good Samaritan Protection Act

**Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James):** I move, seconded by the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), that Bill 204, The Good Samaritan Protection Act; Loi sur l'immunité du bon samaritain, be now read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Ms. Korzeniowski:** This act, The Good Samaritan Protection—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Inkster, on a point of order.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the indulgence of the House to give consideration to what is being proposed here. The member from River Heights has put in a great deal of effort in bringing forward a bill, the Good Samaritan piece of legislation that has been debated now in second reading for the last number of days.

I believe, that, as a Legislature, all members' bills are important, and the concern that I have is that, in recognizing the value and the importance of the bill that the member from River Heights has brought forward, Mr. Speaker, the government, in its wisdom, has decided to take the member from River Heights' bill and reproduce it and put an NDP MLA to sponsor it.

Mr. Speaker, if it is a good idea the government does not need to bring in their own legislation. The bill is already there, and I would suggest to you that we should be debating and allowing that bill to go. No one owns a good idea. If the government supports Good Samaritan legislation, we would ask

that they allow the member from River Heights' bill to be voted on.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

\* (13:35)

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, the point of order is premature. The member has not even seen the bill, and I would suggest that it would be in everyone's interest, particularly the good samaritans of Manitoba, for him to look at the bill before he gets up and makes such a pre-judgment.

Mr. Speaker, I refer to *Beauchesne* Clause 653, "There is no rule or custom which restrains the presentation of two or more bills related to the same subject and containing similar provisions." It goes on to talk about how it is dealt with when it comes to decisions made by the House, but there has been no second reading of a bill.

Mr. Speaker, the two bills are different. They are the same subject area, but the provisions are different and, indeed, my understanding is that the member's bill, which he has been working on for some time, has some strong provisions which I trust that all members of the House will want to support.

I would say, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that because we have interest by members opposite in Good Samaritan legislation, we all become good samaritans and work together so that we can produce a bill in this session that serves the best interests of Manitoba with that kind of co-operative approach as well.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. An honourable member has just risen on a point of order, and a point of order is a decision that I will have to make. You are asking me to make a decision on a point of order raised by the honourable member and which I have a very, very difficult time hearing because of the noise coming back and forth. Points of order are very serious matters, and I need to hear every word that is spoken so I ask the co-operation of honourable members.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, I was making the point that, if there are two pieces of legislation from different sides of the House that have similar purposes, I think that it calls for some co-operative efforts which we are looking forward to engage in, not the kind of nonsense that I hear. I think it is important that we have a good read of both bills, and

this House can make a decision. The member opposite, I think, would be well advised to look in a co-operative spirit when it comes to legislation of this kind and make sure that, when we bring in legislation, what comes out of the Assembly is as strong as possible. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Steinbach, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. I certainly appreciate the fact that the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), I think when you talk about points of order, it might be as much a point of frustration or a point of principle that he rises on.

I think it is important to recognize that here in the Legislature we all have a responsibility to act in a way that members in the general public would expect us to. I think that they would believe that all members, whether they are Conservatives, New Democrats or Liberals, do not have a monopoly on good ideas. So the point that the Member for Inkster makes in terms of saying when a good idea comes forward it should not matter which side it comes forward from, it should be looked at in a way that all Manitobans would expect us to.

Certainly, I know that the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler), not long ago, brought forward a same bill and then, of course, the government scrambled and said they were working on something similar as well. So we have seen this over and over from the current NDP government, where they seem to believe that, just because a good idea has come from another political party, that they cannot adopt it, that they cannot accept it. I do not think that that is what Manitobans would expect.

\* (13:40)

I would encourage this government, where the bill is called the Good Samaritan bill, I would say a good samaritan act, Mr. Speaker, but if they want to change the bill, they could amend the bill for the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), but a good samaritan act would be to say we do not care where a good idea comes from. A good idea is a good idea is a good idea and pass the legislation brought forward by the Member for River Heights.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Inkster, *Beauchesne's* Citation 624(3) reads: "There is no rule or custom which restrains the presentation of two or more bills relating to the same subject and containing similar

provisions. But if a decision of the House has already been taken on one such bill, for example, if the bill has been given or refused a second reading, the other is not proceeded with if it contains substantially the same provisions"

Until a decision such as on second reading is made with respect to one of these bills, it is in order to continue consideration of both as indicated by the authorities just referred to.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Korzeniowski:** Mr. Speaker, this act will provide protection from liability to individuals who provide assistance to someone in an emergency in the form of services, aid or advice except in cases of gross negligence. It is inclusive to protect those individuals who are members of voluntary first aid organizations such as Neighbourhood Patrol even where they may receive some remuneration.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

## PETITIONS

### Coverage of Insulin Pumps

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

Insulin pumps cost over \$6,500.

The cost of diabetes to the Manitoba government in 2005 will be approximately \$214.4 million. Each day 16 Manitobans are diagnosed with this disease compared to the national average of 11 new cases daily.

Good blood sugar control reduces or eliminates kidney failure by 50 percent, blindness by 76 percent, nerve damage by 60 percent, cardiac disease by 35 percent and even amputations.

Diabetes is an epidemic in our province and will become an unprecedented drain on our struggling health care system if we do not take action now.

The benefit of having an insulin pump is it allows the person living with this life-altering disease to obtain good sugar control and become a much healthier, complication-free individual.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier (Mr. Doer) of Manitoba to consider covering the cost of insulin pumps that are prescribed by an endocrinologist or medical doctor under the Manitoba Health Insurance Plan.

Signed by Lynn Fillion, Colette Parent, Thérèse Foidart and many, many others.

**Mr. Speaker:** In accordance with our Rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to be received by the House.

### Manitoba's Electoral System Reform

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Whereas the provinces of British Columbia, Ontario, Québec, Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island recognized the need for reforming the electoral system.

Whereas the federal NDP Leader, Jack Layton, is demanding federal electoral reform and the former NDP Leader, Ed Broadbent, has stated Canadians want change. They want more, not less, democracy. It is imperative to reform our electoral system, and so on.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the Manitoba NDP to consider following the initiatives of other provinces and the federal NDP by advocating change to the way MLAs are being elected in Manitoba.

To urge the Manitoba Legislative Assembly to request that Elections Manitoba's Election Advisory Committee consider establishing a majority supported reform proposal that would change Manitoba's electoral system so that it would better reflect how Manitobans voted.

Signed by Brian Head, Mary Lou Bourgeois, Ralph Gowan and many, many others.

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to read the petition on behalf of the Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat).

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the honourable member have leave? *[Agreed]*

### Provincial Road 340

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The hard surfacing of the unpaved portion of PR 340, south of Canadian Forces Base Shilo towards Wawanesa, would address the last few neglected kilometres of this road and increase the safety of motorists who travel on it.

Heavy traffic has increased on PR 340 due to the many large farms involved in potato and hog production, agriculture-related businesses, Hutterite colonies and the Maple Leaf plant in Brandon. A fully paved road would support local business and lessen the damage to vehicles.

Annual average traffic volumes on PR 340 are increasing with commuter traffic from Wawanesa, Stockton, Nesbitt and surrounding farms to Shilo and Brandon.

The arrival of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in 2004 and increased employment at the Maple Leaf plant in Brandon means there has been an influx of new families in the area. Improving the rural highway infrastructure in this location will be an additional reason for these families and others to settle and stay in the area.

Access to the Criddle-Vane Homestead Provincial Park would be greatly enhanced.

PR 340 is an alternate route for many motorists travelling to Brandon coming off of PTH 2 east and to Winnipeg via the Trans-Canada Highway No. 1. This upgrade would also ease the traffic congestion on PTH 10.

All Manitobans deserve a safe and well-maintained rural highway infrastructure.

We petition the Manitoba Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Minister of Transportation and Government Services (Mr. Lemieux) to consider hard surfacing of the unpaved portion of PR 340, south of Canadian Forces Base Shilo, towards Wawanesa.

Signed by Verna Cullen, Brent Mooney, Lowell Innes and many, many others.

\* (13:45)

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development

##### First Report

**Ms. Marilyn Brick (Chairperson):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the First Report of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development.

**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following as its First Report.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense?

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

*Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following as its First Report.*

##### **Meetings:**

*Your committee met on the following occasions:*

*Monday, November 21, 2005, at 6 p.m.*

*Tuesday, November 22, 2005, at 9 a.m.*

*Tuesday, November 22, 2005, at 3 p.m.*

*Tuesday, November 22, 2005, at 6 p.m.*

*Wednesday, November 23, 2005, at 9 a.m.*

*Wednesday, November 23, 2005, at 3 p.m.*

*Wednesday, November 23, 2005, at 6 p.m.*

*All meetings were held in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.*

##### **Matters under Consideration:**

*Bill 7—The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur le règlement des différends portant sur le champ d'exercice des architectes et des ingénieurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)*

##### **Committee Membership:**

*Committee membership for the November 21, 2005, meeting:*

*Hon. Ms. Allan*

*Mr. Altemeyer*

*Ms. Brick, Chairperson*

*Mr. Cullen*

*Mr. Eichler*

*Ms. Irvin-Ross*

*Mr. Maloway*

*Mr. Martindale, Vice-Chairperson*

*Mr. Rocan*

Mr. Santos  
Mr. Schuler

*Committee membership for the November 22, 2005, at 9 a.m. meeting:*

Hon. Ms. Allan  
Mr. Altemeyer  
Ms. Brick, Chairperson  
Mr. Cullen  
Mr. Dewar  
Mr. Eichler  
Ms. Irvin-Ross  
Mr. Jennissen  
Mr. Rocan  
Mr. Santos  
Mr. Schuler

*At the November 22, 2005, 9 a.m. meeting your committee elected Mr. Jennissen as the Vice-Chairperson. Subsequently at the same meeting, your committee elected Ms. Irvin-Ross as the Vice-Chairperson.*

*Committee membership for the November 22, 2005, at 3 p.m. meeting:*

Hon. Ms. Allan  
Mr. Altemeyer  
Ms. Brick, Chairperson  
Mr. Cullen  
Mr. Dewar  
Mr. Eichler  
Ms. Irvin-Ross, Vice-Chairperson  
Mr. Jennissen  
Mr. Rocan  
Mr. Santos  
Mr. Schuler

*Committee membership for the November 22, 2005, at 6 p.m. meeting:*

Hon. Ms. Allan  
Ms. Brick, Chairperson  
Mr. Cullen  
Mr. Eichler  
Mr. Jennissen  
Hon. Mr. Lemieux  
Mr. Martindale  
Mr. Nevakshonoff  
Mr. Rocan  
Mr. Santos  
Mr. Schuler

*At the November 22, 2005, 6 p.m. meeting your committee elected Mr. Martindale as the Vice-Chairperson.*

*Committee membership for the November 23, 2005, at 9 a.m. meeting:*

Hon. Ms. Allan  
Ms. Brick, Chairperson  
Mr. Caldwell  
Mr. Cullen  
Mr. Dewar  
Mr. Eichler  
Mr. Jennissen  
Hon. Mr. Lemieux  
Mr. Martindale, Vice-Chairperson  
Mr. Rocan  
Mr. Schuler

*Committee membership for the November 23, 2005, at 3 p.m. meeting:*

Mr. Aglugub  
Hon. Ms. Allan  
Ms. Brick, Chairperson  
Mrs. Driedger  
Mr. Faurschou  
Mr. Goertzen  
Ms. Irvin-Ross  
Mr. Reid  
Mr. Schellenberg  
Mr. Schuler  
Mr. Swan

*At the November 23, 2005, 3 p.m. meeting your committee elected Mr. Schellenberg as Vice-Chairperson.*

*Substitutions received during committee proceedings at the November 23, 2005, at 3 p.m. meeting:*

*Mr. Martindale for Ms. Irvin-Ross*

*Committee membership for the November 23, 2005, at 6 p.m. meeting:*

Hon. Ms. Allan  
Hon. Mr. Bjornson  
Ms. Brick, Chairperson  
Mr. Faurschou  
Mr. Goertzen  
Hon. Ms. Melnick  
Mrs. Mitchelson  
Mr. Santos  
Mr. Schellenberg, Vice-Chairperson  
Mr. Schuler  
Mr. Swan

**Public Presentations:**

*Your committee heard 183 presentations on Bill 7—The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice*

*Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur le règlement des différends portant sur le champ d'exercice des architectes et des ingénieurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives), from the following individuals and/or organizations:*

*Kevin Steckley, Private Citizen*  
*Andrew Skelton, Private Citizen*  
*Jon Hobbs, The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*  
*Garry Stasynek, Private Citizen*  
*Garland LaLiberte, Dean Emeritus, Faculty of Engineering, University of Winnipeg*  
*Miles Kubinec, Private Citizen*  
*Robert Hamlin, Private Citizen*  
*Myron Britton, Private Citizen*  
*Lawrence Homenko, Private Citizen*  
*David Derksen, Private Citizen*  
*Aynslee Hurdal, Private Citizen*  
*Don Oliver, Private Citizen*  
*Vince Kwiatkowski, Private Citizen*  
*Robert Eastwood, Private Citizen*  
*Tom Monteyne, Private Citizen*  
*Terry Danelley, Private Citizen*  
*Jim Orlikow, Private Citizen*  
*Dave Lalama, Private Citizen*  
*David Kressock, Private Citizen*  
*Gerri Stemler, Private Citizen*  
*Michael Farion, Private Citizen*  
*Victor Suen, Private Citizen*  
*Scott Stirton, Smith Carter Architects and Engineers*  
*Ken Hildebrand, Private Citizen*  
*Glen Gross, Private Citizen*  
*Greg Hasiuk, Private Citizen*  
*Spencer Court, Private Citizen*  
*David Penner, Private Citizen*  
*Rina Ricci, Private Citizen*  
*Robert Winslow, Private Citizen*  
*Les Stechesen, Private Citizen*  
*Kent Woloschuk, Private Citizen*  
*John Woods, Private Citizen*  
*Councillor Peter DeSmedt, City of Winnipeg*  
*Guy Prefontaine, Private Citizen*  
*Gareth Simons, Private Citizen*  
*Harold Funk, Private Citizen*  
*Bruce Pauls, Private Citizen*  
*Ed Calnitsky, Private Citizen*  
*Barry Ottenbreit, Private Citizen*  
*Desmond Burke, Private Citizen*  
*Jeff Moroz, Private Citizen*  
*Colin Grover, Private Citizen*  
*John Trenholm, Private Citizen*  
*Bill Randa, Private Citizen*

*Philip Christensen, Private Citizen*  
*Calvin Gray, Private Citizen*  
*Grant Van Iderstine, Private Citizen*  
*Karen Peters, Private Citizen*  
*Gabe Derksen, Private Citizen*  
*Ted Leblond, Private Citizen*  
*Robert Garvey, Private Citizen*  
*Johanna Hurme, Private Citizen*  
*Ralph Glor, Private Citizen*  
*Matt Baker, Private Citizen*  
*Annette Gargol, Private Citizen*  
*Stacey Dyck, Private Citizen*  
*Andrew Bickford, AGB Architecture*  
*Mark Ager, Private Citizen*  
*Andrew Brimble, Private Citizen*  
*Blaine Repko, Private Citizen*  
*Richard Prins, Private Citizen*  
*Jeff Penner, Private Citizen*  
*Bruce Wilton, N. D. Lea Engineers*  
*Jason Kasper, Professional Interior Designers Institute of Manitoba*  
*Alan Borger, Private Citizen*  
*Doug Hanna, Private Citizen*  
*Jon Reid, Private Citizen*  
*Michael Boreskie, Private Citizen*  
*Kyle Lewkowich, Private Citizen*  
*Andrea Lawson, Private Citizen*  
*William Schellenberg, Private Citizen*  
*Steve Sebastian, Private Citizen*  
*Brian Everton, Private Citizen*  
*Ellen Kotula, Private Citizen*  
*Glenn Penner, Manitoba Hydro Professional Engineers Association*  
*George Constantinides, Contempora Steel Builders*  
*Jim Wagner, Private Citizen*  
*Ray Hoensen, Private Citizen*  
*Phillip Reynolds, Private Citizen*  
*Myron Paryniuk, Private Citizen*  
*Tony Eshmade, A.F. Eshmade & Associates Ltd. Consulting Engineers*  
*Ruth Hogue, Private Citizen*  
*Norbert Hansch, Terracon Development Ltd*  
*Jim McFeetors, Private Citizen*  
*Francis Pineda, Private Citizen*  
*Richard Marshall, Private Citizen*  
*Evan Hancox, Private Citizen*  
*Kevin Sim, Private Citizen*  
*Kevin Sydor, Private Citizen*  
*Amjad Mian, Private Citizen*  
*Reed Winstone, Private Citizen*  
*Quinn Menec, Private Citizen*  
*Dean Syverson, Private Citizen*  
*Jerald Peters, Private Citizen*

