

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

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The Honourable George Hickes  
Speaker*

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-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, Hon.	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.
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MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
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REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
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SALE, Tim	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
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SMITH, Scott, Hon.	Brandon West	N.D.P.
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STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.
VACANT	Kirkfield Park	

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 23, 2006

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYER

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill 202—The Health Services Amendment and Health Services Insurance Amendment Act

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Inkster, that Bill 202, The Health Services Amendment and Health Services Insurance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services de santé et la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie, be now read a first time.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, this bill provides for the use of the principle accountability in the delivery of health care services throughout Manitoba. This is a principle which the Romanow report advocated a number of years ago. It is important that we have accountability in our health care services that this bill would provide for the adoption of that principle.

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

### PETITIONS

#### Headingley Foods

**Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The owners of Headingley Foods, a small business based in Headingley, would like to sell alcohol at their store. The distance from their location to the nearest Liquor Mart, via the Trans-Canada Highway, is 9.3 kilometres. The distance to the same Liquor Mart via Roblin Boulevard is 10.8 kilometres. Their application has been rejected because their store needs to be 10 kilometres away from the Liquor Mart. It is 700 metres short of this requirement using one route but 10.8 kilometres using the other.

The majority of Headingley's population lives off Roblin Boulevard and uses Roblin Boulevard to get to and from Winnipeg rather than the

Trans-Canada Highway. Additionally, the highway route is often closed or too dangerous to travel in severe weather conditions. The majority of Headingley residents therefore travel to the Liquor Mart via Roblin Boulevard, a distance of 10.8 kilometres.

Small businesses outside Winnipeg's perimeter are vital to the prosperity of Manitoba's communities and should be supported. It is difficult for small businesses like Headingley Foods to compete with larger stores in Winnipeg, and they require added services to remain viable. Residents should be able to purchase alcohol locally rather than having to drive to the next municipality.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister charged with the administration of The Liquor Control Act (Mr. Smith), to consider allowing the owners of Headingley Foods to sell alcohol at their store, thereby supporting small business and the prosperity of rural communities in Manitoba.

This is signed by Tim Dyck, Don Lloyd, Cori Sheldon and many others.

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

### Provincial Slogan

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

That the NDP have authorized the spending of hundreds of thousands of tax dollars to promote the new slogan, "Spirited Energy."

That "Friendly Manitoba" is a better description of our province.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to consider supporting the slogan "Friendly Manitoba" over "Spirited Energy."

To urge the Premier (Mr. Doer) and his NDP caucus to make public the total cost in creating and promoting the new slogan "Spirited Energy."

This is signed by G. Ordonez, Z. Ordonez, N. Tabita and many, many other fine Manitobans.

**Mr. Speaker:** Committee Reports.

Order. The honourable Minister of Science and Technology.

**Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines):** Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to revert to Introduction of Bills.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave to revert to Introduction of Bills? *[Agreed]*

#### **Bill 7—The Real Property Amendment Act (Wind Turbines)**

**Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the members opposite for that.

I would like to move, seconded by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth (Mr. Bjornson), that Bill 7, The Real Property Amendment Act (Wind Turbines), be read a first time.

#### ***Motion presented.***

**Mr. Rondeau:** Mr. Speaker, this bill changes the Property Registry to allow it easier to register wind turbines and encourage the development of wind turbines in The Real Property Act.

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

#### **Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today Jessie Carleton and Anne Noonan. These visitors are the guests of the honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Allan).

Also in the public gallery we have with us today 12 fourth-year University of Manitoba nursing students. These students are under the direction of Linda West.

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

## **ORAL QUESTIONS**

### **Anti-Gang Initiatives Funding**

**Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Premier to cancel his taxpayer-funded, pre-election advertising campaign and redirect that money into areas of priority for Manitobans. Despite this, this week we learned that the NDP government plans to spend an additional \$800,000 of taxpayers' dollars on expanding this pre-election taxpayer-funded advertising campaign.

Last week the Premier sent the message that pre-election advertising was his priority. This week Manitobans are hearing a clear message that's it's even a higher priority than driving gangs out of our province.

Yesterday the government announced that the total budget for the Organized Crime Task Force was only going to increase next year by \$400,000; \$800,000 for pre-election advertising and now \$400,000, half that amount for fighting gangs next year.

In 2000, under this NDP government's watch, the Hells Angels set up a chapter in Manitoba. In February 2005, when the Bandidos were setting up a chapter in Winnipeg, a leading expert on biker gangs stated that gangs are targeting Winnipeg and Manitoba because it is, and I quote, a soft touch. This Premier and his Attorney General issued news release after news release announcing legislation that was supposed to, and I quote, create a hostile environment for organized crime. That was their quote. To date, by the former Attorney General's own admission, some of this legislation has never been used.

Mr. Speaker, will the government commit today to cancelling its pre-election, taxpayer-funded election advertising campaign and redirect that money into fighting organized crime in our province?

\* (13:40)

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** The member opposite would recall that the Conservatives reduced the number of RCMP officers in their '96 budget, '97 budget. The staff allocations for the RCMP, Mr. Speaker, the post-election number was below the '95-'96 budget. He also may want to pay attention to the fact that we have funded over a hundred police

officers. We have funded a special prosecutor for anti-gang activity. He will note that the amount of money for anti-gang activity is much higher than the amount of money he cited for other priorities and issues for the government.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that the work, and I would point out that some of the work and investments made by the government over the last three or four years have resulted in nine leaders in the Hells Angels being arrested. I believe eight of those individuals have pleaded guilty, if I am not mistaken, or at least a large number of them, based on the evidence gathered by the anti-gang team. Obviously, no one can rest easy any day in terms of that activity. You will note that the last two years in a row we have authorized a number of police officers, and the members opposite feign interest in crime and then they vote against additional police officers.

#### **Crown Prosecutors Work Load**

**Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Premier seems to think that they're doing a great job of fighting organized crime in Manitoba, and I would suggest to him that Manitobans would beg to differ. If you look at the results, it was the Hells Angels that moved in under this government's watch. It was the Bandidos that set up a chapter under this government's watch. Organized crime has gone up, as government advertising has gone up.

The question for the Premier is: When will they get their priorities straight, Mr. Speaker?

Now we've received information which I'll table for the House that proves what we've been saying for quite some time, which is that prosecutors in our province are grossly overworked as they struggle to put criminals behind bars where they belong. The information indicates that new prosecutors within the Department of Justice are now working with as many as 349 active cases at any given time; 349 active cases at any given time for an individual prosecutor in our Prosecutions branch.