*Jason Coreau, Private Citizen*  
*Dean Schilling, Private Citizen*  
*Mitra Tirandaz, Private Citizen*  
*Bruce Wardrope, Private Citizen*  
*Jennefer Siwik, Private Citizen*  
*Allison Fulford, Private Citizen*  
*Graeson Wright, Private Citizen*  
*David Dyck, FWS Construction*  
*Daniel Serhal, Private Citizen*  
*Patrick Gloux, Private Citizen*  
*John Ilg, Private Citizen*  
*Mel Fedeniuk, Private Citizen*  
*Glenn Paskaruk, Private Citizen*  
*Travis Cooke, Private Citizen*  
*Rudy Friesen, Private Citizen*  
*Bob Martin, Private Citizen*  
*Ken MacKinnon, Private Citizen*  
*Robert Garet, Private Citizen*  
*Brian Tokar, Private Citizen*  
*Vern Reimer, Stantec Architecture Ltd.*  
*Marcy Shelvey, Private Citizen*  
*Layne Arthur, Private Citizen*  
*Don Spangelo, Private Citizen*  
*Maria Lopez, Private Citizen*  
*Steve Isfeld, University of Manitoba Association of Architectural Students*  
*Robert Morrison, Private Citizen*  
*Guy Newman, Certified Technicians and Technologists Association of Manitoba*  
*James Kacki, Private Citizen*  
*Alan Pollard, Private Citizen*  
*Mark Zaitsoff, Private Citizen*  
*Mona Lemoine, Private Citizen*  
*Fletcher Noonan, Private Citizen*  
*Michael Flynn, Private Citizen*  
*Matt Kessler, Private Citizen*  
*Rodney Macdonald, Private Citizen*  
*Wilmer Koop, Private Citizen*  
*Robert Wrublowsky, Private Citizen*  
*Veronica Jackson, Private Citizen*  
*Charlie Bouskill, Private Citizen*  
*Dave Ennis, Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Manitoba*  
*Allan Silk, Private Citizen*  
*John Synyshyn, Private Citizen*  
*Carmine Militano, President, Consulting Engineers of Manitoba*  
*Ken Drysdale, Private Citizen*  
*Digvir S. Jayas, Private Citizen*  
*Cindy Choi, Private Citizen*  
*Brad Thompson, Private Citizen*  
*Kevin Clouston, Private Citizen*  
*Sean Lepper, Private Citizen*

*Andrew Wach, Private Citizen*  
*Joshua Rudd, Private Citizen*  
*Esther Link, Private Citizen*  
*Ron Basarab, Private Citizen*  
*Jennifer Stockford, Private Citizen*  
*Bob Parsons, Private Citizen*  
*Debbie Grant, Private Citizen*  
*Marjorie Larson, Private Citizen*  
*Cassandra Hryniw, Private Citizen*  
*Michael Banman, Private Citizen*  
*Andrea Flynn, Private Citizen*  
*Steve Cohlmeier, Private Citizen*  
*Michael Sinclair, Private Citizen*  
*Melissa McAlister, Private Citizen*  
*Leane Veness, Private Citizen*  
*Sean Radford, Private Citizen*  
*Connor Beach-Nelson, Private Citizen*  
*Colin Neufeld, Private Citizen*  
*Tat-Liang Cheam, Private Citizen*  
*Doug Corbett, Private Citizen*  
*Jeff Machnicki, Private Citizen*  
*Stan Hutton, Private Citizen*  
*Eric Loewen, Private Citizen*  
*Dorothy Taylor, Private Citizen*  
*Matt Vodrey, Private Citizen*  
*Robert MacDonald, Private Citizen*  
*Terry Cristall, Private Citizen*  
*S. Mark Francis, Private Citizen*  
*Terri Fuglem, Private Citizen*  
*Martin Kuilman, Private Citizen*  
*Nick Read, Private Citizen*  
*Cecilia Moon, Private Citizen*  
*Stephane Chapplaz, Private Citizen*  
*Wells Peever, Private Citizen*  
*Evan Hunter, Private Citizen*  
*Oliver Beck, Private Citizen*  
*Anthony Wong, Private Citizen*  
*Josef Nejmark, Private Citizen*  
*Jac Comeau, Private Citizen*

**Written Submissions:**

*Your committee received 17 written submissions on Bill 7—The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur le règlement des différends portant sur le champ d'exercice des architectes et des ingénieurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives), from the following individuals and/or organizations:*

*Philip Kienholz, Private Citizen*  
*Ron Bell, Association of Manitoba Municipalities*  
*Kevin Humeniuk, Private Citizen*

*Jim Yamashita, Partners Program*  
*Ryan Fidler, Private Citizen*  
*James Weselake, Private Citizen*  
*Jennifer Reynolds, Private Citizen*  
*John White, Private Citizen*  
*Maiya Uprety, Private Citizen*  
*Jerry Semerak, Private Citizen*  
*Peter Hargraves, Private Citizen*  
*Victor Kolynchuk, Private Citizen*  
*Bill Burrage, Private Citizen*  
*Ron Hambly, Private Citizen*  
*Larry Hamilton, Private Citizen*  
*James Blatz, Private Citizen*  
*Tom Alston, Private Citizen*

***Bills Considered and Reported:***

*Bill 7—The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended); Loi sur le règlement des différends portant sur le champ d'exercice des architectes et des ingénieurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)*

*Your committee agreed to report this bill without amendment.*

**Ms. Brick:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), that the report of the committee be received.

***Motion agreed to.***

**TABLING OF REPORTS**

**Mr. Speaker:** I am pleased to table the Annual Report of the Legislative Assembly Management Commission for the year ended March 31, 2005. Copies of the report have been placed on members' desks.

\* (13:50)

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Labour-Market Partnership Agreement**

**Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training):** I have a statement for the House.

I am delighted to inform you of the Labour Market Partnership Agreement signed by the Honourable Belinda Stronach, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada; the Honourable Reg Alcock, President of the Treasury Board and myself yesterday in Ottawa.

I am confident that this agreement is going to make a difference in the working lives of Manitobans and will support both the economic and social goals of the Province. Under this agreement, the Government of Canada will invest \$128.9 million in labour market programs and services for Manitobans over six fiscal years, 2005-'06 to 2010-2011.

By providing supports for non-EI eligible individuals, the Labour Market Partnership Agreement will address the needs of individuals who we have not been able to support under the existing Labour Market Development Agreement, the LMDA, which requires EI eligibility. It complements, that is the LMPA, and broadens our existing programs thus enabling a greater range of Manitobans access to training.

A steering committee co-chaired by Manitoba and Canada will be established with a mandate to oversee the administration of this agreement. Based on an annual plan developed by the steering committee, 50 percent of the funding will be administered directly by Manitoba for delivery of provincial services and programs to Manitobans.

The other 50 percent will be paid directly by Canada to Manitoba clients and organizations. The goals of this agreement are to a) promote a more efficient labour market where quantity and quality of the labour supply meets the demands of increased productivity, b) create an inclusive labour market through the removal of barriers and the enhancement of opportunities for individuals, c) create a coherent system of co-ordinated labour market policies and programs.

The investment will focus on the following priorities established by both the federal government and the provincial government: apprenticeship expansion and enhancement, labour market integration of recent immigrants, literacy and essential skills, workplace skills development, for example, incentives for upgrading skills of existing workers, Aboriginal peoples, assistance to other individuals facing labour market barriers, for example, low-income workers, persons with disabilities and youth at risk.

I believe this LMPA will help us build the labour force we need to support our dynamic economy and help to create opportunities for individuals to participate more fully in the workforce. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the ministerial statement brought forward and certainly there are a number of people on this side of the House who represent areas where there is a skilled labour shortage in our particular areas.

You know, that is not the case throughout all of Manitoba. In fact, there are certain segments of our economy that are not performing as well and that we do not have the job growth in certain areas in the private sector that we would like to see within the province of Manitoba, but to the extent that there is the demand in the province we are glad to see that there is co-operation between the federal government and the provincial government.

The training aspect, the apprenticeship and certainly ensuring that recent immigrants are able to integrate within our communities right through the province of Manitoba in a number of different areas and the city of Winnipeg, we know that immigrants are coming to our great province and we need to help them come into our areas and our communities and become full and participating members of our province.

We know that under the previous government that established the Nominee Program, under the Conservative government, it brought forward that very important program that in fact was also a partnership between the federal government and the provincial government. The Nominee Program was visionary, and I am glad that this government has kept it in place. I also want to recognize that it was a Conservative government that saw the need well in advance for the need of bringing forward immigrants to our province.

I also know that, Mr. Speaker, we are possibly on the eve of a federal election and I am aware that many of our colleagues in Ottawa and all sides of the House, whether they are Liberals or Conservatives, really do think that it is a good program to have supports for immigrants who come to Manitoba. So I know that after the government changes in Ottawa in about a month or so we will still have support for this program and perhaps enhanced support.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the honourable member have leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

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

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, it has been well appreciated for some time that there are quite a number of people who fall through the cracks, who are not eligible for employment insurance and who can certainly benefit from some help in the way of training and learning. So, to that extent, we certainly support this effort.

I am personally and we are concerned, however, that the dollars being handled by the Province are going to be well spent, that they are not going to be wasted or frittered away, that they are actually going to be used effectively. This is something that we will be watching very, very carefully as time goes by, and we look forward to a more detailed plan that is going to be presented.

I noted that the MLA for Arthur-Virden, yesterday, was commenting in Brandon that the money from Ottawa was exasperating him, and I would have expected that every once in awhile he would be pleased that there is a little bit of help from Ottawa providing support for these sorts of efforts.

#### **Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to take this opportunity to draw attention of all the members to the public gallery. We have from the International Orders of Job's Daughters, Bethel No. 2, seven Grades 9 and 10 students under the direction of Mrs. Linda Langtry. They are situated in the constituency of the honourable Member for Southdale (Mr. Reimer).

Also in the public gallery we have with us today students from the Canadian Mennonite University. These students are under the direction of Mr. Donald Benham.

Also in the public gallery we have with us today visitors from the Headingley Senior Services. These visitors are the guests of the honourable Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you all here today.

**Mr. Speaker:** Now we will go on to members' statements.

#### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

##### ***Disconnections* Theatrical Production**

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Mr. Speaker, earlier this month I attended the premiere of *Disconnections*, a play presented by Restorative Theatre Productions, in association with Victims' Voice and the John Howard Society of Manitoba.

*Disconnections* was written by Winnipeg playwright Ingrid Koss. The play centres on a family who has suffered the murder of a loved one and the impact this has upon them and those close to them.

*Disconnections* is a powerful story showing not only the grief of victims of crime but also commenting on the manner in which individuals in our society treat and react to victims of crime. The play is written as a sequel to *Connections* presented in 1999 by the John Howard Society of Manitoba. *Connections*, written in consultation with inmates and victim groups, addressed crime, the impact and the legal process from the inmates' perspective. The success of that production led victims of crime and their family and friends to identify the need for a similar play from their perspective.

Following the performance, there was a panel discussion in which victims of crime from Victims' Voice spoke and responded to questions from the audience. The input and support of Victims' Voice and, in particular, Wilma Derksen, were acknowledged by the playwright.

The play is also presented by the John Howard Society of Manitoba, a non-profit community justice organization, which strives to achieve restorative justice by working with victims, offenders and communities to resolve conflicts, repair harm and restore peaceful relations in our society. The John Howard Society of Manitoba works with all in recognition of a common goal to live in safe and peaceful communities.

I wish to congratulate Restorative Theatre Productions for an outstanding production and for its vision of a safe, respectful and healthy community that truly engages and supports its members in overcoming conflict and adversity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **U.S. Thanksgiving**

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, today, as we all know, is the United States Thanksgiving Day, and today I would ask all of us to celebrate with our American friends. What is most important on this day is the celebration that the pilgrims, when they crossed the oceans into a new land, sat down and gave thanks to their Lord for the protection from the danger and for food and shelter.

\* (14:00)

I think we today, when we celebrate with our American friends, need to recognize the tremendous

friendship that we as Canadians have built with our American friends, as they with us.

I know that many of our large corporations share offices in the United States and operations in the United States. Our Canadian operations, as well as the Americans, have their corporations operate and manufacture in the province of Manitoba and in Canada. That is the kind of relationship that has existed between us, the Canadians, and especially those of us that live in Manitoba for as long as I can remember, as long as our borders have existed.

We live in a country, in two countries, that enjoy the freedom and the tranquility of a border that is the longest border in the world between two peace-loving nations, and I think that has been demonstrated by citizens on both sides of that border.

Today, we also recognize the importance of having neighbours, next-door neighbours, that are our friends. I know that the Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire), the Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Cullen), the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck), as well as myself, the Member for Emerson, recognize what that truly means.

When a beef producer on the southern side of the border loses his cattle and comes across and brings them back, that is what we celebrate today, that freedom to enjoy that peacefulness to bring those cattle back. Today I ask all of us to remember and to enjoy with and celebrate with the Americans on their Thanksgiving.

#### **Karen Pirnie**

**Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the retirement of a committed leader in the St. James-Assiniboia community, a person who has distinguished herself both personally and professionally as a devoted promoter of health, fitness and active living among Manitobans.

That person is Karen Pirnie. The Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Rondeau) and I attended Ms. Pirnie's retirement dinner at the Assiniboine Golf Course last week, and it was clear to us just how much she has impacted people in the community.

Ms. Pirnie has been executive director of the St. James Assiniboia Senior Centre for the past six and a half years. During her tenure, she doubled the centre's membership and managed to raise \$300,000 towards renovations. Her vision of providing diverse programs for today's active seniors as well as

supportive services that enable seniors to maintain their independence within their homes has led to the centre becoming a model for others. As a result of her efforts, the Senior Centre won several awards.

Prior to her position with the Senior Centre, Ms. Pirnie spent 13 years working for St. James-Assiniboia City of Winnipeg Regional Parks and Recreation Department. Ms. Pirnie chaired the Winnipeg Diabetes Strategy for Older Adults project, a three-year, \$400,000 project through Health Canada. She has received several awards during her career, including a Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal in December of 2002, a nomination for the YMCA-YWCA Women of Distinction Award in Health and Wellness and Manitoba Council on Aging 2003 Recognition Award.

Ms. Pirnie's legacy is also filled with sports accomplishments. In 1971, she held the Canadian record for indoor 50-yard dash with a time of only 5.7 seconds. She won gold medals in 100 metre and 200 metre races in 1994 and 1995 in world masters' competitions.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Pirnie's dedication to the health and well-being of Manitobans is an inspiration to us all. I ask that this Assembly join me in congratulating Karen Pirnie on a successful and influential career and in wishing her the best of luck, health and happiness in her retirement. Thank you.

#### **Pembina Thresherman's Museum**

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** I rise today to recognize the efforts of a group of dedicated volunteers from the Pembina constituency working on behalf of the Pembina Thresherman's Museum, which is located right between Morden and Winkler.

A classic steamer has been rebuilt, thanks to their time, money and hard work. To rebuild a reliable and functional steamer for the museum, the decision was made to replace the boiler and engine. This required 50 hours of volunteer labour just to dismantle, followed by trips to Ontario and North Dakota for rebuilding. Reconstruction of the steamer began in December of 2004. Six months, \$60,000 and 500 hours of volunteer labour later, the steamer was functional again and ready for its first public appearance at the Pembina Thresherman's Museum Heritage Day.

Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, this steamer has been used ever since Morden Corn and Apple Festival started in order to heat the corn that the people from across Manitoba and, of course, from across Canada

and the U.S., eat when they come and this is free. It is cooked by the leader of our party, the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Murray) and the Member for Pembina. We continue to stir the pot, as it were.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate all the donors and volunteers who lent their time and talents to this unique project. Thank you very much.

#### **LITE Wild Blueberry Pancake Breakfast**

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite members of the Assembly to an important event happening in the North End this Friday, November 25, the 9th Annual LITE Wild Blueberry Pancake Breakfast. Expecting anywhere between 800 and 1400 participants, this breakfast is meant to serve both as a fundraising tool for LITE as well as an opportunity for a community to come together.

LITE stands for Local Investment Towards Employment. This is a group committed to promoting community economic development by supporting inner city initiatives in Winnipeg that builds skills and provides jobs. Through fundraising efforts such as the breakfast, LITE can fulfil the two parts of its mandate; to provide free Christmas hampers to low-income families using products purchased from inner city businesses and to provide grants to prospective inner city businesses and initiatives. Through partnerships with such local inner city businesses as Neechi Foods and the Andrews Street Family Centre, LITE's charitable work stays in the community and helps rejuvenate it in a sustainable and organic fashion.

Started in 1993, LITE has already made important contributions to many North End, West End and core neighbourhoods. LITE has raised over \$700,000 in support of inner city community enterprises and projects, donated over \$300,000 in inner city food products to the Christmas Cheer Board and has supported hundreds of inner city jobs. Backed by a tireless group of volunteers, all of LITE's members have in common a concern about poverty in the inner city and want to help out in a way that builds community self-reliance.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank LITE and all the volunteers who have made this breakfast tomorrow possible. Their admirable work has demonstrated how strong communities are built and sustained in a self-sufficient manner.

### GRIEVANCES

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), on a grievance?

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** On a grievance, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** On a grievance.

**Mr. Goertzen:** I rise today on a grievance.

As you know, this limited opportunity that we as members have to rise on a grievance, we only do it when it is a very, very significant issue either to our constituents or to all Manitobans in general and, certainly, I think that my grievance falls into the latter category.

Mr. Speaker, over the last number of months, I have had the opportunity to travel throughout the province to talk to young people and talk to parents about the deadly drug crystal meth. Just this week, I was in the community of Winkler with the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck), who has a strong heart for this issue, about the difficulty of drugs really in all communities in the province of Manitoba.

I have had the opportunity to do presentations with the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), and other members of this Legislature to talk about this issue, and we have raised a number of issues. We are glad that the government is taking our suggestion on some of them in terms of the restriction of precursors of the deadly drug crystal meth. Certainly, I know they have taken our suggestion on some of the issues of awareness and getting some awareness out there, and I have used some of that material, even in my own community, in the community of Steinbach, where I also did a presentation.

But there is another step to this, Mr. Speaker, that I want to bring attention to all members opposite, and that is the ability for young people who are addicted to drugs, where there is crystal meth or any other kind of a drug, to have the ability to get treatment within their own province. We continue to hear, and I have continued to hear, with my travels, of Manitobans across the province, in talking to young people and talking to parents, that it is very, very difficult to get treatment when somebody is addicted to crystal meth or cocaine or a variety of other kinds of drugs. The waiting list is sometimes three months, sometimes six months to get into counselling here in our province, and the reality is we know that three months or six months is a

lifetime to a meth addict. It is a lifetime to someone who is dealing with a deadly, deadly addiction.

When a young person reaches out and says we want help, we want help for our addiction, you need to be able to get that addiction treatment for them quickly. It is not good enough to say, well, you will have to come back in three months, or you will have to come back in six months. That treatment and that help and that assistance has to be there for the young person when they are calling out for help. That is truly what is going to make a difference for those who are already living with an addiction. Certainly, the preventive measures that we have suggested be put in place in which the government has taken some of those ideas.

\* (14:10)

We think that prevention is an important part of this puzzle, Mr. Speaker, but we also know that there are many who are still going to get addicted to drugs, deadly drugs, and they need to have those facilities in place. There needs to be an ability for those young people to get that assistance when they have made their determination that they need that help.

We also know, Mr. Speaker, and I have talked to parents, as I have mentioned, across the province, that there is also another element, that parents of drug-addicted teenagers in the province of Manitoba feel helpless. They feel that they do not have any authority or any power to help the young people that they have responsibility for.

Mr. Speaker, that is very, very concerning because we talk about in this legislation, I have heard members opposite talk about it, I have heard members of the Liberal Party talk about it, certainly members on our side, the Progressive Conservative Party have talked about parental responsibility.

We all believe, I think, that there needs to be this element of parental responsibility, that good measures and good responsibility starts within the home, Mr. Speaker, but when you do not give the tools to parents to do and to have parental responsibility, it is very, very difficult.

Today in Manitoba, if you are a parent of a drug-addicted teen under the age of 18 years old, there is virtually nothing, virtually nothing that that parent can do. They are powerless. They are helpless. I have sat down across dinner tables, I have sat down in people's living rooms and I have heard from parents who have said to me: We want to help our child. We feel that we are powerless, they are slipping away

from us. They are out of our grasp and there is nothing that we can do to help them.

I have raised this issue publicly before, Mr. Speaker, when I have talked about the fact that Alberta brought forward legislation last year to give parental responsibility, to give some hope to parents, to give that hope to their young people by getting them some short-term help, by giving them a lifeline, by giving them a safe place in a short period of time to help them clean up from that drug addiction and then hopefully get them on to that next step, get them on to that next level where they can get longer-term treatment.

It is about offering a lifeline to young people, Mr. Speaker. It is about giving them that vision of hope, a short-term process they can clean up off of a drug and get that help. Certainly the Saskatchewan government has brought forward the treatment needed. They have stabilization beds, medium term. They have detox facilities.

They have gone to longer-term facilities, mobile treatment facilities, Mr. Speaker. They have seen the need for this kind of resource in place to ensure that young people in the province of Saskatchewan can get help when they are looking for it, and they have taken that one extra step. I note that the Saskatchewan government introduced in their Legislature this week a bill similar to the one in Alberta. The NDP Saskatchewan government brought forward a bill that will allow parents of drug-addicted teenagers to get some short-term help, to get detox help. That is a New Democratic government.

When I raised this issue a few months ago, the NDP government in this province said it is not viable. It is not workable. We are not going to do it, Mr. Speaker. Now they can see the province next to us, Saskatchewan, which has an NDP government, has brought forward this bill. It is called an act respecting Youth Drug Detoxification and Stabilization Act.

They have said that there is a good reason to give power to parents so that they can really exercise that parental responsibility, Mr. Speaker. I wonder now, after their brethren in Saskatchewan have seen the wisdom of having that kind of legislation, I wonder now if the NDP in this province will change their minds and recognize that it is important, recognize that there is in fact a need to have this kind of legislation in the province, but there is also a missing element.

I wonder if their restriction or their reservation to bringing forward the legislation in this province is because there is a lack of facilities, is a lack of detox facilities, of stabilization and treatment facilities. If you are going to give parents, Mr. Speaker, the power to get help for their kids, you have to make sure that those facilities, you have to make sure that those resources are in place.

Saskatchewan took the necessary first step by putting the resources in place through the stabilization beds, through the mobile treatment units for youth, and then they went the extra needed step to ensure that there was parental power for parents dealing with the addiction.

I wonder if the reluctance from this government to put forward this kind of legislation in the province to give hope to parents, to give hope to drug-addicted teenagers, is because they do not have the resources and they are not willing to put the resources in place to help young people. But, Mr. Speaker, I would say and this is why I stand on the grievance, that if you are not willing to help the next generation of young people, if you are not willing to help them with the addiction then how can we ever believe that this is truly a government that cares, that this is truly a government that wants to do the right thing for Manitobans.

I know that as I have gone throughout the province of Manitoba and met with these parents they have in a very heartfelt way said that we need to find a way to make a difference for our young people. I know that it is not a solution for every young person, but I think that if we can give tools and allow parents to determine whether or not it is the solution for the young person that they are responsible for that it would be another thing that would be helpful in our province. It would be another thing that we could say to parents, we want to give you some hope, we want to give some hope to your young persons of Manitoba. That is what I have been hearing. I have been hearing it from post to post to post in Manitoba. They have all been saying let us do the right thing.

I want to ask this NDP government if they will join with me and do the right thing for young people in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Grievances? Okay, as previously agreed, we will now move on to Oral Questions.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Maples Surgical Centre MRI Scans

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Maples MRI will soon be a reality here in Manitoba. The surgical centre has applied for a licence from the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons. They are moving ahead with their plans for private MRI scans for Manitobans, a service that is not prohibited under the Canada Health Act and is allowable under this NDP government's own regulations.

We continue to hear very mixed messages from this NDP government about where they stand on this very important issue. Right now Manitobans can travel to Ontario, Nova Scotia, Alberta or British Columbia to access private MRI scans.

Can this NDP government tell us today if they are planning on denying Manitobans, Manitoba patients, access to choice in these services right here at home?

**Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, as I made it clear from the beginning, we believe in the Canada Health Act, we believe in medicare, and we will enforce the relevant regulations that guard Manitoba citizens' rights and privileges under the Canada Health Act. What are those regulations? They are the regulations that were passed by Don Orchard and Jim McCrae. Jim McCrae, in 1995, where he set forth Regulation 16/95 which defines the act, defines diagnostic laboratory, defines approved service, and sets out the mechanisms for the approval of any laboratory or diagnostic service in Manitoba. We will enforce that act.

Apparently, they do not even believe any more in what the predecessor Conservative government believed in. They have gone so far to the right, they cannot even see their predecessors.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, as always with this NDP government everything is about ideology rather than about patients, and that is unfortunate.

We know that the federal Health Minister has contradicted statements that were made by this government regarding the legality of the Maples MRI. Four other provinces in Canada are being allowed to offer private MRI scans under the federal government and within the Canada Health Act. Manitobans will soon have that same opportunity here at home.

Why is this NDP Premier (Mr. Doer) intent on denying Manitobans the same access to choice, Mr. Speaker, and services that four other Canadian provinces are offering today?

**Mr. Sale:** Mr. Speaker, let me correct the member opposite first. Four other provinces are not offering this service. In four other provinces, there are private MRIs which have not been approved by the federal government.

I spoke with Health Minister Dosanjh this morning in this regard. He made it very clear that the federal government was being very careful in studying this issue to decide how we could protect medicare.

The only interest that Maples has and the only interest that this party opposite has is to break medicare so that for-profit medicine becomes the law of the land in Canada. We are not going there. I am saddened that they apparently are.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I know that members opposite in the NDP find it troublesome that we on this side of the House support the Canada Health Act. I do not know why, but we support the Canada Health Act. We are very clear about that on this side of the House.

This Premier's Minister of Health has stated that he intends to fine the Maples Surgical Centre when they begin to perform MRIs, Mr. Speaker. Yet, in four other Canadian provinces, this practice is ongoing without penalty. I would like to ask this Premier does he agree with his Minister of Health and does he intend to penalize Manitobans by fining the Maples Surgical Centre.

\* (14:20)

**Mr. Sale:** What our government intends, Mr. Speaker, is to abide by the law of the land which is the law that was passed under the Filmon government in 1995 because they apparently cared enough to define the ways in which medicare could be appropriately regulated and appropriately protected.

I would imagine that most Manitobans are appalled that the opposition today has moved so far to the right that even Stephen Harper will not take the position that the leader of this opposition party takes. He says he believes in medicare and the Canada Health Act. He cannot put forward the position he is putting forward if he understood the Canada Health Act.

### Maples Surgical Centre MRI Scans

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, the only people who do not understand what the Canada Health Act says are the members opposite. The Canada Health Act says, and I quote from there, "MRI and CT services are considered to be insured health services when they are medically necessary for the purpose of maintaining health, preventing disease or diagnosing or treating an injury, illness or disability and are provided in a hospital or a facility providing hospital care."

The Maples Surgical Centre is not a hospital. Therefore, an MRI in that facility is not considered an insured service. Therefore, the Maples Surgical Centre can offer this to Manitobans and give Manitobans the choice to have that.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Health today admit that he does not understand, in fact, his own legislation nor does he understand what the Canada Health Act says?

**Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I do understand the regulations that Jim McCrae put forward in 1995, and so do my legal advisers, so does legal counsel to government understand the Canada Health Act and the regulations very clearly.

**An Honourable Member:** The waiting lists have grown since then.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Sale:** Mr. Speaker, a medically insured service under the Canada Health Act may not attract a fee to the patient at the point of service delivery. That is the clearest statement in the Canada Health Act that there could possibly be. You may not charge at the point of service for a medically necessary service to a person who is insured under the act.

That is very clear. It has been very clear. Jim McCrae was not confused about it, Donny Orchard was not confused about it. We are not confused about it. But, apparently, this entire opposition bench is so extreme that even Stephen Harper will not go where they are and say "open sesame" to all the private sector providers in the country. Even Stephen Harper is not as extreme as you are.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know what could be more clear than the difference between a hospital and a private clinic. It is very clear and it is stated right in the Canada Health Act. This Minister of Health in Manitoba does not understand the

Canada Health Act nor does he understand his own regulations in this province.

Two days ago, the Minister of Health stated, and I quote, "The Canada Health Act by its nature is a national piece of legislation. I think it is very appropriate that we say to them, come on, get on with it. Give us some guidance." Mr. Speaker, under the Canada Health Act, four other provinces have been operating private MRIs. Exactly what type of guidance is this Minister of Health waiting for?

**Mr. Sale:** Well, let me say again, Mr. Speaker, four other provinces are not operating private MRIs. In four other provinces, there are private MRIs. They are not being operated by the Province and that may seem a subtle distinction to the member opposite, but it is not at all subtle. It is fundamental. We operate Pan Am. We operate the MRI in Brandon. We operate, on behalf of the public of Manitoba, MRIs in St. Boniface and Health Sciences Centre and, within the next little while, at Boundary Trails hospital.

We operate CT scanners all over Manitoba on behalf of the people of Manitoba, not on behalf of the pocketbooks of the owners of those facilities.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Before recognizing the honourable member, I want to remind all honourable members, when they are putting a question or answering a question, to put it through the Chair.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously this minister got sick of waiting for guidance. This Minister of Health, yesterday, stated that he plans to fine the Maples Surgical Centre for providing MRIs to Manitobans. Yet two days ago in this House, he stated and I quote, "Our policy is that any private operator can come into Manitoba and can offer a service that we the government and people of Manitoba have to pay for, whether it is needed or not, whether it is medically necessary or not."

I would like to ask the Minister of Health to clarify his position. Does he intend to fine the Maples or is he going to allow Manitobans to have access to this very important service? Which is it, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Sale:** Mr. Speaker, the statements that have been made in regard to the legality of the operation of a private MRI have been extremely clear. There is nothing wrong with a private operator serving MPI or Workers Comp or a third-party insurance company or the federal government for members of the RCMP or any excluded persons under the

Canada Health Act. That is what I said. That is the case. That is the law.

Mr. Speaker, this group opposite has asked more than 60 questions about Maples and the Maples MRI, 60 questions.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Sale:** By their silliness, they have just made clear who it is they are working for. They are working for the person who gave them \$3,000 last year. That is 50 bucks a question. I guess he is getting his money's worth, Mr. Speaker.

### **Brand Manitoba Project Status Report**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, nearly one year ago, the Premier's Economic Advisory Committee Image Task Force announced the launch of the Brand Manitoba initiative. This project was to be completed by July of this year, yet only one of the five projects' phases has been completed to date.

Can the Premier (Mr. Doer) advise the House of the status of the remaining four phases and the expected final cost of this initiative?

**Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Industry, Economic Development and Mines):** I am pleased to let the entire House know that this is a business decision where we have a business group that is working with government to develop a wonderful initiative to rebrand our province.

We need to rebrand our province to let people know about the positive things that are going on. We need to let them know that we have good hydro-electricity. We need to let them know that we are a growing province. We need to let them know that we are expanding in new areas of manufacturing, lean manufacturing, high-end life sciences. Aerospace is growing.

So what we are going to do is we are going to work with government, business and the community to rebrand Manitoba, to give the good news about what is occurring in Manitoba.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps if this rebrand Manitoba had been put in place as it was scheduled, people like Richard Madan would not be going to Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, today the Member for Minto (Mr. Swan) confirmed that the project had not yet been completed. He also stated that the Premier's Economic Advisory Committee Image Task Force is still working with the American company Interbrand to rebrand Manitoba. However, an FOI from November 7, 2005, clearly shows that this group has not met for the past six months despite what the Member for Minto says.

My question to the Premier: What is the status of this rebranding project and what can Manitobans expect to see, or when can they expect to see the results of this initiative?

\* (14:30)

**Mr. Rondeau:** Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of work already done and I am surprised at the members opposite who are not having trust in our business community, not having trust in our community leaders, people like Harvey Seter from the University of Manitoba, Ash Modha, Dave Angus from the Chamber of Commerce. These are people who are donating their time to work in the committee to rebrand Manitoba, to give us a better image, to give us an image of optimism and dynamism.

We need to continue to move forward in the business community so some work has been done. It will not be finished until all the pieces are done. We want to make sure we take the time and get it right and, as was said before, that Rob Warren, director of Asper Centre for entrepreneurs, said, we might be able to increase tourism by \$5 million. It is a good investment. It is a good investment led by our business community.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, let me correct the record from the honourable member. This side of the House trusts the business community, we just do not trust this NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, it has been clear that the budget for this rebranding Manitoba is half a million dollars. That is what the Premier (Mr. Doer) said. An FOI dated on November 8, 2005, shows that this NDP government, so far, has spent \$500,120.99 on the project. That is to date. The project is five months overdue and, according to the member from Minto, meetings are still ongoing.

My question for the Premier. We know that this project is already over budget and nowhere near completion. How much more is this rebranding,

working with a U.S. company, how much more is that going to cost Manitobans?

**Mr. Rondeau:** Mr. Speaker, the members opposite may think it is improper to work with the business community on a project led by the business community to rebrand Manitoba to let people outside this province and inside this province know about the good news of what is going on.