So, while the NDP government spends \$800,000 on a pre-election advertising campaign, will the Premier cancel his pre-election advertising campaign? Will he align his priorities with the priorities of Manitobans, and will he put money into fighting crime in Manitoba?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** We are putting money into fighting crime. We've increased the number of police officers by over a hundred. Only two jurisdictions in Canada had a flattening out of gang crime activity: B.C. and Manitoba. That's still not acceptable to this government. That's why we announced additional funds yesterday. I think the police were very complimentary on some of the anti-gang activity and investments we've been making. The city of Winnipeg police ratio now is one of the highest in Canada, according to Stats Canada. There are some positions still vacant in the RCMP that we funded. We'd like those training courses to proceed more effectively.

I would point out, just to deal with prosecutors; I remember again that the members opposite had a lot less prosecutors. After an arbitration case took place, they legislated away an arbitrators' wage increase for prosecutors and rolled them down to minuses and zeros.

Now, I expect the Crown attorneys, I don't know whether they are in bargaining or in arbitration because we've given them the right to do that so they won't have to stop prosecuting if there is a dispute. We take that again as very, very important. We do note that we have lost prosecutors to other provinces, and I am certainly hopeful that while representing management in these negotiations, we do continue to have salaries that will allow us not only to recruit Crown prosecutors but retain them.

I believe the number of Crown prosecutors has gone up significantly since we have been elected. As I say, there actually are specific Crowns dedicated to the crime unit so that there can't be *[inaudible]* at 80 percent increase in the Prosecutions budget. I would point out that it is a significant increase, and that is because we do care about safety in our communities as all Manitobans do, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. McFadyen:** I do want to thank the Premier for one admission that he made in his rambling answer, and that was that caseloads are going up and workloads are going up because crime is going up in Manitoba under his watch.

In 2000, the Hells Angels moved in; in 2005, the Bandidos set up a chapter in Manitoba. We know that a government and a leader that takes concerted effort to fight crime can be successful. We've seen it in New York City, and we know that if you can beat crime in New York City, you can beat it anywhere.

The issue is that we simply have not seen the degree of willpower, the degree of effort and the degree of attention required on the part of this government to deal with what is a very serious issue. We have young people who are being brought into crime, who are dealing with issues of addiction and the drug trade in many of our communities, not just here in Winnipeg but across the province.

When I was in Dauphin a number of weeks ago, I saw the boarded-up storefronts in Dauphin. I don't know how the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), the minister, can sleep at night when he looks at what has happened to the main street of the community of Dauphin; storefront after storefront boarded up because the windows are being smashed by vandals. Crime is running rampant in this community. The mayor of Dauphin advises that they believe they have as many as eight drug operations operating out of different homes in that community, Mr. Speaker. That's one small community in our province that has rampant crime and we've got issues here in Winnipeg that we all know about, and it just has not been a priority on the part of this government.

So, Mr. Speaker, we know with these numbers that we have senior prosecutors in this province, the numbers just released today, senior prosecutors who are dealing with the most complex and sensitive cases in our justice system; murders, sexual assaults and very serious complex crimes, dealing with as many as 311 active cases at any given time. Now we know the dedication and the skill of our prosecutors, but nobody could expect that a prosecutor can be effectively dealing with 311 active files at a given time.

So when is the government going to get serious about tackling this problem which has grown up under their watch? When are they going to make it a priority? When are they going to cancel their wasteful spending on pre-election, taxpayer-funded advertising? When are they going to get serious about fighting crime for Manitobans, not just in Dauphin, not just in Winnipeg, but for our whole province?

**Mr. Doer:** I remember when the member opposite was chief of staff, he used to have a Deputy Minister of Health—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

\* (13:50)

**Mr. Doer:** The associate deputy minister was filmed on TV ads: Oh, yeah, cutting health care nurses and doctors has really improved health care here in Manitoba. It was almost like the individual was taken hostage in terms of one of those films that were going on, these grainy films that were going on, paid for by, quote, taxpayers.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out the number of police officers went down in the late '90s. The number of police officers is now up. The wages were rolled back by the government of the day.

We have respected either arbitrated settlements or negotiated settlements with the prosecutors. We are in negotiations now. The Crown prosecutors, I believe we've hired 14 additional, 17 additional Crown prosecutors, 18 new Crown prosecutors since we have been elected; seven are focussed in on the crime gang prosecutions unit. We have achieved over 300 convictions or guilty pleas involving crime and gang members since 2003.

Budget 2006 adds another five prosecutors and additional support staff because when we reviewed the Crown office when we came into office, there was an analysis that Crowns were spending way too much time on the administrative materials. They didn't have computers. They didn't have backup staff. We've also hired a number of backup staff and provided greater technical support to those Crown prosecutors so they can spend more time on prosecuting crime and less time in the office maintaining paperwork, as they had to do in the past.

#### **Crown Prosecutors Work Load**

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that in Manitoba today, senior and junior prosecutors are dealing with as many as 350 active cases at any given time. We know now why experienced and young prosecutors are leaving this province.

Benjamin Marshall was killed in an execution-style murder in November of 2001, and it took five years for this trial to begin. When the trial was supposed to begin last month, a deal was struck as a result of problems because of the disclosure of evidence. The deal was to drop the charges against one individual and allow for a parole eligibility of 12 years for the other.

I want the minister to indicate if he's asked for a review of this particular case in his department to see

if that was as a result of lack of prosecution services and resources.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I am used to members on the opposite side attacking doctors. I am used to them attacking nurses. I know they fired 1,500 nurses. I know they decreased prosecutors.

We have hired more prosecutors in our tenure in office than they did during the lean 11 years, firstly. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, Crown prosecutors are in negotiations. Thirdly, we've put in a process called the front-end review to try to reduce backlogs on cases.

We actually have the number of cases that vary: for an overall top attorney, from 17 to a high number. They took the high number; they didn't talk about the average; they didn't talk about the mean; they didn't say that some prosecutors only have 17 cases. They didn't say that. No, they have to, as usual, go to extremes.

**Mr. Goertzen:** With such a high number of caseloads being carried by prosecutors, when the minister says that more prosecutors are hired it must mean there's much more crime in Manitoba because they're dealing with such a high number of cases, Mr. Speaker.

The family of Benjamin Marshall was not advised of court cancellations. The family was not advised of problems with disclosure. They were not consulted on the plea bargain. All the consideration was given to the criminal; none was given to the victim.

There have been 14 prosecutors who have left Manitoba in the last 18 months. That's probably why they had to hire more because more are leaving, and they're dealing with staggering workloads.

Will the Minister of Justice, today, commit to an external examination of the work in the Prosecutions department in terms of the structure and the workload so we can get justice for victims and answers for families, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Firstly, Mr. Speaker, a review was done and implementation of that was put in place. One of the reasons that we have the numbers of caseloads is because we actually track every single case. We took cases that had been long term and gave them to Crown attorneys so that every Crown attorney has case management and has a case assigned to them. Did not happen during the 11 lean,

Tory years when the Hells Angels came and when the author said, because of lax government, organized crime moved into Manitoba because the government in the '90s was not taking it seriously.