We start talking about the oil industry, that is record numbers. We start talking about the manufacturing industries which are, again, leading the nation in the future. We start talking about the growth, the economic growth, and we start talking about life sciences and the aerospace. What we are trying to do is rebrand this so that the business community outside and inside the province know what is going on. They understand the optimism and the growth that is going on here, and we want to work with the community leaders, people like Harvey Sectar, Ash Modha, Dave Angus, to give the image of this wonderful optimistic province.

#### **Brand Manitoba Project Status Report**

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale):** Mr. Speaker, I think what I will have to do is maybe repeat the question that the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition just asked, because I am not sure the minister heard it. All we wanted to know is they have spent a half a million dollars already on this rebranding. They say that they are still doing consultations. They say that it is not completed, naturally that brings up the question it is going to cost more. How much more and when will it be finished? That is all. How much more and when?

**Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Industry, Economic Development and Mines):** Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of work done. It has been done by the Premier's Economic Advisory Council, a group of volunteer community leaders that are leading the initiative. These are people who are working on behalf of all Manitobans to get a better image of our province. These are people like Harvey Sectar, Ash Modha, Dave Angus. These are people from different economic sectors, business leaders and community leaders. They are going to be working as volunteers to rebrand the province. What we are trying to do is work with the community volunteers and leaders. It is not something that they are paid to get an exact deadline. What we are trying to do is make sure all the pieces are in place, the

right optimism is shown and that we are working with the business community.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Speaker, if I hear correctly from the minister, the contract that was awarded last December that was supposed to be finished by the end of June is now completed because a half a million dollars has been spent. So, since then, it has been the volunteers who are putting in all this time, this effort, and all this research that the member is bringing forth at this time. I hope that is what he is saying because then it is not costing the government any more money. Then it is a good deal. We have the report. We have not seen it yet, though, but these people are doing the volunteer work on it on a volunteer basis and it is not costing any money.

Is this what has happened since then? The report that was supposed to be due in July, since then, all the consultation is voluntarily, no cost?

**Mr. Rondeau:** Mr. Speaker, the business community identified rebranding as a priority item.

Dave Angus, from the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, says that he thinks this a fabulous idea. It is only through a consistent message that you will get definite ideas and improve the image of this province.

We are a growing province. In the nineties, people inside and outside of the province thought it was a stagnant place that was not growing, that did not have a lot of future. It has changed, Mr. Speaker. Now we are a growing province. Our economy has grown by over \$10 billion. What we have is a new image. We have the cheapest hydro-electricity prices and we have growing business, businesses that are investing from both inside and outside the province. We should be proud of that.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the branding Manitoba project. That is what I am talking about, a contract that was let last December, due at the end of June, July 1. That is what we are asking about.

The minister is stating that they are still doing consultations and they are still doing research on it. I want to know who is doing that research, how much it is costing and whether, possibly, it is even a Manitoba firm that has been subcontracted to do this work. That is all I want to know, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Rondeau:** Although we have some provinces, such as Saskatchewan, that has spent \$14 million on their rebranding effort led by government, we have

chosen to go a different route. We have chosen to work in partnership with the business community on an initiative. The project is unique as it is being led by the business community with government as a partner, so it is being led by the business community. This is not a government-driven initiative. So what we have to do is it may take longer, it may take a little bit longer, but what we are going to do is work with the business community, with our community partners who are leading the initiative. It is not a government-mandated driven initiative. It is done by the business community.

### **Child Poverty Rate Reduction Strategy**

**Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has the second-highest poverty rate in Canada. Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in two-parent families. We have the deepest poverty for two-parent and female lone-parent families, and this does not include children living on reserves.

Why does this cold, heartless minister turn a blind eye to children and families, Mr. Speaker?

**Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Family Services and Housing):** Mr. Speaker, we are still dealing with the echo from the 1990s when members opposite walked away from every issue of poverty and low income that they possibly could.

We have reinvested in a lot of strategies here, Mr. Speaker. Poverty is not easily dealt with. It takes multi-prong strategies. We have the Affordable Housing Initiative, we have the national child care agreement, and we also are thinking outside the box around initiatives like the Grand Rapids pilot project where for the first time in the history of Canada, governments are working co-operatively with Aboriginal communities saying, "What is your vision and how do we provide real housing options for the Aboriginal people of this province?"

**Mrs. Taillieu:** Mr. Speaker, the child poverty rate in 2000 was 20.8, and in 2003, the child poverty increased to 22.1 percent.

Last year, on this very day, the Premier (Mr. Doer) stood in this House and incorrectly stated, and I quote, "We absolutely are committed and responsible for continuing to invest throughout the system to do everything we can to reduce the number of children living in poverty. We accept that responsibility."

Mr. Speaker, if this government has done everything they can, why has the child poverty rate increased?

\* (14:40)

**Ms. Melnick:** Mr. Speaker, we stand behind the words of the Premier which is why we have reinvested in training and post-secondary education, which is why we have brought forward very innovative policies against domestic violence such as A Woman's Place where, when a woman says "no more," there is a place for her to go that will help her with what she would need in the area of justice, what she would need in the area of child care, what she would need in the area of housing. This is a unique model across Canada, and I am very pleased to be working with the Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh) on this. We are also the only jurisdiction in Canada that will not claw back 1 cent on compensation received by survivors of residential schools who are receiving social services.

**Mrs. Taillieu:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister is not answering my questions. In 2003, two-parent families with children needed an average of \$12,000 just to reach the poverty line in Manitoba. This is the largest gap in 25 years. When the province has seen significantly high revenues, why has the child poverty rate increased? Why does this NDP government lack the political will to support children and families in Manitoba?

**Ms. Melnick:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not think a government that lacks political will would work with the Sisters project in North Point Douglas, a group of women living in poverty who came to me as the minister, asked me to partner with them. We have put together a unique pilot where we are providing child care training in their community. There is a child care centre newly established, not only for the women who are in the studies, but for the community at large. They have told us that they are pleased that they will be going into early childhood education, because they will be receiving an annual salary of \$30,000 a year, compared to the rest of Canada at \$18,000. This is not a government walking away from poverty.

### **Poverty Rate Reduction Strategy**

**Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet):** The Minister of Finance believes that Manitoba's economy is doing well. However, food bank usage in Manitoba is further evidence that he is wrong,

wrong, wrong. Food bank use in Manitoba was up almost 9 percent this year, yet across Canada food bank usage was down. I ask the Minister of Family Services why has she failed to address the needs of the poor in Manitoba.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Now, it is amazing to me that this member who was part of a government that cut welfare rates in this province, eliminated support to families, eliminated support to children, this is the government that expanded the retail sales tax on children's clothing and school supplies. You taxed school supplies while you cut off money for day care. You cut off money from people on social assistance. Now you are wondering why food bank use is up. Because you eliminated the programs.

**Mr. Hawranik:** Mr. Speaker, and I have to remind the Minister of Finance that this is a member of the opposition who started the first rural food bank in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the number of children using food banks in Manitoba rose by 8 percent this year. Winnipeg Harvest says the solution is not to increase the donations to the food bank, the solution is for government to draft plans with achievable and measurable results. I ask the Minister of Family Services why do you not have any plan to address the growing use of food banks in Manitoba.

**Mr. Selinger:** Now, Mr. Speaker, the member claims that he started the first rural food bank program. You know what? Do you know why he had to start that program? Because of the cuts of the Conservative government to the people in his constituency, and it is because of those cuts that we had people who required food in the Lac du Bonnet area.

What have we done for the people in Lac du Bonnet? We have increased their welfare rates. We have built schools for them. We built hospitals for them. We increased their minimum wage. The minimum wage used to be among the lowest in Canada. It is now the third highest among all the provinces. We have taken a systematic approach. The member opposite did a food bank while he cut programs.

**Mr. Hawranik:** Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Finance, rather than increase welfare rates in Lac du Bonnet, I would rather that you created an economy to give them a job. Manitoba is the province with the second-highest reliance on food banks in Canada.

Winnipeg Harvest indicated that, and I quote, "whatever the government's doing, it is not working." That is what Winnipeg Harvest said. Food banks across this province have been trying to support this NDP government's failure. While this NDP government dithers, Manitoba's poor become poorer.

I ask the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Melnick): Why did you fail to develop a reasonable plan to reduce poverty in Manitoba?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, the member says that he would like us to create jobs, and you know what, that is exactly what we have been doing. That is why in this province we have the second-lowest unemployment rate in this country. Now yesterday—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I would remind members we have guests in the gallery and we have a viewing public. They came all the way down here to be able to hear the questions and the answers, and it is pretty sad when we have resorted to a shouting match. It is time for questions and answers. There is a rule that deals with decorum, and I hope all members will follow that rule.

**Mr. Selinger:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to put on the record some of the investments in the private sector in this province: \$100 million for Inco in the North, \$6.5 million for Monsanto at Smartpark, \$10 million to Nygard in the downtown of Winnipeg, \$145 million for an ethanol plant in Minnedosa, \$187 million for the first wind project in Manitoba's history in southwestern Manitoba, Winpak, a \$50-million expansion of manufacturing facilities, a \$15-million expansion of the Viscount Gort hotel, \$15 million for a new head office for the credit unions in Manitoba, a \$30-million investment in Steinbach.

We have very high levels of private sector investment in this province and many jobs to go along.

#### **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder Public Awareness Strategy**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, fetal alcohol syndrome disorder occurs when a woman drinks alcohol during pregnancy. The negative impact it has on our children is overwhelming. It is all about education and public awareness. It is something that cannot be cured, but it can be prevented if a government wanted to be proactive.

My question to either the Minister of Health, possibly the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), is: Does the minister support encouraging public awareness when it comes to dealing with fetal alcohol syndrome disorder?

**Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Family Services and Housing):** Mr. Speaker, the member from Inkster may not know that this government has been providing a lot of monies towards a prevention, a total prevention of fetal alcohol syndrome with the monies that have been made through the Manitoba Liquor Commission. We have invested heavily on preventing fetal alcohol syndrome, which I am sure everyone in this House can agree really is the way to go.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, the Ontario government has taken significant steps as the minister knows. I would suggest, Judy Wasylycia-Leis, a former member of this Chamber, stated warning labels should be a part of awareness strategy. They will not cost the public a cent and could save many Canadians a lifetime of hardships.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, no one owns a good idea. The time is now for labelling. The time is now for the government to do something, to take a proactive approach at public awareness on a critically important issue that is affecting hundreds of children in our province. Will the minister, any minister of this government, acknowledge the importance of public awareness and see the merits to labelling in this province?

\* (14:50)

**Ms. Melnick:** Well, again Mr. Speaker, we do have a program of awareness. We introduced a 1-800 line that provides confidential information on prevention and also concerns that may be raised during a pregnancy. There is universal screening that was introduced by this government to improve the knowledge of incidence and the facts around fetal alcohol syndrome and the use of alcohol during pregnancy. The Healthy Child partners are working again with Manitoba Liquor Commission. We work annually on a public awareness campaign, which this year is going into the schools.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, what I am asking is to recognize that warning labels on bottles, cans and other sealed containers of alcoholic beverages will have a significant impact on public awareness. The minister has an opportunity to make a real difference.

It has worked in tobacco smoking. We are not asking you to lead the country on the issue. Ontario has already acted in part on the issue. You do have an opportunity to show leadership, demonstrate leadership on this critically important issue. That is what I am asking the government to do.

Will the Minister of Health at the very least acknowledge that FASD is a serious health issue in our province and it needs to be addressed? Will that Minister of Health acknowledge this today, Mr. Speaker?

**Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Health):** Well, Mr. Speaker, not only do we acknowledge it, we have been working at it since we formed government with the prairie northwest consortium. There are warning labels on many of the bags from liquor commissions. The issue of labels is a very interesting one. What you want to do with a public information campaign is keep the message fresh and rotating and simply counting on one approach is not appropriate, which is why we have used TV ads. It is why we have used pamphlets. It is why we have used bags that are labelled. It is why we are going into schools. It is why we have a STOP FAS program.

So the member is correct. It is a serious problem, and we have been working at it in terms of public awareness and making sure the message is very clear to young people and women of childbearing age. If you are in any way sexually active and likely to become pregnant, do not drink.

### Healthy Schools Initiative Update

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** It is so entertaining to listen to members of the opposition ask questions about poverty. It happens once a year, and then it promptly drops off their radar screen as they also conveniently forget their own hand and legacy in creating the depths of poverty in this province.

But, given that this is the one day a year that they see fit to ask these very important questions, I wonder if our Minister of Healthy Living might care to talk about the ongoing work our government does year round on this issue, in particular, describing for all of our benefit a recent program announced called the Healthy Schools Initiative.

**Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Healthy Living):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to talk about the opportunity of our providing further support with our Healthy Schools Initiative, an initiative that is designed to work with schools in

promoting health within our schools on such things like physical activity, which I am very happy to report is this year's theme, things like positive nutrition, healthy nutrition, injury prevention and other initiatives promoting health for our young people, making sure that our young people have the skills that they need to cope with situations so they will not resort to the use of drugs, they will not resort to the use of alcohol.

Mr. Speaker, we provided further support to this initiative. We know that our partners in our schools are going to work to use those funds to ensure that health becomes the culture and the climate for all of our young people in Manitoba.

### **Turtle River School Division Labour Dispute**

**Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education. I have a very serious issue happening in my constituency where we have a school division where there is a strike proceeding, and we have a number of children who are unable to attend school. Some who are unable to get the supports that they need is the reason that they cannot attend school and others who are disadvantaged in terms of getting a ride or any kind of transportation to school.

My question to the Minister of Education is: Will he consider intervening to try and bring both parties back to the table?

**Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth):** Mr. Speaker, certainly I empathize with the students and the parents in the difficulty that this labour dispute has caused, but, as a labour dispute, this is a dispute between the Turtle River School Division and the CUPE local association that represents the support staff. As autonomous bodies, school divisions are responsible for situations around school division staff and employment issues. There is a process in place to deal with this issue and we respect that process.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, there comes a time when those of us at the senior level of government need to recognize that we have a responsibility. I am asking this minister if he recognizes that he is approaching a time when his intervention in a very serious situation may be necessary. Will he consider that?

**Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, obviously there is absolutely no question when this kind of a labour

dispute occurs in our communities and disrupts the school system, there is a great deal of concern in regard to this matter. I just want to make sure that the members opposite realize that services are available in my department, and my conciliation branch and mediation branch is in contact with the parties and we hope that this matter will be resolved as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, we all understand the sensitivities around a situation such as this. I would like to seek some assurance on behalf of my constituents and particularly the vulnerable children who are unable to attend because of a lack of assistance in the classroom, the children who simply cannot get transportation to school. They will soon and probably already need our assistance. Is the government washing its hands of this situation?

**Mr. Bjornson:** Once again, Mr. Speaker, there is a process in place and there is no role for the minister to intervene on this particular issue. The government provides operating and capital support, and it is up to the school division to determine how to best use those resources to deal with issues such as paying employees within the financial resources that are available to them. This is a human resource issue, it is a negotiation issue and there is a process in place. My colleague has identified that there are supports available through her department. We respect the process, and I would hope that the process serves the students well and that this issue is resolved very quickly.

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

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY (Continued)**

#### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Human Resources will meet on Monday, November 28, at 9 a.m., to deal with Bill 5, The Dental Hygienists Act, and Bill 6, The Dental Association Amendment Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on Monday, November 28, at 6 p.m., to deal with all reports that are outstanding, and I will table a list of those reports.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been announced that the Standing Committee on Human Resources will meet on Monday, November 28, 2005, at 9 a.m., to deal

with the following bills: Bill 5 and Bill 6. It has also been announced that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on Monday, November 28, 2005, at 6 p.m., to deal with all reports that are outstanding and the list has been tabled.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, would you please call debate on second readings, Bill 11.

#### DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

##### Bill 11—The Winter Heating Cost Control Act

**Mr. Speaker:** Resume debate on second reading, Bill 11, The Winter Heating Cost Control Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach).

**Some Honourable Members:** Stand.

**Mr. Speaker:** What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Russell? *[Agreed]* It will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Russell.

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to put a few remarks on the record on Bill 11, which is entitled The Winter Heating Cost Control Act. The purpose of this bill is to prohibit any further increases in natural gas prices for customers of Centra Gas during the 2005-2006 winter heating season and allows the government to limit such price increases in 2006-2007. This bill also requires Manitoba Hydro to establish a stabilization and affordable energy fund.

\* (15:00)

If it were not for this bill, we would be paying not only North American prices for natural gas, but huge increases, an estimated increase of 44 percent this winter. That would have, I think, a devastating impact, not only on consumers, but also on non-profit organizations and community centres and all kinds of consumers of natural gas in Manitoba.

I know from talking to some organizations that they are already struggling. For example, I had a real estate agent phone me because a group in Winnipeg that owns an old building, probably 75 years old or more in the North End, and they want to sell their buildings. One of the reasons is that their heating cost is about \$9,000 a year. I know that some community centres in my constituency are struggling because they are self-supporting; they do not get a lot of support from the City of Winnipeg. They support themselves from bingos. Because they are in very old

and very poorly insulated buildings, their natural gas costs are quite expensive.

Now, just by way of history, since I mentioned that we are paying world prices, before the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement, Canada had a rule at the federal level that we had to identify 20 years' supply in Canada before we could increase exports to the United States. After the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Agreement, that rule went out the window and Canadian exporters of natural gas could export whatever they wanted and at world prices.

Now, the interesting thing about that is that not only did we lose control over our supply, but under the rules of NAFTA if we wanted to cut exports to the United States, for example, if there was a shortage in Canada, we could only do that if we cut back consumption in Canada by a similar amount, which means that basically we are tied to exporting current amounts to the United States or more, probably in perpetuity. While it is good for Canadian exporters because we make lots of money from that, there is a downside, and I think the major downside is paying North American prices, or world prices, as opposed to a Canadian price.

Now, I guess I need not point out, but maybe I should for the benefit of members opposite, that if it was not for Manitoba Hydro, a Crown corporation, we would have no control over this. I do not think that any government in Manitoba, regardless whether it was our party or your party, would want to be in government when prices increase by 44 percent. I remember very well running in an election where Autopac prices were going up by 18 percent, and we got thrown out unceremoniously—*[interjection]* I lost that election, as the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) reminds me, and the Member for Inkster won that election in 1988.

**An Honourable Member:** Twenty of us.

**Mr. Martindale:** In fact, there were 20 Liberals that won that election. In the North End, it was only on two issues: the flat tax, 2 percent, and Autopac increases. I never want to go through something like that again, although the Member for Inkster would like to do that. But I digress.

But the point I was trying to make is, not only would we not want to be in government and have no control over natural gas prices and have them go up by 44 percent, but neither would members opposite.

If you were in the government, you would probably be doing the same thing that we are, and that is to control the price. We have a plan to do that, and it is in this bill. I look forward to listening to your speeches on this because I do not know how you could possibly oppose a bill that says we are going to level out the prices and we are not going to allow for spike of 44 percent. If you argue against that, then really you are arguing for a huge increase in prices this winter. *[interjection]*

Yes, during Question Period, they were allegedly championing the poor. So we will see how that ties in with this bill, if they want a 44 percent increase in natural gas prices.

Now, we actually have a very good record when it comes to controlling energy consumption in Manitoba and promoting programs of energy conservation. For example, Manitoba went from ninth to first place. In just a few years, Manitoba has risen from its former ninth place standing in terms of Canadian energy efficiency activities to the No. 1 position in the last annual ranking; that is, No. 1 in Canada.

In the last three years, more than 70 000 Manitoba families have participated in these programs. I know that there is a great deal of interest in Power Smart and other programs. I have had many community meetings in my constituency. For example, I have had town hall meetings. The first town hall meeting that I had when I first got elected, I dropped the notice in the mailbox. In every mailbox in four polls, it advertised that there would be free coffee, it was on a Sunday afternoon, it was at a restaurant, it was in walking-distance of four polls. Only one person showed up and it was somebody on my executive.

Subsequently, I have had a number of town hall meetings. I have never had more than 20 or 30 people, even when I co-sponsored it with a member of Parliament and a city councillor. People are pretty lackadaisical about town hall meetings, I would have to say, unfortunately so.

However, I did sponsor a Power Smart meeting in my constituency and had the best attendance of any public meeting I have ever sponsored with 40 or more people present. They were very interested in saving energy. *[interjection]* Did I hear the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) say that he had people out at a Power Smart meeting? *[interjection]* I am sorry. I could not hear his comments.

**An Honourable Member:** 350.

**Mr. Martindale:** At a Power Smart meeting? If he sponsored a Power Smart meeting, I commend him.

Of course, people in the North End are more interested, and should be, in energy conservation, because we have a very old supply of housing stock, so people are probably paying more for energy consumption than they should just because of old houses not being well insulated.

The residential loan program helps support more than \$70-million worth of home renovations, saving Manitobans energy, reducing home heating bills and boosting local employment at the same time. New programs and incentives were added on materials and products from insulation to light bulbs providing in-home advice and expanding programs to natural gas users.

In fact, I took advantage of one of these programs and because I am over 55 it was free. I did not have to pay for it. Other people, I think, pay \$75. *[interjection]* Yes, I am. Look it up in the Parliamentary Guide. *[interjection]* If I do not look it, well, thank you for the compliment. But we did the home energy assessment. It did not cost me anything and it was very, very interesting and enlightening. I did not spend any money as a result of the recommendations that were made, but I suppose if natural gas prices were to go up I might do so. But I am very fortunate because we bought a house that somebody else fixed up, and the previous owner made a number of upgrades to the house which we very much appreciate.

Power Smart has helped Manitobans save more than 250 megawatts of power, an enormous amount that is now available for export to keep electrical rates the lowest in North America.

Bill 11 provides for Power Smart expansion. Hydro and this government are not resting on our laurels. Power Smart has more than doubled its target for savings and electricity and is similarly increasing the resources available to Manitobans to capture more savings. Now, I think we are doing a great job. I think there is more that we can do and we are expanding these programs. We will do more. But, you know, we can learn from other countries and because in the past energy has been cheap and abundant in Canada, I do not think we have been particularly good stewards of our natural resources and our energy resources in Canada.

I remember going to Europe in 1976, and people had installed automatic devices whereby if you walked into a room the light would go on and when you left the room the light would go off. I have never seen that in Canada. Maybe it exists here, but I have never seen it.

Last year in December I was an international election observer in Ukraine. We stayed in a newly renovated hotel in Donetsk and one of the interesting features that they had to save energy was that the key to the hotel room was attached to a little plastic card. When you went into the hotel room, you put it in a slot and then the lights came on; and, when you left your room, you took it out, and the lights went off, which means that there were no lights on in any room in the hotel when there were no occupants in the room. Surely, that is a tremendous saving to hotel owners.

I have never seen that in Canada. I would like to see it. Maybe it exists somewhere but there are many, many little things that we could be doing to save energy consumption that we are not doing yet. So there is more to do.

On November 9, Hydro, the Province and the federal government announced the expansion of the Power Smart Home Insulation Program. Previously a rebate of up to 100 percent of the cost of insulation materials was available for electric heated homes. Now the program will cover natural gas heated homes, an estimated 120 000 more Manitoba homes. That means \$500 rebates are now available to homeowners who are working to upgrade their insulation levels.

Bill 11 would assist us in working with community groups to ensure that low-income homes and neighbourhoods are better able to reduce their heat loss and have greater access to alternatives. These activities will be rolled out from the inner city neighbourhoods of Winnipeg across low-income areas province-wide. Since I represent a constituency that includes low-income neighbourhoods, I look forward to seeing this rolled out in the North End and in Burrows and other inner-city constituencies.

\*(15:10)

We want to make sure the federal government's recently announced \$3,500- to \$5,000-per-home funding for low-income families gets maximum uptake in Manitoba. These federal monies are, of course, subject to the passing of the bill currently before the House of Commons. Well, it will be

interesting to see whether that happens or not, or whether we are into an election. It looks like next week we are probably going to be into a federal election and some legislation will probably die on the Order Paper.

Specific programs are being developed to increase energy efficiency in the North. We are working with Manitoba Hydro, community groups, First Nations and the federal government. Bill 11 means more energy efficiency. Bill 11 provides tools to increase energy efficiency and conservation activities for all Manitobans. We think Manitobans want to stay national leaders in energy efficiency.

Bill 11's fund will encourage alternatives to natural gas. Geothermal earth energy heating is much cheaper to operate than natural gas and has no pollution. Also known as ground source heat pumps, this amazing technology harnesses the earth's energy to provide heat to homes, schools, offices and ice rinks and arenas. I know of some examples, where, for example, two of my caucus colleagues have geothermal heat. One is the MLA for Dauphin and the other is the MLA for Assiniboia. In talking to one of them, I think his heating bill is \$150 a year, which means that the payback period from the installation is very quick.

It is expensive to install, and that is a problem for people who cannot afford to install in the first place, but if you can and you get installed, your payback period and long-term savings are excellent. I know of many community organizations that are using this now. For example, in the Burrows constituency, there is a football field that is used by the North Winnipeg Nomads on McPhillips Street, Crupp stadium, I think it is called, and they have spent some money upgrading the football facility there, and I believe they put in geothermal heat.

This government and Manitoba Hydro believe in this technology and managed to quadruple the installation rate for geothermal heat pumps in the past four years. This means thousands of Manitoba homes and businesses have already been assisted in waving goodbye to their gas heating bills forever. Geothermal heating will be installed across Waverley West and hopefully in many other new housing developments in Manitoba, so that from day one in your new home worries about rising gas prices are a thing of the past.

I certainly hope that this is true of all new suburban and inner city housing developments. I think it is the way of the future. It is really the way to

go, and, you know, the more that we can be self-sufficient in Manitoba, it means that we are buying less gas and oil from Alberta, and therefore we are not exporting money to Alberta to pay for these, and profits to Alberta. We are keeping money at home here in Manitoba to recirculate and reinvest.

With Hydro training more new installers, and that is local businesses, for geothermal than any other Canadian province, Manitoba now ranks No. 1 on the continent in geothermal. Bill 11 means more geothermal. The fund will help Hydro and this government will help more Manitobans switch to this renewable earth energy as a cleaner and cheaper alternative to heating with natural gas.

Bill 11 is a practical solution. All these actions, that is, expanding Power Smart, extending efficiency incentives to gas-heated homes, boosting the heat pump infrastructure and working with low-income families, community groups and First Nations, have been taken to help ensure that we were in a position to provide more effective, practical help to all Manitoba families and businesses wishing to reduce their exposure to "imported energy prices." That is an interesting expression, imported energy prices. We would be paying world prices for commodities like natural gas were it not for this bill which is going to level out those increases. *[interjection]* I am sure that the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck) wants to speak on this bill, and he will get his chance.

Why should electricity funds not be returned to electricity ratepayers? Ed Schreyer was quoted in the *Free Press* on November 18 saying that cross-subsidization by Hydro of natural gas rates is wrong and retrograde. Well, firstly, we agree with Ed Schreyer. It is wrong to subsidize fossil fuel rates with renewable hydro revenues. Bill 11 does not cross-subsidize. Bill 11 provides for price increases of natural gas to be deferred and paid back over time. This prevents the hardship of sudden rate shock. It does not mean using hydro profits to reduce rates. Bill 11 provides for some hydro profits to help Manitobans reduce their consumption and switch to alternatives. That is the goal. This fund will be available to help all Manitobans, not just natural gas users, to conserve energy and to make the changes they need to control heating costs. Reducing heating costs across the province benefits everyone, as we are all economically interdependent. Hydro profits will be shared with all Manitobans.

Secondly, we must act. The PUB has indicated, correctly, that there is a potential crisis here. There

are serious social and human concerns associated with rate hikes. Even with rate-smoothing, low- and fixed-income Manitobans will have a tough time coping with heating costs. This could cause hardship and unwanted social costs. Funding targeted programs can prevent this.

I am, certainly, aware of this in my constituency in Burrows because from time to time people phone me asking for assistance because their natural gas has been cut off or their hydro has been cut off. There is an individual who specializes in gas cut-offs at the Public Utilities Board. I phone him, and we try to work out an arrangement between my constituent and Manitoba Hydro natural gas.

I would have to say that most of the time they are reasonable. But it is not always easy because sometimes people owe a lot of money. It is not uncommon, especially in the fall, when people want their heat turned on because it is getting cold, for them to phone my office, and of course I wish they had phoned me in the spring when it was cut off, but they phone me in the fall and I find out from inquiring that they might owe a very large sum of money for a poor person. For example, they might owe \$3,600. Manitoba Hydro wants a lump sum down payment and a schedule of payments on a monthly basis before they will turn the natural gas back on.

So anything that helps to mitigate this situation needs to be implemented because we do not want this to be a hardship on large numbers of people, and we know that the people who would be impacted the most negatively will be poor people. So this is of great interest to me and to my constituents because I represent so many poor people.

Reducing heating costs across the province benefits everyone, as we are all economically interdependent. I think I mentioned that already.

Thirdly, from a financial perspective, Centra Gas may face millions of dollars in uncollected bills. A strong energy efficiency program will help stem these losses.

Fourth, all natural gas customers of Centra Gas are also electricity customers of Manitoba Hydro, and electricity ratepayers stand to benefit. As the PUB has correctly noted, there is a business case for Hydro to reduce natural gas heating costs in Manitoba. If natural gas customers are faced with sudden large increases in rates, many may switch to electric heat. Hydro would be hit with costs and

losses associated with a rapid movement of fuel-switchers from natural gas to electricity, reducing their net electricity export revenues on an ongoing basis. Export sales help keep hydro-electric rates low.

Finally, there is a benefit to the planet and to future generations if Hydro uses some of its export profits to reduce the harmful emissions of natural gas use.

Bill 11 builds on the success story of Manitoba Hydro. This government and Manitoba Hydro are building on the successes of the past, including Manitoba's low-rate advantage with a new vision of a clean energy future. This new vision includes new generation dams built in historic partnerships with First Nations. Plans already underway for these dams include equity partnerships and large-scale training programs, thousands of jobs, so that the benefits are long term and fairly shared. Key examples are dams of Wuskwatim and Conawapa.

Harvesting Manitoba's winds. This clean energy source is environmentally friendly and can provide economic development to rural communities. This government and Manitoba Hydro are committed to developing 1000 megawatts of wind power over the next ten years. Manitoba's first 99-megawatt wind farm is already harvesting our winds into electric power at St. Leon.

I am looking forward to going to see that. I think it is in the constituency of the Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan). Is that right, that St. Leon is the constituency of Carman? I am looking forward to going out to St. Leon. I understand the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck) is lining up, he wants to be next with wind farms in his constituency.

**An Honourable Member:** He has his already.

**Mr. Martindale:** Oh, you already have them.

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. Martindale:** Okay. That is because you have windmills on some of those farms, I suppose.

Well, I remember going to rural Saskatchewan and people had no hook-up to Saskatchewan Power. They had a windmill, and that provided the electricity for their house and their barn because they had never disconnected it, like some of their neighbours.

So some of these things seem new, but actually they have been around for a long time. We are just

building them on a much bigger scale. I am sure the Member for Pembina and many members opposite are eager to have this development in their constituency because they are paying taxes to the rural municipalities. They are leasing rights from farmers. The farmers are happy. Manitoba Hydro is happy. Consumers are happy. The municipalities are happy. The Conservative caucus on the other side is happy. I think that is a win, win, win, wind situation.

\* (15:20)

In fact, because wind farms are mentioned here, I think that the members opposite should actually vote for this bill, because it means expanding some of these energy conservation measures to their constituencies, so I think you will be in favour of this bill. We look forward to seeing you vote for it. We will have to stay tuned for your critic's speech on this bill, then we will know whether you are going to support it or not, although sometimes members opposite kind of duck things until, you know, the third reading vote and then we know where they really are.

**An Honourable Member:** We learned from the NDP.

**Mr. Martindale:** I cannot remember ever doing that, but maybe we did.

Expanding export sales that enhance and diversify Manitoba's transmission links and market contracts. The first step was negotiating a 400 megawatt sale to Ontario this year worth well over 500 million in new export sales. Manitoba NDP has a vision for Manitoba Hydro. We are only able to take such action because of the long-term investment and belief in Manitoba Hydro as a Crown corporation owned by the people of Manitoba for the people.

This is a vision which has developed and been realized by foresighted actions taken at the Province and Manitoba Hydro across past decades. Unfortunately, Tories do not share this vision for Hydro. They want to sell Hydro on Bay Street. They privatized MTS and local phone rates have gone up by 68 percent. The people that profited most from the privatization of MTS were the stockbroker friends of the Tories and Jaguar dealerships.

Today's Hydro success benefits all Manitobans. The historically high water levels of the recent past have helped boost Hydro's electricity-related export earnings to historic highs, an advantage which can now be harnessed to help all Manitobans reduce their

energy costs and address the challenge of climate change. That brings me back to something that I said originally, and that is that, if we did not have a Crown corporation, we could not do this and we would be subject to market forces, that is, world prices for energy. There would be huge increase, estimated at 44 percent, and the public would be outraged, but we are able to deal with this because we have a Crown corporation and I think that reinforces the importance of having a Crown corporation in order to level out prices. I think that is a very, very important advantage to the people of Manitoba.

Bill 11 is about providing Manitobans with the time and the tools to protect themselves and their families against the risk of high and volatile natural gas prices. In the short term, it provides help through the protection from rate shock and the smoothing out of natural gas rates, long term solutions to the problem of natural gas, solutions that are both environmentally sustainable for the plant and financially sustainable for families, for business, for Manitoba Hydro and Centra Gas, for the Province and for the Manitoba economy.