We've also taken Crown attorneys and given them to the integrated crime unit of which we provided double funding for operations alone, yesterday, and which the police came out and praised us for leading the country in initiatives in crime.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Mr. Speaker, so as not to leave false information on the record, I will table for the minister the time line of when the Hells Angels came into Winnipeg, in Manitoba, which was put together by a leading expert. It's July 21 of 2000, under their watch. I would say that when prosecutors are dealing with 350 cases, there is no way they can properly do their job. We defend prosecutors because we know that they're the gatekeepers of justice. That's why we bring these issues when we reveal these numbers today.

We're saying you need to support those prosecutors; you need to support the families and you need to support the victims. It's time this Minister of Justice stopped putting out releases. When will he support prosecutors in Manitoba?

**Mr. Chomiak:** The budget for prosecutions has gone up over 80 percent. I do not know any other part of government where as much resources has been put in on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker.

A book published in 1997 said that when the best members of the Los Bravos earned Hells Angels prospect status in October 1977, they changed the complexion of Winnipeg. He also said that in Manitoba the Angels were blessed. Politicians and police had done little to put up roadblocks against the incursions the bikers had been making in the province throughout the 1990s.

Double the money to integrated crime yesterday, Mr. Speaker. Significant convictions—[interjection] He should talk to his federal Member of Parliament, who he met with yesterday, to talk about coordinating gang—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

### **Manitoba Housing Authority Security in Public Housing**

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale):** Mr. Speaker, earlier this week we learned that there has yet been another violent attack on a senior in a Manitoba Housing complex. The residents at 101 Marion are terrified of

their safety after two assailants walked right through the front door into the building and viciously assaulted and stabbed a woman in her suite. Yet, according to the department's Web site, a key component of this government's Aging in Place strategy is to allow seniors to remain safely in their communities.

I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for Seniors (Ms. Irvin-Ross): How can she say that the key focus of Aging in Place strategy is to provide safety and security for seniors who remain in their own communities when they can't even provide safety in their own Manitoba public housing?

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Family Services and Housing):** Well, Mr. Speaker, the concern of all Manitobans, including our seniors, is of vital importance to all of us. As a government, I'm reminded of a unique program in Canada called Safety Aid to help ensure that seniors are not only safe, but feel safe in their homes where they're healthier and happier. In the Throne Speech, we announced that would be expanding.

In terms of 101 Marion, I am pleased to confirm with the House that the department, MHA, has worked with the victim, and that's job one, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that she had necessary supports.

Second of all, the MHA went to work immediately to enhance the security arrangements at that building.

**Mr. Reimer:** The residents of 101 Marion have reported that 30 police visits were there in the last month. That's one a day. Once a day, police coming to this public housing unit that the Manitoba government is directly responsible for. The seniors feel, and they are rightly justified in saying that they don't feel safe in their own suites there, Mr. Speaker. This government can do lip-service, and can do all kinds of talk about what they're going to do, but the people in those units in Manitoba Housing are terrified of what's happening.

Not only in 101 Marion, but in other parts of the public housing here in Manitoba: Gilbert Park, Selkirk Park. They all are having problems with gangs, prostitution, drugs and violence, and, in particular, violence towards seniors. What is this government going to do to correct these situations?

\* (14:00)

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we on this side take no comfort from the crime statistics which show that crime fell more in Manitoba than any other province last year. That has got no meaning for individual victims. That's why it's important that we make advancements in public housing in Manitoba. At 101 Marion, there's security card access; there's closed-circuit television; there's nightly security patrols. But what the member doesn't know, because time has passed him by on this one is that—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** —meetings involving the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) and, as well, involving Housing authorities, security has been enhanced there, Mr. Speaker, 24-hour security. I should advise the member opposite that we are also looking at security on a systemic basis across all Manitoba housing. That is happening now.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Speaker, back in 2000 and 2001, I asked questions then of the Minister responsible for Housing, the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Sale). At that time the question was asked whether there was a zero tolerance involved with public housing in regard to gang activity, drug activity, assault, solicitation, use of firearms and the threat of health, safety and welfare of their tenants, whether this was in effect. The answer I got at that time was, yes, these are enforced. It's called a zero tolerance. This government says they would follow the thing. They talked the talk; they don't walk the walk. The people in public housing and the seniors in public housing are threatened. The facts are there. They're having a problem. Do something about it.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Well, Mr. Speaker, fortunately, the member missed the fact that something was done about it. In fact, it was responded to within hours. Security enhancements took place on the very next day in that particular unit.

It is important that we not only respond to public housing developments and the security concerns as they arise, but we take a longer term view, a systemic view, and make permanent changes; looking at innovative ways to enhance the safety of people living there. I remind members opposite that Manitoba Housing working with our police have done an excellent job, but there is a new kid on the block that's called the Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods team. They have shut down almost 200 drug dens, and they work with Manitoba

Housing too. That is something that Manitobans are noticing is making a difference in their housing developments and in their neighbourhoods.

### **Colorectal Cancer Avastin Accessibility**

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, 780 Manitobans will be diagnosed with colon cancer this year and 350 of them will die. Yet, Manitoba is not funding Avastin, a crucial drug in the fight against colon cancer. Dr. Ralph Wong, an oncologist at St. Boniface, told *The Globe and Mail*, and I quote: "Not only are we screwing our patients by not offering them the standard of care, . . . It makes us look like a Third World country." We find it very concerning and also very disturbing.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health why she is not funding Avastin to fight colon cancer even when doctors are recommending that drug be used.

**Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I want to share with the member opposite, and indeed all members of the House, that when individuals are living with cancer and their families are dealing with family members with cancer it is a very frightening time. It's a time that is of great concern to all Manitobans, and that's why I am very proud to announce that last year, in May of 2006, we announced a \$13.3-million fund to increase and to cover the expensive breakthrough drugs for cancer.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, this was the largest-ever increase to CancerCare, to their drug budget. It was an increase of over 130 percent. It was designed to look at issues just such as these.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Mr. Speaker, that is very cold comfort to the patients that can't get Avastin.

Cathy Miller's mom is one of 70 patients who recently had to wait up to four months to see an oncologist so she could get chemotherapy to fight her colon cancer. In a letter to the editor of *The Globe and Mail*, Cathy wrote, and I quote: I do not believe that an 11-week wait time is anything Manitoba should be proud of. The mental anguish that my family suffered those 11 weeks was unbearable. I am one Manitoban that is not proud of the medical system in this province.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health why she is spending thousands of dollars trying to convince Manitobans that health care is great here when we've got so many patients fighting for life-saving cancer treatment.