So we are providing short-term help and long-term solutions and I think we should be commended for this. I look forward to hearing the position of members opposite and for the third party to see if both of them are going to support this bill or whether they are in favour of world prices.

**An Honourable Member:** I am in favour of supporting our seniors.

**Mr. Martindale:** I think the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is in favour of world prices for natural gas, and so we will be looking forward to seeing whether he flip-flops and changes to supporting this bill or whether he would prefer to have market forces prevail.

**Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to say a few words in respect of Bill 11 and some of the arguments I know that have been presented by members opposite, both in the newspapers and in the media and, of course, in this House, remind me of one of the things I first heard when I became elected in 2002.

I was speaking to an NDP member, Mr. Speaker, and I was really concerned about the fact that the government was spending \$100 million of taxpayers' money simply to buy new "Cadillac" VLTs for the

province so that they could addict more Manitobans, so they could extract more revenues, more gambling revenues and gambling profits out of Manitobans and, in fact, those who are least able to pay those profits to the government.

The point that they made was, "Why are we worried about spending \$100 million? It did not cost taxpayers a penny. We borrowed the money." That is the logic that they have, Mr. Speaker, and Bill 11 kind of follows that same logic. Bill 11 was introduced to prohibit further increases in natural gas prices for consumers of natural gas and customers of Centra Gas, and allows the government to limit price increases for 2006 and 2007. But what also happens with Bill 11 is that it also establishes the stabilization and energy fund. We do not call it an energy fund or a stabilization fund or affordable energy fund as members opposite call it. We call it a slush fund of government. Let us call it what it really is, Mr. Speaker.

Really, what its purpose is is to balance the budget of the Province and to carry out all those pet projects that members opposite have, particularly when an election looms in this province. It also is used by the government to pay for expenses outside the budget so now they do not seem to have enough revenues in the government to spend, they have to find it somewhere.

*Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

So one way of doing it is to raid Manitoba Hydro like they have done in the past. All they are doing is taking money out of Manitoba Hydro to pay for expenses that this government should be paying for out of the budget in the first place. So that is really what they are doing. There is no savings overall to Manitobans, and I have heard members opposite say there are savings. Show me where there are savings, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Manitoba Hydro is going to pay the difference. Manitoba Hydro is a utility owned by all Manitobans. Centra Gas is a utility owned by all Manitobans. The gas prices are not going to be lower in Alberta any more. They are going to stay the same. What we are faced with is having a different utility, not Centra Gas, but we are going to have a different utility subsidize the difference in the rates. All Manitobans are still going to be paying for that rate. There is no savings to Manitobans overall. I do not know where they get this. It is like taking money out of the left pocket to put it in the right pocket. It has got nothing to do with saving money and that is

how they try to paint this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is absolutely not true.

We are going to limit gas prices to certain consumers but we are going to increase Hydro rates to others to compensate. Where are the savings to Manitobans? Where are the savings? I challenge each one of them to show me where there are savings. There are none. The only way you are going to save money in terms of natural gas is to hedge the price. The minister has said they have hedged nine months in advance. Well, that is normally what Centra Gas does in any event, so of course we save money because the future price may go up over what it is today.

There are no savings to Manitobans, they are just trying to fool the public. There are no savings to Manitobans overall. The price is not coming down. Overall, it is going to be the same money out of taxpayers' pockets, out of Manitobans' pockets, whether it comes out of their pocket for natural gas bills or whether it comes out of their pockets for Hydro bills. The same amount of money is still going to be coming out of the pockets of Manitobans.

I take exception with the fact that they are taking money out of Hydro, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are more users in Manitoba Hydro than there are gas users in Manitoba and those users are going to subsidize the cost of natural gas for gas users. I read in the paper the other day that one individual who was complaining, and he should properly complain, because he thought that he was doing the right thing by switching to an energy source such as hydro, which really is considered a green energy. He was switching his heating system in his home from natural gas to hydro and he was complaining. He had a very good point. Why should he have switched from electric heat to gas heat when he is now going to be faced with subsidizing those people who heat their homes with gas? He had a very good point, a very valid point that I think members opposite should listen to.

I am really interested in seeing how the member from Wolseley is going to handle this one. In my view, he is the self-professed protector of the environment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He talks about the environment; he talks about David Suzuki and green energy and so on. Well, here we have green energy, hydro-electricity, subsidizing natural gas rates for Manitobans. What kind of message is he going to send to all Manitobans? How is he going to vote on this matter? We are going to be watching

how he votes, and he had better vote carefully, because we are going to be watching.

\* (15:30)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are certain issues that I have with respect to Hydro, and that is with the debt equity ratio that needs to be addressed. We are at about a 15 to 85 debt equity ratio and we should be at a 25 to 75. That is the benchmark. When we were in committee the other day, in Hydro, Mr. Brennan, the CEO of Manitoba Hydro, indicated now that target has been pushed back to 2011-2012. There are obviously reasons for that. One of the reasons, of course, is this government, this NDP government's raid on Manitoba Hydro again, the second time since I have been elected in this Legislature since 2002.

Hydro has a huge debt, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Chamber of Commerce indicated, as well, that Manitoba Hydro has a huge debt. When I asked Bob Brennan, the CEO, about the debt numbers, he indicated that the debt in 2005 for Manitoba Hydro is now over \$9 billion. In 1999, the Manitoba Hydro debt was only \$7.2 billion. That is an increase in debt of 25 percent, almost \$2 billion at a time when there is absolutely no capital projects that have been funded by Hydro since 1999, absolutely none. Not one capital project, not one dam was built since 1999. Not one Hydro building was built since 1999, and yet a \$1.8 billion increase in the debt of Manitoba Hydro. What is going to happen when we start building dams in this province? What is going to happen when we build the Hydro building in downtown Winnipeg? There is going to be more debt piled upon the debt we already have.

The interesting thing when I looked at some of the financial statements of Hydro, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that, when I looked at the interest rates in 1999 versus the interest rates in 2005, the interest rates in 2005 are now 2 percent, a full 2 percent below what they were in 1999. Yet Manitoba Hydro's cost of servicing that debt, the interest that they pay on that total debt, has gone from \$411 million to \$502 million. Almost a \$100-million increase in debt servicing costs to Manitoba Hydro. This is a direct result of the management of this utility by this NDP government.

That is in keeping with what I have been talking about in this Legislature to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), who is in absolute denial, but this province is in debt over \$20 billion, including that Hydro debt. He knows it. Let him look at his own

Public Accounts, page 138, if he wants to confirm that. It is in writing and he put it there in the Public Accounts statements. Manitoba Hydro makes up nearly 45 percent of Manitoba's total debt, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Another concern I had with respect to Manitoba Hydro, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we have been using export revenues to prop up the government revenues to try to balance the budget. The NDP did that in 2002 and 2003. They took \$233 million away from Hydro. It did not have the cash to pay the \$233 million. It had \$12 million in the bank. They added \$233 million to the debt of Manitoba Hydro simply to ensure that the Finance Minister would comply with balanced budget legislation. He did not have enough money to go around at a time when economic times in Manitoba should be good and revenues are increasing. He still did not have enough money to cover all of his expenditures, so he raided Manitoba Hydro for \$233 million. What was the result? Within a year and a half of that announcement, within a year and a half of taking that \$233 million out of Manitoba Hydro, they increased the hydro rates by 7.5 percent. That is the result of that dividend to the provincial coffers.

We see a parallel with this slush fund that is created in Bill 11, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That slush fund is supposed to be for natural gas subsidization, but as we see within the next year, by April 2007, Manitoba Hydro has applied for another 5 percent rate hike. A 5 percent rate hike, in spite of the fact that Manitoba Hydro should, obviously, not be used to subsidize rates for natural gas in this province.

We have to use the profits that are generated by Manitoba Hydro wisely, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Certainly, cross-subsidization from hydro into natural gas is not a wise use of Manitoba Hydro profits because of the fact that there is no decrease in gas rates whatsoever. There are no savings to Manitobans. All Manitobans will still pay the same amount for natural gas consumption and hydro consumption, except now Manitoba Hydro rates are going to go up another 5 percent by April 2007.

A full 14 percent of the power, the electrical power that is generated in Manitoba, a full 14 percent, is generated within the constituency of Lac du Bonnet, the constituency that I represent. We have six Manitoba Hydro power electric generating stations on the Winnipeg River in the constituency, and 14 percent of Manitoba's power is generated within our constituency. I can tell you, Mr. Deputy

Speaker, that Manitoba Hydro is neglecting our constituency in spite of the fact that a good deal of the energy that is generated in this province, the electrical energy that is generated in this province is generated right in that constituency.

We have drainage issues that have been created by Manitoba Hydro over the years. In fact, when they started building the dams along the Winnipeg River the first thing they did was dike a good portion of the Winnipeg River to ensure that it did not flood the farmland. They did that. What they did was change the natural drainage pattern from going in a west to easterly direction into the river, they changed it going from a west easterly direction from a south to a northerly direction. As a result of that, it created many drainage issues within the constituency. Manitoba Hydro, after building those drainages, in fact have not spent any money on drainage issues within the constituency in spite of the fact that there are trees growing in those drainage ditches and nobody is looking after them, including this NDP government.

Shoreline protection is a huge issue within the constituency because of the fact that the hydro dams generate electricity on the run of the river. If rates of flow is increased, that also increases erosion in the Pine Falls, Powerview, the Sagkeeng area, Silver Falls, Great Falls, the St. George areas and including the RM of Lac du Bonnet. That has created huge issues for the constituents in Lac du Bonnet in the sense that because of the increased flows, while they are good for Manitoba Hydro because it generates more electricity, I have no issue with that, the point is that Manitoba Hydro should be flowing some of that money back to the constituency to ensure that the problem flows, the increased flows, and the problems that those flows are creating within the constituency are looked after and shoreline protection is done for the area because acres and acres every year are falling into the Winnipeg River because of the increased flows. While, as I say, that is good for Manitoba Hydro, they should be turning some of those profits back into the constituency to ensure that the erosion issues are looked after.

It should not necessarily be going to subsidize Ralph Klein in Alberta. We should not necessarily be subsidizing rates of Centra Gas by using Manitoba Hydro as a way to do it. There are other ways of doing it, such as through general revenue. We have had \$525 million in new revenues available to the Province this year. Why do they not use of those revenues to subsidize natural gas? Is it because this

NDP has spent every nickel and then some, as usual, I ask?

Certainly, there are incredible amounts of new revenue that have been available to the Province, courtesy of the federal government, and some of those revenues could have been used to subsidize natural gas rates if they wished to do that. But to go to Hydro and use no existing government revenues, to use one utility against the other, I think is wrong.

\* (15:40)

I think a comment, an appropriate comment was made by one Ed Schreyer, the former Premier of this province of Manitoba. He called it perverse. I do not know whether they were listening or not, but the former Governor General, the former NDP Premier of this province called the cross-subsidization perverse. They were not listening, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they should be ashamed of themselves for doing what they have done.

We will be watching to see who votes for Bill 11 to see whether or not they want Hydro consumers to pay for the cost of subsidization. There is enough existing revenue within the province to cover any subsidization if they wish to do that. They chose not to do it, as I mentioned, probably because they have spent every nickel and then some on whatever programs they feel are appropriate, none of which will probably help the economy of this province as we have seen in terms of the way the economy has been performing. We have been below the national average in terms of economic growth for the last five years in this province. We are the only province in Canada to earn that distinction and, for that, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) is solely responsible for his policies that have really failed all Manitobans in terms of how the economy has performed.

With that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that members opposite have listened. They better listen because, in fact, all they are doing is playing shell games with Manitobans and not giving Manitobans all the facts. Thank you.

**Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples):** Thank you for the opportunity to put a few remarks in support of this Bill 11. It is called The Winter Heating Cost Control Act.

This bill addresses an issue that is on top of the minds of Manitobans at this time of the year, heating and the cost of heating. We all know Manitoba has a climate that demands extremely high heating

requirements and that high heating costs can cause great hardship. Natural gas is used to heat over 250 000 homes in Manitoba. These are extraordinary times and natural gas prices are at historic heights. In the past few years, the price of natural gas has been very unstable. In the past year, it doubled on international markets and remains volatile. The Public Utilities Board has said that rates for natural gas would rise by 44 percent if Centra Gas were to charge market prices.

Bill 11 would allow us to use the means Manitobans have to protect natural gas consumers from the rate shock for two years and to help all Manitobans conserve energy, reduce usage and switch off gas to renewal energy like geothermal. This protects consumers, is also environmentally sound and will help reduce emissions in the long-term. This builds on our record and the Suzuki Foundation recently rated Manitoba's climate change plan the best in Canada.

In October 2005, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the federal government announced a \$500-million program to deal with rising heating costs. This program has not been passed in the House of Commons and is now in jeopardy because of the impending winter election. Bill 11 makes sure we have the tools to help Manitobans without this important federal support.

The Tories have been critical of this bill. They call it cross-subsidization, and they are stuck in the previous era. Today there is a looming crisis in heating costs, and they are willing to let seniors, middle class, middle income and so forth be disciplined by rate shock and abandoned to the out-of-control market of natural gas. This is the same ideology they were blinded by when they privatized MTS and sold it to their friends. Rates went up 68 percent.

It seems the Tories would have us send more of our money to Alberta for natural gas. We would rather invest that money in Manitoba through Manitoba Hydro programs for better insulated homes, geothermal, wind, biodiesel, new dams developed in the North and the long-term stability of Hydro. The Tories have also flip-flopped. The Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) asked why the bill eschewed general revenue or taxpayers' money. Before the bill was introduced, the Member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) called for business and non-profit to be protected from rate hikes. The bill does that, but now she opposes it.

The Leader of the Liberal Party has been critical of this bill and has suggested Manitobans should pay market rates, yet even the federal Liberals have acknowledged that people need protection from gas prices. In the past year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the price of natural gas has become inherently unstable. The price is set on the international market. As a fossil fuel, it is non-renewable and can become subject to shortness of supply like regular gasoline, driving up the price. We saw that happen after Hurricane Katrina.

Whereas the price of natural gas averaged \$2 per gigajoules in the 1990s, in recent years prices rose to the \$10 to \$15 per gigajoules range. All this adds up to the serious problem of growing volatility of the price of natural gas. Manitoba does not produce natural gas but rather must pay oil and gas companies in other provinces, usually Alberta, for that fuel, producing a net drain on the economy. Natural gas is a fossil fuel which produces CO2 which contributes to climate change, harming the environment.

Bill 11 is the cornerstone of our strategy to deal with natural gas spikes. Part 1 of the bill protects Centra Gas customers from rate shock by preventing rate increases during the winter heating season, usually from November 1 to April 30, during this year 2005 to 2006 and next year 2006 to 2007. It also allows the government to prevent rates from spiking between seasons. This provides time for Manitobans to plan for a long-term solution.

Part 2 of the bill creates a stabilization and affordability fund at Manitoba Hydro. The purpose of the fund is to help all Manitobans control and reduce their heating costs by conservation, efficiency and switching to renewable clean energy alternatives. The fund would be administered by Manitoba Hydro and not the government, and any revenue that is needed will come from a percentage of Hydro's strong export profits. This year, Hydro's export profits will be over \$300 million.

In Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have the lowest rates of electricity in North America. Our industrial rate is very low, only half of Ontario's rate. Hydro withdrew its electric rate increase in October 2005. This has helped people against the double whammy already applied by volatile gasoline and natural gas prices.

\* (15:50)

What kind of benefits would Manitoba experience from the stabilization and affordable energy fund at Manitoba Hydro? This fund provides for Manitoba Hydro to dedicate some of its increased electricity export revenues this year and next to an internal fund established for the purpose of increasing efficiency and conservation alternatives to natural gas, and to ensuring customer costs do not surge out of control, but remain well managed. The fund is needed, because it ensures that support is in place in time for those Manitobans and Manitoba homes and businesses, which need to move quickly, to invest in efficiency and heating alternatives.

I ask members opposite, I encourage them to support this bill as it will be a win-win-win situation for all Manitobans. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert):** Mr. Speaker, I stand to speak to this bill, in favour of this bill and offer my support for it. When I took a look at the bill, I just wanted to kind of give a bit of a context for the House as to what the bill says. It talks about "WHEREAS Centra Gas makes no profit on the sale of natural gas commodity to its Manitoba customers but only passes on to them the costs it incurs in purchasing natural gas."

That is one of the first statements in the bill, and I think that bodes very well for Manitoba. It also talks to the fact that our Centra Gas is not actually making money. We are not doing this at a profit. Gas is actually just offered at the cost that we bring it in at, and that, I think, is something that bears mention as we look at this bill because that is probably one of the cruxes that this bill is based on. If there was profit being made in this bill, then we would be able to take a look at that profit and look at whether or not that profit could offset the costs. Since that is not the case here, we have to take a look at a different system.

This bill addresses something that I think many members have heard about, and I know when I talk to members of Parliament, they say that they have heard a lot about, "That is the cost of home heating." When you take a look at natural gas, which is a non-renewable resource, as is the gas that we run our cars on, the issue for us, Mr. Speaker, it is that natural gas and the use of natural gas is not an option. When people take a look at their cars, often their use of their cars is something that they can defer or use a different manner of transportation. So they can sometimes take a look at the use of their car and decide whether or not they want to expend that cost

in terms of using their car. That is not the case for natural gas.

We have a climate here, which many of us can attest, even over the last couple of weeks, although it has been very nice, it has sometimes gone down to minus 23 or minus 25 with the wind chill. We know that climate is cold. That means that we do not have an option in terms of whether we use natural gas or not. We can look at other ways of heating our homes, but we definitely have to use natural gas.

Natural gas is used to heat over 230 000 homes in Manitoba. We know that natural gas, just the same as gas we put in our cars, is at a historically high level. Over the last few years we have seen that gas prices have been very unstable, and we actually see that happening even right now. We see the prices going up sometimes, and it is something we cannot predict. Then all of a sudden it will go down, so it is very hard for people to take a look at their budget and be able to decide how much they are going to have to spend when they are looking at their utilities. In the Public Utilities Board, they have said that the rates for natural gas could rise as much as 44 percent if Centra Gas were to charge market prices. Bill 11 would allow us to use the means that Manitobans have to protect natural gas consumers from the kinds of shocks that they would get with the rates.

Manitobans are leaders in terms of conserving energy, reducing their use and switching off gas to renewable energy like geothermal. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to just talk about the fact that we have been very, very environmentally sound. The David Suzuki Foundation recently rated Manitoba's climate change plan as the best in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the federal government announced a \$500-million program in October of 2005 to deal with the rising heat costs. The problem, as we all know, is that this program may never come to see the light of day. The program has not been passed in the House of Commons, and it is now in jeopardy because we know that winter is coming and with this winter probably we are going to have a winter election. Bill 11 takes care of the individuals here in Manitoba for the next two years.

I know that the Tories have been quite critical of this bill. They have talked about this bill in terms of it being a cross-subsidization. I think that they have to take a look at the people that they have in their own constituency and they have to see whether or not those people are concerned with the looming crisis in heating costs. I know that for many of the

people in my constituency this is a concern, and it is a concern that I hear at the doorstep.

I think that, when you take a look at MTS and the sale of MTS that was not considered favourable by a lot of the Manitobans here, and I think that when we take a look at the rates that were changed, those changes saw MTS and Manitoba Telephone System have a 68 percent increase.

I also wanted to talk about the fact that the Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) has asked why this bill did not use general revenue and taxpayers' money. Before the bill was introduced, that is not something that we wanted to take a look at. We wanted to realize the fact that we do have electricity here and we wanted to take a look at the general revenue that electricity provides for us.

I also wanted to talk, Mr. Speaker, about the fact that this bill, Bill 11, is really important to our overall strategy. It is part of a bigger picture. It is not a sort of a stand-alone bill, which is how the Tories are considering it. Rather, it provides for a stabilization and affordability fund at Manitoba Hydro. The purpose of this fund is to help all Manitobans control and reduce their heating costs by conservation, efficiencies and switching to renewable, clean energy alternatives.

Our actions, Mr. Speaker, over the last little while, have made it so that Manitoba Hydro has been very prudent in hedging and storing gas, and it makes it so that Manitoba homes and businesses have \$120 million for this winter season. The Public Utilities Board has approved a 6.3 percent increase for residential customers, effective November 1. This is lower than other provinces. In Saskatchewan, we see that their increase is 10 percent; in British Columbia, the increase is 13 percent.

Mr. Speaker, for many of the people in Manitoba, they have taken advantage of the kinds of programs that we have, programs that will allow you, for example, if you are a residential customer, to have a Manitoba Hydro loan at 6 percent, to borrow up to \$15,000 to install a heat pump system. Just in terms of a heat pump system, Manitoba is one of the leading provinces across Canada in terms of the use of geothermal power.

I just want to give you some idea of some of the places that have been looking at geothermal and have been using that. The Rosedale Hutterite Colony has been using geothermal heat pumps. In November of 2003, we saw the northern schools make use of

geothermal heat pumps. Also, the electrical museum had a building retrofit with a Power Smart exhibit, and the Calvary Baptist temple has benefited from heat pump system.

Heat pumps, I think, a lot of members may or may not be aware, they can cut costs by up to 65 percent. So that is something that people are taking a look, and many new homeowners are going to be benefiting from that. In particular, when we look at Waverley West, this new subdivision is going to be using heat pumps. So the introduction there of heat pumps into the subdivision is going to cut the costs for heating homes drastically.

\* (16:00)

Mr. Speaker, I want to just talk about the fact that the PUB, as mentioned in the bill, has suggested to us that, whereas the Province of Manitoba and the Public Utilities Board consider that the hardship that Centra Gas customers experience from escalating natural gas prices can be alleviated somewhat by deferring price increases, I think the other thing we want to highlight is the fact that this is going to allow customers some time to take a look at some of the other programs that are out there so that they can do things like insulate their home, like install geothermal pumps. That will allow us to have a better heating system in homes, thereby allowing customers to pay less for their gas costs.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted just to talk for a minute about the fact that Manitoba is a leader as well in some of the other kinds of energy that we have, things like wind power. This is something that is new here to Manitoba. The wind power that is being produced at St. Leon is just going to be amazing. It is going to produce 99 megawatts of wind power that can be used in terms of lowering our electricity costs because that will be power that can be exported on the export market.

I just wanted to mention, Mr. Speaker, that Bill 11 would assist us in working with community groups to ensure that low income homes and neighbourhoods are better able to reduce their heat loss and have greater access to alternatives. I know that the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) talked about the fact that we have an older housing stock here in Winnipeg, and I think that is important to keep in mind that here in Winnipeg we are probably more impacted by the cost of gas because a lot of our homes are older.

With older homes, Mr. Speaker, you have a sort of a lower efficiency in terms of insulation, so often homes that would be rated higher in a new home, that is not the case. Older homes are not as airtight as the new homes, so you often see that older homes pay a lot more money for gas costs. Keeping in mind that Winnipeg has an older home stock, that is why it is very important for us to make sure that Winnipeggers and Manitobans are not impacted by the changes that are happening on the natural gas prices, which in a lot of ways resulted from some of the changes that we see in our environment.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that we are now actually into the Greek alphabet when you take a look at some of the hurricanes that have taken place across the world. In particular it was the hurricane, Katrina, that had a big impact on the amount of gas that is being refined. So when you take a look at that, you can see why it is very important that Manitobans have an ability to use the hedging fund so that we can have lower gas costs.

Mr. Speaker, I also just wanted to mention that our electrical costs are some of the lowest rates in North America. Our industrial rate is very low. We only pay half of what Ontario's rates are, and Hydro withdrew its electric rate increases in October of 2005. That is important to put on the record because the members opposite are often talking about Hydro and how it is not being used to the best of its advantage.

I do not believe that is true, Mr. Speaker, I think the NDP has a vision for Manitoba Hydro as was mentioned in the Public Utilities Board hearings. I think that that bodes well for Manitoba. With those few remarks, once again, I wanted to say that I am in favour of this bill and I look forward to seeing it go through. Thank you.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable Member for River East—

**An Honourable Member:** Rossmere.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Rossmere.

**Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere):** I would like to speak to Bill 11, The Winter Heating Cost Control Act, and I would like to say a few words on this bill. The bill prohibits any further increases in natural gas prices for customers of Centra Gas during the 2005 and '06 winter heating season and allows the government to limit such price increases also in 2006 and '07. The bill also requires Manitoba Hydro to

establish a stabilization and affordable energy fund. That is the bill in a nutshell.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) speak on this bill. The other Tories, for some reason, I have not heard speak at all. They usually say they want to debate something and, at this point, very little has been said except in Question Period, but they have not really debated it. We heard the member from Lac du Bonnet talk about debt and so forth. Well, they do not stand on high moral ground when it comes to debt. I just think of Mulroney, and the reason I did is because he has been on TV recently. Yes, on Sunday night or Monday night there was a documentary on Mulroney so I just happened to think of him. He left the largest debt in the history of our country. He even beat Jean Chrétien and Pierre Trudeau.

So, here, they talk about debt. It is a scare tactic and, of course, I think of Grant Devine. I never hear these people talk about Grant Devine at all, you know, or Harris from Ontario. Well, they left their share of debt all over this country and we are still paying for it. We are still paying for it.

As I heard the member from Lac du Bonnet speak, I realized they are really out of touch. It is 2005 and, as people have said, this is not 1895. If they were in power, probably they would sell Hydro like they did MTS. Their whole policy on Crown corporations, on energy and so forth does not amount to much. Their policies do not amount to much. They have not built a hydro dam in years, decades. They built no wind farms. They had really no energy saving programs where we have moved ahead on energy.

Remember, we had an old arena here and we wanted to have a new one. The Tories went into all kinds of conferences, you know, talking about how to build an arena. I remember Filmon was working on it and Stefan was working on the arena. Well, they built no arena. We get in and we build one. That is just an example of we are the builders. I could give you many more examples of where we are the builders. They are not the builders.

There are just a few comments I wanted to put on the record here, all right, Mr. Speaker. This bill addresses an issue that is top on the minds of Manitobans. I have had some phone calls on our policies and how we are going to address the rise of natural gas in our province. We all know Manitoba has a climate that demands extremely high heating requirements and high heating costs can cause

hardships for many families. That is what we are going to alleviate. We know natural gas is used to heat over 230 000 homes in Manitoba.

These are extraordinary times. Natural gas prices are at a historic height. In the past few years, the price of natural gas has been very unstable and in the past year, it doubled on international markets and remains volatile. The Public Utilities Board has said that rates for natural gas would rise by 44 percent if Centra Gas would have changed to market price.

\* (16:10)

Mr. Speaker, when I think of this, I think of where I grew up on the farm, and the cost of energy was a high cost for my family. Governments in those days never thought of alleviating the cost of heating for our homes. You live out in those prairies, where temperatures are extremely high, you need some sort of support for families that cannot afford the fuel prices of today. I appreciate that the government is moving in this direction of helping homes.

**An Honourable Member:** We are waiting for the punch line.

**Mr. Schellenberg:** They are waiting for the punch line. Well, it is coming. Bill 11 would allow us to use the means availed to us to protect natural gas consumers from rate shock for two years and help all Manitobans conserve energy, reduce their usage and switch off gas to renewable energy like geothermal. We do have a plan. Now, we do not just rely on natural gas, but we have other forms of energy we are developing.

The federal heating program seems to be in jeopardy right now. The federal government announced a large program in October 2005 to deal with rising heating costs. This program has not been passed in the House of Commons. It is now in jeopardy because of the impending winter election. Bill 11 makes sure we have the tools to help Manitobans without federal support.

I know Ralph Klein sends a cheque for \$400 to all the homes in Alberta, and he started to deregulate gas prices in Alberta and he got into some trouble. He was under tremendous heat to subsidize right in Alberta, and what he used is money from royalties from gas and oil and so forth. So he is using money from fossil fuels to support, to subsidize the heating of homes in Alberta. And what we are using here is the export sales, the extra profits that we are using to help homeowners. And Hydro belongs to all Manitobans. If the Tories were in power, it would

probably be privatized, and we would not have this revenue coming in. It would be much like MTS where the prices just go sky-high.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, the Tories have been critical of this bill, and they are stuck in a sort of previous era. There is a looming crisis in heating costs, and they are willing to let seniors and poor people and working people suffer out there. Actually, their ideology here towards this bill is very similar to a privatized MTS. They do not think of the consumer. They think of profits and today in Question Period on health care and so forth, on the MRI, it is always profit, always profit. That is what they look for. They do not think of the consumer that really needs support.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, I have not heard any strategy or any agenda of how the Tories, or even the Liberals, would respond to this.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 11 is a cornerstone of our strategy to deal with the natural gas spikes. Bill 11 has two parts to it. The first, it protects Centra Gas customers from the rate shock by preventing rate increases in the winter heating season. That is one. The second part is it creates a stabilization of the affordable fund at Manitoba Hydro. The purpose of the fund is to help all Manitobans control and reduce their heating costs by conservation, efficiency, and switching to renewable, clean energy alternatives. The fund will be administered by Manitoba Hydro, not the government, and any revenue that is needed will come from a percentage of Hydro's strong export profits. It will not increase the cost of hydro to the consumers. This comes from the extra profits. This year Hydro's export profits will be over \$300 million. It is a job well done.

Also, I want to point out we do have very sound policies for our Crown corporations. We use them to support consumers. The profits of all the Crown corporations go back to the consumers. The Tories, of course, think of knocking them off, making a few bucks quick.

I will just say something about the low interest rates here. We have the lowest rates in North America. Our industrial rate is very low, only half of Ontario's rate. Hydro withdrew its electric rate increases in October 2005. This is how people, again, the double-whammy already applied by volatile gasoline and natural gas prices. So we have done something to keep the rates fairly stable.

I have already mentioned this, but we have created the stabilization and affordable energy fund. The fund provides for Manitoba Hydro to dedicate some increased electricity export revenue in this year and next to an internal fund. The fund is needed because it ensures that support is in place in time for those Manitoba homes and businesses which need to move quickly to invest in efficient heating alternatives.

Also, I would like to comment on our Power Smart program. Power Smart is now a leader in North America, has done a lot and will be doing more. Manitoba Hydro and this government had the foresight to expand Power Smart's residential efficiency program. Manitobans have responded in a very enthusiastic way. Manitoba has gone from ninth to first place in energy conservation. In a few years, Manitoba has risen from its former ninth place standing in terms of Canadian energy-efficiency activities to its first place position. At the last ranking, we were first, yes, in Canada.

In the last three years, more than 70 000 Manitobans have participated in the Power Smart program. The residential loan program helped support more than \$70-million worth of home renovations, saving Manitoba's energy, reducing home-heating bills, boosting local employment at the same time. So our Power Smart program is really well received by our public and doing very well.

Another area we have moved into is geothermal. The geothermal earth energy heating is much cheaper to operate than natural gas with no pollution and is known as a ground-source heat pump. This amazing technology harnesses the earth's energy to provide heat to homes, schools, offices, ice rinks, arenas. I recently was at the Canadian Mennonite University's opening of their new residence. What they spoke about is geothermal heating. Manitoba is a leader in geothermal heating. So what we are doing is we are diversifying our sources of energy.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

\* (16:20)

We have also expanded into wind energy. We are committed to alternatives. Manitoba Hydro has also chosen to back up its hydro power with wind instead of natural gas. One thousand megawatts of wind will be developed over the next 10 years. The first 100 megawatts of wind turbines are spinning right now in St. Leon. It is very much appreciated by the farmers and the total community. I think

someone else spoke about this recently here, or today in this Legislature, and I think many of the rural MLAs here from the opposition would love to have some of these wind farms right in their area.

Also, we have done a lot in the development of hydro dams. In the eighties we built Limestone and it has done very well. A lot of our export sales comes from the profits of Limestone. But, also, we are looking at building new hydro dams. Just two examples would be Wuskwatim and Conawapa. So we are looking towards the development of hydro dams.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but I support this bill because it protects Manitobans. It protects our consumers of energy, especially natural gas. I, therefore, hope to hear more people speak on it, people from the opposition. I think this is a good deal for all Manitobans. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay, seeing no other speakers, this bill will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) when this matter comes back to the House.

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, would you please call second readings, Bills 16 and 17?

## SECOND READINGS

### Bill 16—The Corporations Amendment Act

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), that Bill 16, The Corporations Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les corporations, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, The Corporations Act is the principal statute governing private companies in Manitoba. With these amendments, Manitoba is modernizing its corporate law in order to remain competitive with other jurisdictions, principally the federal jurisdiction. We have consulted with representatives of the legal profession and Manitoba business, and we believe that we have identified the key amendments that are required.

Prior to 2001, both the federal and Manitoba statutes required a company that was intending to provide certain types of financial assistance to satisfy a financial test as to its net worth. The federal government eliminated this test in 2001. We are

satisfied that sufficient safeguards exist in The Corporations Act and other statutes to address cases of financial assistance improperly granted, and there is no need for an arbitrary net worth test. The bill therefore will repeal this financial test.

Prior to 2001, both the federal and Manitoba statutes required a majority of the members of a corporation's board of directors to be Canadian residents. Recognizing a more global economy and the need to attract foreign investment the federal government reduced its quota to 25 percent in 2001. Most other provinces have a 25 percent or zero percent quota. The bill therefore reduces the proportion of members of a board of directors that must be residents of Canada to 25 percent.