**Ms. Oswald:** Again, I'll say that any individual in Manitoba or family that is living with cancer and dealing with issues concerning cancer deserves our priority attention, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, I would assist the member in putting some correct information on the record concerning that \$13.3-million fund, a 130 percent increase to CancerCare Manitoba. We have doctors, medical doctors with expertise in the area of pharmaceuticals and treating cancers, making decisions about appropriate drugs with the families of people living with cancer; not politicians, but doctors making these really important decisions.

On the subject of people who are waiting to see oncologists, this is a very significant issue that has been dealt with actively by CancerCare Manitoba.

### **Screening**

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, Dr. Wong is an oncologist, and he is very frustrated with this government in terms of them not following through with the kinds of treatments that are needed. Hildegard Kohli, who is in the gallery today, lost her husband, Chris, to colon cancer. She feels her husband might be alive today if he had been offered a colon cancer screening test or even if he had known to ask for one.

We all know that prevention is cheaper than treatment, and we know that prevention can save lives. Instead of spending thousands of dollars trying to mislead Manitoba that our health care system is in such great shape, would she direct that money today into colon cancer screening advertising so patients know that they can ask their doctor for that kind of test here in this province? Would she set her priorities right and put it towards savings patients' lives?

**Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, there are no words you can say to an individual who has lost a loved one due to cancer, other than to say a heartfelt bit of sorrow to what that person must be going through.

Our commitment to cancer in Manitoba continues, and our commitment to health care in Manitoba continues. We are going to continue on our unprecedented investments to CancerCare Manitoba. We are going to continue with our leading-edge technology in Manitoba, the first province to have the gamma knife mentioned by *The Globe and Mail* just this week for having the shortest wait times for radiation in Manitoba. We've got work to do, but

that's why health care will be a priority on our platform and not abandoned like members opposite.

### "Spirited Energy" Advertising Campaign Costs

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, on October 19, the Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines (Mr. Rondeau) spoke at an Assiniboia Chamber of Commerce event. At this event he spoke about "Spirited Energy" recruiting five businesses to Manitoba, but when asked about it would not provide details as to what these businesses were.

I ask the Minister of Competitiveness if his colleague is so sure "Spirited Energy" is great for businesses, why was it not able to attract J.R.I. Canola crushing plant, keep CanWest and Lund from moving their jobs out of this province, while at the same time B.C. Hydro takes Manitoba workers?

**Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade):** Mr. Speaker, it's nice to see the members opposite begin to talk about "Spirited Energy" in Manitoba. Manitoba's sustained record over the last seven years has been double what the members opposite has done. Our GDP debt to ratio is going down. Our total debt ratio in the province of Manitoba is down about 30 percent as opposed to when the members opposite were in. The Brandon Chamber of Commerce, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce have all come out in favour of "Spirited Energy" promoting Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the sky-is-falling-from-the-'90s party, is the only one that isn't in favour.

**Mrs. Rowat:** Mr. Speaker, the sky may be falling, and it's hitting the member opposite on the head. We have been talking about "Spirited Energy" for weeks now.

The Premier (Mr. Doer) himself has said that the public has a right to know how money is being spent, and I would add that the public also has a right to know where it is being spent.

Can the Minister of Competitiveness confirm today that all of the "Spirited Energy" banners that are on display are paid for by those who are hanging them or are they literally just more window dressing paid for by this NDP government?

**Mr. Smith:** I know the Member for Minnedosa, as she maybe drove out here this week, saw cranes for

the first time through the Minnedosa valley where we are developing with an ethanol plant out there.

The "Spirited Energy" campaign that's been led by the private sector in the province of Manitoba, certainly by Robert Silver, and many of the others on the Premier's Economic Advisory Council, have recognized something that I believe Dave Angus said the best, when he said: This is something that we should have been promoting. This is something we should have done decades ago.

Mr. Speaker, we believe in Manitoba. We believe in the growth in Manitoba. We believe in the youth retention that is going up in Manitoba. We believe in more people coming to Manitoba, and more business. Our province is growing, our province is gaining in wealth and our province is gaining youth.

**Mrs. Rowat:** The Town of Minnedosa would be pleased to hear that he has even referenced the ethanol plant. They are still waiting for a return phone call from last year when they were trying to get some answers from this government.

Mr. Speaker, I have been advised by the Brandon University that they did not have to pay a cent for the banner that's being displayed on the side of their building. Can the minister confirm and let the residents of Manitoba know whether the taxpayers of Manitoba are actually paying for these banners through the "Spirited Energy" campaign?

\*(14:10)

**Mr. Smith:** What I can confirm is the amount of businesses in Manitoba that are proud of the "Spirited Energy" campaign, and what I can confirm is the ethanol plant that they did nothing with is developing and building in Minnedosa.

Mr. Speaker, the cranes that we're seeing in Manitoba now, the growth that we're seeing in Manitoba and the housing market that we're seeing in Manitoba is unprecedented.

What is interesting to note is that members opposite, through the years and certainly through their time in government, lost over 2,000 youth per year in the province of Manitoba. We have gained 1,100 youth per year in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, when you take the last seven years, that would be the city of Portage la Prairie, Gladstone and Minnedosa all combined, that our record has attracted to Manitoba.

***Little Black Book School Distribution***  
**Consultation with Parents**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, unlike this NDP government, we believe that parents should be properly consulted and have the final say on whether or not controversial materials such as the *Little Black Book* are distributed to their children through our school system. We believe that parents know what's best for their children, not this NDP government.

I ask the Minister of Healthy Living: Why were parents not even consulted on this issue?

**Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Healthy Living):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for this question. Community members and stakeholders were consulted.

**An Honourable Member:** How about parents?

**Ms. Irvin-Ross:** Yes, parents were consulted on the *Little Black Book*. The *Little Black Book* is going to be resource material that is going to be distributed through community organizations and school divisions if they choose.

This book will provide valuable information to Manitoba youth. It is going to provide them information about financing, about peer pressure, about healthy sexuality. It is going to provide them also information about physical activity and healthy nutrition. This is a resource that is going to be valued by all community stakeholders and support the healthy development of Manitoba youth.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** We have a letter from the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils (MAPC), dated December 7, 2006, which states their concerns about the lack of parental consultation on the issue of the distribution of this *Little Black Book*. This letter says, and I quote: Our involvement to date has been a two-hour meeting during which we were able to view it and allowed to provide feedback as individual members.

Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Healthy Living honestly believe that a two-hour viewing of such a document is appropriate consultation of parents? Will she agree to a proper process of consultation with parents until they approve of a document that is suitable for being distributed to their children?