Litigation on issues concerning corporate governance has become more prevalent in recent years, and it has become important to properly define the standard that corporate directors have to satisfy. In 2001, the federal government clarified that directors who have exercised the care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would have exercised in comparable circumstances will not be liable for certain debts of corporations that The Corporations Act otherwise exposes them to. We concur in the view that directors who demonstrate this standard of due diligence are not guilty of corporate misconduct.

The bill also strengthens the enforcement provisions under The Corporations Act. Corporations which fail to have any directors or maintain their required quota of Canadian resident directors will be dissolved by the director of the Companies Office. Moreover, directors who try to avoid their obligations by resigning as directors, but continue to manage those companies behind the scenes, or other persons who exercise the powers of directors behind the scenes will be caught by new provisions which deem them to be directors for the purpose of their duties and obligations under the act.

The bill also contains provisions to facilitate electronic commerce within corporations, including participation in shareholders' meetings by electronic means. This will help shareholders who cannot physically attend those meetings maintain direct involvement in corporate decisions that affect their investment in the company without having to appoint a proxy.

The bill includes various administrative amendments such as those allowing the company's office director the power to set the forms to be filed

with him under the act as opposed to having those forms being set by regulation as they are today, and clarifying and expanding the power to correct documents when errors have been committed.

Mr. Speaker, with these comments, I am pleased to present this bill for your consideration and consideration of the Legislature. Thank you.

**Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler), that this debate now be adjourned.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### **Bill 17—The Securities Amendment Act**

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Macintosh), that Bill 17, The Securities Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les valeurs mobilières, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, this government has been actively working with our counterparts to harmonize securities law requirements across Canada to make it easier to do business here and across Canada. At the same time, it is important that the streamlining and harmonization does not sacrifice investor protection. This bill furthers this goal and, in fact, will enhance protections for the investing public.

Mr. Speaker, this bill introduces amendments to the harmonizing of securities law requirements for that of other Canadian provinces and territories. Among the amendments are repeals of current provisions in the act which are outdated and have been replaced with rules which have harmonized requirements across Canada. This bill also includes new provisions for the Securities Commission to delegate powers to other securities regulators and accept delegations of power from other securities regulators. These new provisions will provide tools to enhance the operation of the passport system and for further future streamlining as the need arises.

More importantly, Mr. Speaker, this bill enhances investor protection. One of the greatest concerns investors have right now is that the information about public companies is accurate and available on a timely basis. That is why this bill will now make it easier for investors to take court action for a public company that makes misrepresentations

in written or oral statements or fails to make timely disclosure of material changes.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, this bill gives investors new statutory rights when they buy securities relying on an offering memorandum allowing investors to have their money returned or to sue for damages when the offering memorandum contains misrepresentations. This bill also provides more tools for the Securities Commission and the courts to protect the public. Manitoba already leads the country in having given the Securities Commission the power to make orders to compensate for financial losses. The Securities Commission will also now have a new enforcement tool. Amendments are proposed to give the Securities Commission the ability to prevent individuals who violate securities laws from acting as directors or officers of public companies.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this bill contains amendments increasing the maximum fine a judge can order for the breaches of The Securities Act from \$1 million to \$5 million, sending a clear message that offences in our capital markets and the protection of investors are taken very seriously in Manitoba. With these comments, I am pleased to present this bill for consideration.

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Portage (Mr. Faurshou), that we adjourn debate.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, would you please call the debate on second readings, Bills 15, 12 and 13?

\* (16:30)

#### **DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS**

##### **Bill 15—The Emergency Measures Amendment Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** Resume debate on second reading, Bill 15, The Emergency Measures Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina? *[Agreed]*

Speakers? No.

### **Bill 12—The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** I will now call Bill 12, The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck)

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina? Stand? *[Agreed]*

It will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina.

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand up and put some comments on the record about Bill 12, The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act.

Now, it is not that often that I get up and quote a sixties song in terms of a bill. I am glad to see that the opposition members are paying attention and waiting for their epiphany, as we have heard, but, indeed, if there is any song that is appropriate for the bill, it is, of course, the one-hit wonders, the Five Man Electrical Band, who had their very famous song called, "Signs." Of course, the chorus of that song went, "Sign, sign, everywhere a sign, / Messing up the scenery, messing my mind." That certainly is the inspiration for a wise piece of legislation which is going to accomplish two things: it is going to provide improvements to the process for removal of unauthorized structures from provincial highways; and it is also going to provide an update to the outdated penalty provisions of this act.

With regard to the process for the removal of unauthorized structures, primarily signs or other structures, these proposed amendments will allow the department of highways to respond quickly and respond effectively to those signs and structures placed illegally on or by the side of provincial highways.

Illegal signs and structures and highway rights-of-way often pose a threat to public safety due to their design characteristics, their inappropriate placement and sometimes even the construction materials used for the sign and it can create a number of problems, problems for motorist visibility, especially if they are placed near bends in the road, near intersections. They can create problems for highway maintenance crews in terms of keeping the weeds cut or the snow ploughed. There can be a problem for the general traffic safety of on-road and

off-road vehicles, including off-road vehicles and snowmobiles.

Now, the act, as it now stands, prohibits the placing of materials and structures on a departmental road except as permitted in the act or with the consent of the minister. But the problem, Mr. Speaker, is that the current process for removal of those unauthorized signs and other materials is based on whether the minister knows who owns the object, not whether it was authorized to be there in the first place. Unfortunately, as the law now stands and has stood for some time, it is only after the owner has been given a notice to remove the object and time to remove and then fails to comply that the department can take action to remove the unauthorized sign, and certainly this is quite generous, given that the material was not supposed to be there in the first place. So the proposed amendments simplify and reorient the process to focus on whether the material or structure is authorized for placement in the first place.

So, Mr. Speaker, this amendment would provide that, where an object is placed without the required permission, an authorized employee from the department can then give a verbal direction to remove the sign immediately or by a specified date; and, if the owner does not comply, these amendments would allow the object to be removed without further notice, without having to take any steps with respect to the owner of the sign. Now, where the object has been authorized for placement, formal notice to repair or remove the object will be given before any action is taken.

Now, one of the other good things is this bill will provide new authority to authorize the department to remove immediately any unauthorized sign, any unauthorized structure without notice when the object poses an immediate threat to the safety of users of the highway and the right-of-way, so clearly is it common sense, Mr. Speaker.

The amendments were developed in response to numerous complaints from the public, requests from municipalities to deal with the increasing number of signs cluttering provincial highway rights-of-way, and certainly, comments from highways employees who, certainly, as I have indicated before, have some problems with unauthorized signs being provided.

Now, in discussing this with the Minister of Transportation and Government Services (Mr. Lemieux), I understand highway staff are very patient, and I am assured they will continue to be

very patient with individuals who place signs, but they will be able to take steps to remove unauthorized structures for the safety of all of us driving on Manitoba's highways.

Now, as I have said, the intention is that highway staff would be patient. The intention is that Manitobans will comply with these requirements, but if they do not there will be work done on the bill to update the penalty provisions of the act.

Now, the penalty provisions have not been revised since the mid-1960s, and as a result 1960s prices provide that most offences have a minimum fine of \$5 and a maximum fine of only \$50. The general penalty provision provides for a maximum fine of only \$25. These fine amounts in today's dollars are unfortunately completely lacking in any deterrent value to persons who commit violations under this act. In fact, you would find that some individuals who put signs on highways may simply consider a \$25 fine to be a cost of doing business but doing business in a way which could potentially endanger Manitobans.

So to this end the department is proposing the maximum fine for offences under this act be increased from \$50 to \$2,000. Minimum fines will be eliminated to give judges some discretion, and, again, as we modernize the act, imprisonment for signs will be removed as a sentencing option. These changes will bring the penalty provisions in line with those under The Highway Traffic Act and The Off-Road Vehicles Act as we standardize penalty provisions. So it is anticipated that the threat of a significant fine will assist in gaining greater co-operation, and we hope that will be the situation respecting signs and structures on the highway right of way. The amendments addressed under this bill will ensure that the department can respond quickly and effectively to the placement of illegal signs and structures on highways for the protection of all users.

Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to get up and talk about how this government is a government for all Manitobans. While we are on the theme of highways and transportation, even though I am a city resident and represent Minto constituency, certainly I enjoy travelling outside of the city of Winnipeg, and certainly I am concerned about our highways. I was very pleased to see a news release just a couple of days ago from Transportation and Government Services dealing with a fall advertising schedule for the 2006 construction season.

Certainly, I know that members of the opposition enjoy spreading their rumours and untruths around the province, as the Premier (Mr. Doer) sometimes says, swaggering into the coffee shops, so I thought let us do a little bit of a test on how fair this government is for all Manitobans. Indeed, if you look through the fall advertising schedule, there are somewhere in the range of 46 projects which is only part of the construction schedule for 2006, but, as the minister had promised, these are being tendered as early as possible so that construction companies can make their plans for next year earlier than ever before.

With the help of the highway map provided to me by the Member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff), I had a chance to go through these various construction projects. Indeed, when you add them all up, I see that 24 of them are in areas which are represented, at least for the short term, by members of the Progressive Conservative Party, and 22 of them are in areas represented by New Democrats. I know that the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) can go back to sleep because indeed none of them are in areas represented by Liberals because, of course, the Liberals do not have any members outside of the Perimeter because they have no plans for anything outside of the Perimeter.

So, anyway, we do indeed have a government interested in all Manitobans. I know that, when some of the opposition members strut around their constituencies, as they do, complaining that the provincial government is not adequately addressing their needs, I can certainly point to this press release and certainly point to the proposed fall advertising schedule to show that this government, unlike the Filmon government before it, is interested in building highways in all parts of this province. *[interjection]* Well, here is the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) with the four-lane highway going all the way to his door, and he is certainly pleased with the highways in his area.

But there are all kinds of things that we can learn. Even last night at committee I had the opportunity to learn a few things that I did not know before. Quite interesting, we had an individual who came out and talked about the bridge and road project which now connects the community of Cross Lake in northern Manitoba to the provincial highway system. This was in the context of the committee hearing, but it was certainly interesting to hear what he had to say.

\* (16:40)

This individual described in some detail the award-winning bridge which is now connecting the community of Cross Lake, with a population of some 5000 people, now hooked up all year round to the provincial highway system. The project is a bridge, which is a quarter of a kilometre in length, which spans the historic and important Nelson River. I understood last night from his presentation that the project planning involved public consultation meetings with the local Aboriginal community, and the location of the bridge, the route for the new roadway were selected with a number of different considerations, including accommodating traplines to provide a minimum disruption for residents, to avoid Aboriginal sites of significance and to best meet the needs and the desires of the community.

I understood from this individual that from the original design, one span of this bridge was lengthened to allow for snowmobiles to pass under the bridge along the north side of the river which is not always frozen and otherwise would not allow passage. Indeed, after consulting with the community, the bridge provides vertical clearance to ensure even with snowpack and drifts, there would be no danger to snowmobile traffic travelling under the bridge. Of course, the Cross Lake ferry is no longer necessary. Indeed, the abandoned ferry site is now a picnic area for travellers.

Now, we also heard the bridge may attract increased human activity in the future, so the design was to change to allow for a future sidewalk and lighting on the bridge, have lighting conduits that, in careful consideration, are located in the upstream side of the bridge so that the sidewalk can be in the downstream side to allow the locals to fish off the bridge. The local community of Cross Lake loves to fish, and it does not work well, we learn, to cast on the upstream side. All of those are human factors, but there are certainly factors you can take into account if you are a highways department and a government which listens to people. If you consult with people and listen to their needs, you can certainly make some sometimes minor, but certainly important, changes in infrastructure.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am certainly pleased that we have a bill which is going to modernize The Highways and Transportation Amendment Act to improve the safety for all of us who travel on Manitoba's highways. I have also appreciated the chance to put a few words on the record on this

government's effort to continue to govern for all Manitobans. So, with those words, I will sit down. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Speaker:** When this matter is again before the House, it will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

#### **Bill 13—The Conservation Districts Amendment Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** I will now call Bill 13, The Conservation Districts Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie, who has 10 minutes remaining.

**Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity once again to continue with remarks regarding Bill 13, The Conservation Districts Amendment Act. I want to apologize to you, the Speaker, in regard to my raising of a newspaper article which I was referring to. Yes, indeed, we do have rules of the House that we must respect in regard to exhibits. But I do get a little bit enthusiastic in regard to the topic of water and the role that the conservation districts do play in that.

I was just listening very intently to the honourable member's remarks from Minto. He started out with a quote from a song. This government truly reminds me, in a similar fashion, but it is not the song which he quoted from. The mid-seventies song that was sung by Trooper that was entitled "Three Dressed Up as a Nine," I think that this government in its policies and how it releases all of its policies is really truly trying to exhibit a nine in the public's mind, but really addressing the issue only on perhaps a category of a three. That, I am afraid, is unacceptable to Manitobans in general.

I look to some of the remarks that fit into this particular line of thinking that was stated two days ago by the Minister of Water Stewardship (Mr. Ashton), when he stated that this government was truly supportive of the conservation districts operating here in the province of Manitoba, numbering now 17, up from the 9 that were in operation in 1999 when the previous administration left government.

But I want to put on to the record that those nine conservation districts were supported by government in a very, very good fashion financially. The nine conservation districts received \$2.57 million for their operations. Today, if we were to look at those same

nine in today's dollars, with inflation considered, that would be \$3.06 million. Let us just now look at the, it is now 17 operating conservation districts. Yes, there has been a bump up, but up until just a few months ago their budget was \$3.9 million. So you almost double the number of conservation districts, so in one's train of thought, if there was a doubling of the number of conservation districts operating in the province, should not the budget by this government double as well? But, in that case, then the budget should be in excess of \$6 million. Yet, even with the bump up, only \$4.2 million is slated for supporting of conservation districts operations here in the province of Manitoba. I think that really tells the true story of the level of consideration that this government has towards the valuable work that conservation districts provide to Manitobans throughout our province.

I left off with my remarks in regard to the climate change and that this government spends more than \$1 million a year trying to keep the government departments apprised of climate change and the impact to which climate change has on the various responsibilities throughout government and the varied departments. Now, you would think that with that type of support—and I know that the Premier (Mr. Doer) is off to Montreal very shortly to team with Premier Jean Charest from Québec to host on December 5 and 6 a world congress on climate change and leaders from around the world will be gathering in Montreal to discuss this issue and the impact that it will have throughout the globe.

Now, with that type of recognition of climate change, you would be certain that a government would be looking to prepare Manitoba for the very serious impacts that a climate change will have upon this province, and with the potential drought conditions that come with climate change, one would expect every and all effort to be put in place to store water. Yet most of the expenditures that the government right now is making is actually to enhance the water travel to salt water through the water courses as the Red River and Assiniboine River in the southern part of our province. I believe that the government is making a fundamental error in not looking at the water courses that are tributaries to these two main rivers in southern Manitoba and attempting to store water at every cost-effective juncture within those water courses, and I want to compliment the New Democratic Party under the direction of the previous First Minister Pawley, when

the south Hespeler report was commissioned in co-operation with the federal government, that actually did an outstanding job of identifying numerous areas within southern Manitoba and their potential for water storage.

\* (16:50)

Now, the gentleman, Mr. Eugene Kostyra, who was the former Finance Minister, is now heading up the authority that is expanding the Red River floodway, but I would expect that with that knowledge, Mr. Kostyra would be encouraging this government to look to the report to which he received back in 1988 that described very, very well the need to store more water in southern Manitoba. I did raise the issue at committee just a day ago when Manitoba Hydro came before a Crown corporation standing committee. I asked about the concern they had about drought and as it pertains to climate change, and the response from Mr. Brennan, the president of Manitoba Hydro, he said that it was, indeed, of a significant concern and, yes, much more could be done and should be done in the storage of water so that this utility could make use of the water in a more controlled fashion in order to continue to generate electricity that benefits all Manitobans.

So I try to emphasize to this government the absolute paramount need to look at both of the concerns, major concerns that Manitobans face. Not only do we face the concern of inundation and flooding, but we also face the concern of drought and inadequate water for not only personal use, but livestock rely on water, crops rely on water, industry relies on water, and, yes, the burgeoning industry of tourism and recreational use of water is significant as well.

So I cannot emphasize more the importance that this government look at both sides of the ledger, not only to protect Manitobans from flood, but they must also protect Manitobans in the case of drought. I know this government recognizes the potential of drought because they are spending so much money and so much time on climate change. If that is truly the case, then I look to this government to take action. I am known, at many junctures, always to leave the government with a good suggestion based upon my dialogue here in the House, and I would like to once again encourage this government to consider construction of the Holland No. 3 dam on

the Assiniboine River just upstream from Portage la Prairie.

In fact, if one was to travel the Manitoba department of highways' No. 34 highway down through the Assiniboine Valley, that is the point on the river that the Holland No. 3 dam could be constructed and would be of benefit to all Manitobans. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** No other speakers? When this matter is again before the House, it will remain open.

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

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 24, 2005

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