**Ms. Irvin-Ross:** Mr. Speaker, we did consult on the *Little Black Book* with many stakeholders across Manitoba, of all ages, of community organizations

and found that they supported this model. This is a model that is going to provide—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Ms. Irvin-Ross:** This is information that's going to support Manitoba youth from the ages of 14 to 18 years old. It's going to give them information about financing, about healthy lifestyles, nutrition, physical activity, healthy sexuality. It's going to provide them with valuable information that is going to help them make the healthiest choice, the easiest choice and continue to live healthy lifestyles. Consultations happened; they were successful. People support this initiative.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Well, members opposite may think that a two-hour viewing in a room of this document is appropriate consultation to the parents in this province. But we are not happy with that, nor are the parents out there. As we understand, the *Little Black Book* is in the final stages of translation and will be distributed through the school divisions across our province within the next few weeks without any proper consultations from the parents.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Healthy Living today agree to halt any distribution of the *Little Black Book* until the parent councils endorse the document that is to be distributed to their children? Parents know what's best for their children; not this Minister of Healthy Living and not this NDP government.

**Ms. Irvin-Ross:** Mr. Speaker, I will provide the member opposite about where the *Little Black Book* model came from. This *Little Black Book* model was distributed in Alberta.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. If members wish to have conversations with each other, we have empty loges here, but we need a little better decorum in the House. I ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

**Ms. Irvin-Ross:** Mr. Speaker, this is a tool that has been used in other provinces very successfully. It's a tool that provides youth with information about healthy lifestyles. A range of information is provided to them. It's essential that we provide this information to youths so they can make the healthy choice, the easiest choice.

I think it's very important to know that there were a number of consultations with key stakeholder groups that included community organizations, included MAST, included parents, as well as children and youth themselves. They support this initiative. Why won't they?

### **Health Care Duplication of Diagnostic Tests**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** For more than seven years this NDP government has run an utterly dysfunctional health care system. Health care in this province is so badly co-ordinated. Mr. Speaker, so badly co-ordinated is the health care in this province that family practitioners frequently have to repeat tests done in hospital because they can't get access to the in-hospital tests resulting in needless duplication.

Why is the Minister of Health continuing to operate such a dysfunctional system? Where is the accountability?

\*(14:20)

**Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly do find it curious strange that the member opposite, himself a doctor—and we won't get into the whole argument about how that may or may not, according to his definition, be a conflict of interest—may today be saying that the people in the system, the doctors, the nurses, the technologists, are running a system that is, in fact, in disrepair. We, on this side of the House, have the greatest of respect for the people on the front lines who are working with patients: the nurses, the doctors, the technologists. We have the greatest of respect for those running hospitals. I really find it pretty appalling that the member opposite would have such negative and horrible things to say about these professionals. Shame on him.

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

### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

#### **River East Transcona School Division English-German Bilingual Program**

**Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the recent 25th anniversary of the English-German Bilingual Program in the River East Transcona School Division. This program had humble beginnings in the early '80s, when two German nursery school teachers Sonja Klassen and the late Alice Lutz took up the challenge of making German education available throughout the school system.

At first there were only a few families involved in developing the idea, but it wasn't long before the word of the program quickly spread throughout the community. Some of the founding mothers of the program include Katie Dyck, Revita Dyck and the late Ingrid Ginter. Thanks to their persistence, the program was implemented for kindergarten and grade 1 students at Princess Margaret School in 1981.

As years passed, the program grew and eventually encompassed all grades including grade 12. This growth allowed students to pursue studies in both English and German while also learning about those cultures through additional programs such as the student exchanges to Germany.

There are now programs in Donwood Elementary, Chief Peguis Junior High and River East Collegiate as well. Hundreds of students are currently enrolled in the English-German Bilingual Program, and thousands have benefited from its unique linguistic and cultural opportunities.

I would like to recognize, congratulate and thank all those who have played an integral part in supporting the English-German Bilingual Program over all these years: the parents who believe that it is important to provide their children with these opportunities, the teachers for doing an excellent job in sharing their expertise and enthusiasm, the administration and trustees that continue to support the program, the presidents and executive members that have served over the years, and, most of all, to the students themselves for continuing to exemplify culture appreciation and global citizenry in their study of German language and culture. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Domestic Violence Prevention Month**

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, this month is Domestic Violence Prevention Month, a month in which we collectively work to bring about the awareness that domestic violence is unacceptable.

Over the past couple of months, I have had the privilege of attending events and openings that have contributed to bringing about such awareness. In Brandon and in The Pas, I had the privilege of speaking at Take Back the Night rallies that were held in recognition of the dangers that face women on a daily basis. These rallies demonstrated a determined stand to not let fear control the lives of women.

Recently, I had the opportunity to tour the women's shelter, Aurora House, in The Pas, and also toured and attended the opening of Meredith Place in Brandon, which is a transitional housing facility. It is precisely these sorts of demonstrations and resources that will contribute to addressing the complexity of domestic violence.

Research tells us that there are certain segments of society that face a greater risk with respect to domestic violence. Disabled women are 40 percent more likely than non-disabled women to be victims of domestic violence. Rates of spousal violence and spousal homicide are higher for Aboriginal women than non-Aboriginal women and Aboriginal men. Stats Canada also reports that the severity and impact of domestic violence is greater for Aboriginal women. We also know that the rates of sexual assault and other violent crimes are significantly higher on reserves.

Domestic violence is further compounded by the fact that a very small percentage of victims report these crimes, or these incidents. With this knowledge in mind, it is clear that, while domestic violence is a complex problem, there are clear indications of what segments are hit hardest. Included in that group are children. It is important that we find a way to ensure that these children are not caught in the cycle of violence that often perpetrates itself. But it is also equally important to offer support to those segments of society, many of whom are caregivers, that are most affected. This means paying attention to Aboriginal women, to women with disabilities and to women who live on reserves.

Domestic violence thrives not only in the darkness of streets and in homes, but is also in the darkness that is the absence of knowledge. The less aware our society is about domestic violence, the further we will be from addressing the problem. So this being Domestic Violence Prevention Month takes the opportunity to shed light on this issue. It is incumbent upon ourselves to do so.

### **Immigration Goals**

**Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk on a subject that I feel very strongly about, immigration. In the coming months, Manitoba will reach its goal of attracting 10,000 immigrants to the province annually.

I am thrilled that our government has reversed the trend of population loss that occurred from 1992 to 1999. In 2005, over 8,000 international

immigrants came to Manitoba, the largest number since the early 1980s. Aggressive efforts have led Manitoba to increase its immigration targets. The Throne Speech sets new targets and calls for the province to double the number of immigrants over the next decade by adding 1,000 to the target every year.

As the MLA for The Maples, I know how important immigration is to the economic health of my constituency, my city and my province. With low unemployment and high demand for skilled workers in certain industries, it is important that Manitoba continue to attract immigrants with the talents and skills that are needed. Manitoba's Provincial Nominee Program has been very successful in that regard.

The program accounts for over 65 percent of the immigrants who have come to Manitoba over the last year. It allows the Province to select applications from potential immigrants who best match the specific needs of Manitoba, and who intend to live and work in the province. Those approved as Manitoba provincial nominees are given special status in applying for their permanent resident visa.

The government has also introduced a fast-track assessment stream for applicants who have employers, family or community support, as well as for international post-secondary students who have graduated from a Manitoba program.

The Maples is home to a large proportion of recent immigrants. I will continue to work hard to ensure that these members of my community have the opportunity to fully participate culturally, socially and economically in our community, city and province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Teulon Library**

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to offer my congratulations to the community of Teulon on the recent opening of its new library.

Specifically, I'd like to commend the community on the decision to name the new children's reading room after Jonathon Watson, a courageous young man who sadly lost his life with cancer last November. It is hoped that this new library and room will serve to inspire other young people to take similar interests in reading and education as Jonathon, who, despite some very difficult times, did not let things get him down.

Furthermore, I'd like to express my sincere respect for Mrs. Brenda Watson and her husband, who were present at the recent dedication of the room, for her strength and role in raising such an amazing young man who served to inspire others.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to Rem and Val Weiss who donated and served to help create the room named after Jonathon.

This new library will be a great asset to the community of Teulon and, once more, I wish to commend all those involved in making it a reality.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **2006 All My Relations Welcoming Ceremony**

**Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, today I have the honour of sharing the story of an important and unique multicultural celebration that I had the privilege of attending last week. The event was a 2006 All My Relations Welcoming Ceremony, which brought together the Aboriginal community and our city's new immigrants and refugees in a wonderful celebration of friendship, food and cultural entertainment.

Volunteers with the multicultural All My Relations group recruited and gained support from many Manitoba immigrants and cultural groups, in order to make the event the remarkable success that it was. What's all the more remarkable is that this was the first time that the All My Relations group had attempted this type of an initiative.

The evening was a huge success with a large number of people. The room was absolutely packed and was celebrated with a vibrant collection of song and dance and wonderful food from across the world, including traditional Aboriginal cuisine and food from the Congo, Afghanistan and Ethiopia. I very much hope that this kind of event will continue to grow into a much-anticipated community tradition.

It was also inspiring to hear the words of encouragement that the Aboriginal community extended to the new immigrants and refugees, as the Aboriginal people committed to helping them learn about Aboriginal culture and values, as well as our city as a whole.

This welcome was a unique type of grass-roots community approach to building bridges between neighbours, focussing on the similarities between our groups, but also reminding us that differences are a precious asset to be treasured.

I would like to congratulate all those involved in organizing the event for creating such an outstanding evening. The All My Relations Welcoming committee has sent a strong message to the community about how to build strong relationships and how to celebrate diversity.

I know that the new immigrants and refugees that attended this ceremony very much appreciated the efforts that the Aboriginal community made to make them feel like cherished members of a thriving community.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with the All My Relations group in the future, and I once again commend them on their very first and very successful welcoming ceremony.

### **MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

\* (14:30)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), that under rule 36(1) the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely the inappropriate actions taken by the Premier's (Mr. Doer) office in regard to the interference in the NDP nomination in the constituency of The Maples.

#### ***Motion presented.***

**Mr. Speaker:** Before recognizing the honourable Member for Inkster, I believe I should remind all members that under rule 36(2) the mover of a motion on a matter of urgent public importance and one member from the other parties in the House is allowed not more than 10 minutes to explain their urgency of debating the matter immediately.

As stated in *Beauchesne's* Citation 390, "urgency" in this context means the urgency of immediate debate, not of the subject matter of the motion. In their remarks, members should focus exclusively on whether or not there is urgency of debate and whether or not the ordinary opportunities for debate will enable the House to consider the matter early enough to ensure that the public interests will not suffer.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I truly do believe that this is an issue that needs to be debated today. This issue goes directly to the chief of staff of the Premier's office, and the allegations are of inappropriate conduct. I sincerely wish that the Legislature would acknowledge the sense of

urgency. We are under Throne Speech currently in which there is very limited debate left, and there is the whole issue of the Throne Speech that has to be debated during that Throne Speech. We have a very limited legislative time schedule, yet we have numerous bills that this government is going to insist on passing. There is a very limited amount of time, and I would ultimately argue that the public good would be best served if in fact we were allowed to be able to address the types of allegations that have been levelled at this government through the Premier's office.

Let me be very, very specific. Mr. Speaker, sometime towards the end of August, beginning of September, there were discussions that had taken place between the chief of staff of the Premier's office and at least one, possibly more candidates where they were trying—

**An Honourable Member:** Hearsay.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** No, it's more than hearsay, I'll say to the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak). It's a lot more than hearsay. He had better listen to what's being said, and maybe then he'll understand the urgency of this because it goes far beyond hearsay.

Mr. Speaker, these discussions took place. There were a number of things that were alluded to. One of those things was suggesting that the Member for The Maples (Mr. Aglugub), for example, was not going to stay in a full term after the next election. One of the allegations is saying that after two years that MLA was going to be stepping down.

**An Honourable Member:** Garbage.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, one member says "garbage." This is an accusation, an allegation, Mr. Speaker, that's being made of the chief of staff from the Premier's office. Why won't the Premier's staffperson even come forward and address the issue?

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. A matter of urgent public importance is very important, and I need to be able to hear the words and also remind members it is debating the urgency not in the context of the motion here, so I ask all honourable members for some co-operation here.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate why the Government House Leader would be somewhat upset because he understands the reality of the situation as I do. What I am seeing here, is a sense of corruption that's within the Premier's office. We are

looking for leadership from the Premier of this province, and that's the reason why I believe that there needs to be debate today. I believe that we need to hear from the Premier and any others because I suspect that there is a chance that others within that Cabinet are aware of it. We need to address this issue head-on.

Mr. Speaker, you know, yesterday, I must admit I took a bit of a chance. I can tell you that everyone that I have talked to, and I have talked to several people in regard to this issue, didn't want me to use their names. It is very difficult to bring forward an issue if they're not prepared to let you use their names. I must admit to that. That's one of the reasons why I sat on the issue when I first started hearing about it in September. But then I was given assurances that Elections Manitoba was aware of this issue. So I had to debate what was in the public good versus raising those allegations inside this Legislature. I genuinely believe that it is in the public good. It is my responsibility to do what I can to uncover something that this government is trying to hide from the public, and that is what this emergency debate is all about.

This government is trying to hide the truth from the government in terms of what and how corrupt they were in regard to interfering in the nomination in The Maples, Mr. Speaker. When I raised it yesterday, it was interesting as I am sure other members have read the article in the *Winnipeg Free Press*. I now have a candidate that I can refer to because he is being quoted in the *Free Press*, and I quote: "Sidhu confirmed he sent the letter, but would not discuss its contents because he said it is a confidential matter."

Sidhu said he was interviewed by Elections Manitoba three weeks ago. Well, Mr. Speaker, that proves my case that Elections Manitoba is aware of it. What did the Premier do yesterday? He sat back: Well, I am not going to say.

He didn't want to say whether it was with Elections Manitoba or whether it was not with Elections Manitoba. Why? Because he wants desperately this not to get out. He has leaks in his office. He has leaks that go beyond his office. He has no idea who it is that's providing the information. But I will tell you one thing I am not going to sit on this issue. This is an issue that goes right to the Premier's office. I know that the chief of staff was inappropriately involved in a nomination—

**An Honourable Member:** Say that in the hallway.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** –and the allegations deal with serious issues. I said the issue of bribery, the issue of being intimidated.

**An Honourable Member:** Say that in the hallway, I dare you. I dare you to say that in the hallway.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The Member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) said: I dare you to say it in the hallway.

Is the Government House Leader trying to tell me that I do not have a responsibility to uncover when the government is being corrupt?

**An Honourable Member:** No, you're lying. You're lying.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe the Government House Leader is being unparliamentary when he says "lying." I am asking the Government House Leader to withdraw his comments of me by calling me a liar. I ask him to withdraw those comments now.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I do believe—on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Government House Leader, from his seat, called me a liar—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I did not have my mike on. The honourable Member for Inkster, on a point of order.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader, from his seat, called me a liar and I take great exception to that. I am asking the Government House Leader to withdraw those comments immediately.

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

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach):** I would confirm that I also heard the comments from the Government House Leader.

\* (14:40)

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Inkster, I can only make rulings on what I hear. I was listening very, very carefully to the honourable Member for Inkster, and, if there was a comment made, I did not hear it. Unless a member, if they were willing to stand up and say they said it, I have to rule that the honourable member does not have a point of order because I personally did not hear the comment.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Inkster, to continue with his comments.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think that speaks volumes, that the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) used unparliamentary language to the 10th degree. This is language in which the Government House Leader was not even prepared to acknowledge that he used, knowing full well—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe the member is speaking on his notice of motion, and I don't know what he's talking about now, whether he's talking about a point of order that you've ruled on, or whether he's back to his motion, but I believe he's supposed to deal with the matter and urgency of the matter raised. I think that's the reason for the MUPI.

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

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa):** Members on this side of the House clearly heard comments being made—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. This is getting a little out of hand. I just made a ruling on that matter. Either members accept the ruling or challenge my ruling. My rulings are not going to be up for debate on the floor of this Chamber. You have two choices. You either accept it, or you challenge it.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Government House Leader, on a new point of order?

**Mr. Chomiak:** A new point of order.

To expedite matters, if there's anything that I said that was unparliamentary, I will withdraw it.

**Mr. Speaker:** If the member stood up, if he said anything unparliamentary, that should take care of the matter.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll take what I can get from the Government House Leader, given the lack of integrity in some members.

Mr. Speaker, I—*[interjection]*

### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Minister of Family Services, on a point of order?

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Family Services and Housing):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I am compelled to rise. The member knows full well that the long-standing, one of the most essential rules of this House, is that we are all honourable members, and the member reflected on the integrity of the House Leader. I ask him to withdraw that unparliamentary remark.

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

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I withdraw any remarks that offended the Government House Leader regarding his integrity.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Minister of Family Services, there has been a withdrawal made by the honourable Member for Inkster. So that should take care of the matter.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** At this point, I'd like to caution all honourable members that this is the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, and if a member feels strongly about an issue, they have the right to raise that issue. But I would assume that in this Chamber, that members should have respect for one another. There might be difference of views here and there, but I think members have to show some respect to one another. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members here.

The honourable Member for Inkster, to continue.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In short, I do believe that the Premier (Mr. Doer) had a responsibility to Manitobans if he was not the one that instructed Michael Balagus to go and meet with the candidates that were running against the incumbent, that he had a responsibility to at least ask Michael Balagus whether or not the allegations that were being levelled were accurate.

I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier knows full well the content of the letter that's in question, and I suspect that the Premier is standing by his chief of staff. I look forward to the day in which that letter will be public, and I do believe that it'll be a question. The Premier likely has a copy of the letter,

so it would be more appropriate for the Government House Leader to ask the Premier to table it.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear in terms of what my responsibilities are. My responsibilities are to the constituents whom I represent. I genuinely believe that my constituents are interested in knowing if, in fact, the Premier in his office behaved in an inappropriate fashion in regard to a nomination inside The Maples.

I, for one, believe that there were actions that were inappropriate, and some of those actions I'm prepared to even say outside this Chamber, because I know and I feel confident of what it is that I'm speaking about. It's interesting in terms of the response that we've had from the Premier. It was interesting to see one of the candidates has now come forward and said that they did write a letter. It's nice to see that there was confirmation that Elections Manitoba is doing an investigation, so what I brought yesterday is true.

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

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** These are certainly serious matters which the Member for Inkster raises. I know that, in the last few days, he's raised other issues that he considered to be important as well relating to conflicts here in the Legislature, and I didn't support him on those. In fact, I asked him to take another route. In the past few days, he's also raised a matter of urgent public importance again. We didn't support him there, but we do look at every situation on its own merits and, I think, in a bipartisan way because here in this Legislature we want to ensure that we bring forward advice to you that we think is on its merit and not simply being brought forward for political reasons, Mr. Speaker.

On the urgency, specifically, I think it's important that, when you talk about the urgency of debate, if you look at the context of the issue that the member has brought forward. Unfortunately, we have seen in the past that this particular government will not want to have information readily available or made readily available. It does not want to discuss scandals. I think of the Crocus Investment scandal, for example, where it was very, very difficult to get information from the government. In fact, it's still difficult to get information from the government. When we are looking for facts to be put on the record, we often have to rely on outside agencies

because they simply don't want to come forward with those facts.

So it is important that you look at the context, that you look at how a government has responded to situations in the past, I think, when you deal with the matter of whether or not this is, in fact, urgent and warrants setting aside the debate for today.

I know, Mr. Speaker, you'll certainly remember that, earlier on in the week, the government set aside debate on the Throne Speech for another issue, an issue, in fact, that's dealt with on the federal level. They felt that that was important enough to deal with on that particular day, so the government itself has acknowledged there are times when debate should be set aside. On that issue, it was, again, a federal issue and not one we deal with here in Manitoba, where the Member for Inkster has raised an issue that's specific to Manitoba. I would say that you need to not only look at the context of how a government responds and acts to allegations that are brought forward to it, but also to look at the past history and the recent history that we've had here in the Legislature.

On the specific allegations that the member brings forward, obviously, he has come across some information in one form or the other and has brought it to this particular Legislature. I think that there would be value in hearing more from the Member for Inkster and some other sort of debate that we might be able to hear from the members opposite. In fact, I say that and I know, perhaps, the members opposite and the government will see that as a negative towards them and, perhaps, an attack on them. I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, it is the opposite, I think, to give the government an opportunity to come forward and clear the air in a very quick and forthright manner. I know the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) doesn't seem to agree with that interpretation. He himself has been one who has been difficult to get information out of in the past, so perhaps that is where his vision is clouded on this particular issue.

\* (14:50)

But I would say to the government that this is their opportunity not to look at it as a negative, but to look at it as a positive, a way to come forward and say, here are the facts; we have nothing to hide; let's move on. Then this issue will die very, very quickly, and they won't have to deal with it day after day after day. Not only is that sort of the respectful thing to do, I think, for Manitobans generally—Mr. Speaker, I

would say to them, not to offer them too much political advice—but it would be the politically smart thing for them to do as well, to ensure that this isn't a story that sort of lingers over the Legislature, or lingers over Manitobans and the rest of this very short session.

That is also a key point, Mr. Speaker. We do have a short period of time to deal with these sorts of issues because the Legislature is only sitting for a few days. I know that some of the government ministers, including the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), who, I heard on the radio, are presuming that certain pieces of legislation are going to pass before this Legislature rises, even though we only have six days, I think, to debate legislation.

Well, we certainly wouldn't want to see an issue like this to, sort of, stop legislation from going forward or making it more and more difficult to move legislation. So I would encourage members opposite of the government, if they have nothing to hide, if there is nothing to these allegations, they should have the debate. Then they could move forward and say that they're not worried about anything, but I would caution them because, if the Government House Leader stands up after I sit down, after supporting the Member for Inkster's resolution to have a matter of urgent public debate, if he then stands up and says that they don't want to have this particular debate, for whatever reason, I would say to him, it points more to the fact that maybe there is something to hide, maybe there is more to these allegations. Instead of making the situation better for the Premier, I would suggest he would, in fact, make it worse. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, we have a duty in this House to present information and present factual information. We have that duty.

We had an instance of your ruling this very part of the week where the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), irresponsibly, made an allegation in this House, and which you ruled on, Mr. Speaker, which you ruled all members ought to—

**An Honourable Member:** Point of order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Member for River Heights, on a point of order.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** The Member for Kildonan, the Minister of Justice, the House

Leader for the NDP is throwing around accusations which are uncalled for and unjustified—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I did not hear the point of order.

**Mr. Gerrard:** My point of order here is that the Minister of Justice and House Leader needs to be relevant to the issue at hand rather than throwing around unjustified accusations and irresponsible accusations.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for River Heights, he does not have a point of order, but relevancy is important. I'm sure the honourable member was going to tie that to the MUPI, I hope. I hope he was.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. You ruled this week that we ought to be very careful as members of this House in allegations that we make in the House about people and their reputations. You ruled that earlier this week, and that's the touchstone for me commencing my comments.

The member stands up today and says this is of such urgent importance that we have to debate it today, even though I knew about it in September, even though I heard about it in September, and even though today is November 23 and the House commenced November 15. The member had November 15, November 16, November 18, 19, 20, 21 and then he raised it yesterday in Question Period. He raised the issue in Question Period, and he was inaccurate in the statement because the Premier said, in response to his question, any innuendo or any issue of allegations that deals with any breach of The Elections Act I refer immediately to Elections Manitoba.

The Premier responded to the member's allegations. The Premier responded to the allegations the member made that he didn't even have the courage to repeat in the hallway because he knew that repeating hearsay or making allegations like he made in the House yesterday would get him in legal difficulty if he said them outside of the protection of the liability in this Chamber, and the Premier responded.

Now, the member stands up today and says we urgently must deal with matters that I have heard, or a letter that I have heard about, and we have to urgently deal with it today on a question that I raised

yesterday that the Premier said he's sending or he has sent to Elections Manitoba. Then he said, because the Premier said he sent it to Elections Manitoba, therefore, I have an issue that I have to raise today because the Premier said he's going to send it to Elections Manitoba. He already did, so that confirms something. Confirms what? Confirms the letter that the member thinks he saw, that he heard about, Mr. Speaker, that he raised yesterday, that the Premier said, if it's raised, I send it to Elections Manitoba. He now says, oh, because you sent it to Elections Manitoba, I want to talk about it today because it's of urgent public importance. That is a little bit of circular reasoning, and there are other words I could use.

Mr. Speaker, the member not only has numerous opportunities to talk about these issues including Question Period, including Throne Speech debate, including grievances, including Question Period in which he asked the very question he's talking about today. Not only does he have other venues, but I argue that, by raising this issue, he's doing one thing. He's trying to make it into a political issue, and that's very obvious that he's making it into a political issue—there's no other reason—in order to further a political purpose.

There are allegations about every single—the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, this week in the paper. Now the member raises something about the New Democratic Party, Mr. Speaker, in a pre-election period. The member is waving his hands like he doesn't know and is making gestures, but this is really significant. When a member stands up and says to the Premier (Mr. Doer), have you done something, and the Premier says he has done something, I would expect the member would let due process take place, due process take place. Instead, he's made himself accuser, judge, and executioner.

He won't confirm the information. The Premier has said if any information has come it's gone to Elections Manitoba. The member said if it's gone to Elections Manitoba that confirms my allegation. Therefore, I have to do what? Execute someone?

Mr. Speaker, he is accuser, judge and executioner. That's not what we do in this House. We don't make spurious—[interjection] I think it is incumbent upon all of us to not accuse individuals, particularly when individuals have responded by following the appropriate fashion, but to let the processes take place. The member asked the question. The Premier gave the response. Now the

member is standing up and making further allegations, and further, at the same, he sat on the information, literally. He literally said I sat on this information and raised it now, eight days after the House sat. After eight Question Periods, after six or seven opportunities to debate it in Throne Speech, after six or seven opportunities to talk about it during grievances—well, we don't have grievances—various opportunities. He now says, I want to deal with this matter as urgent public importance because it's been in the paper, because I raised it yesterday in the House.

Mr. Speaker, there is no defence for any Manitoban on that kind of an argument. A member could make any kind of argument in this House, accuse anyone of anything, have it reported in the paper, and then we'd have to have an urgent public debate every time members made accusations.

I know the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) was forced to apologize by letter for allegations he made in the paper. He's done that in the past. I know that. When I made allegations inappropriate in this House when I was in opposition, I stood up and I apologized. When there was a process underway, Mr. Speaker, I let the process take its course.

I don't want to stand up and talk about allegations about each political party, Mr. Speaker. We make shots in here, but the fact is processes are in place. The Conservatives have their election campaigns. They have their problems. They have Don Orchard. The Liberals have their problems. There are allegations before Elections Manitoba. The Member for River Heights has raised issues of Elections Manitoba on matters concerning members of this House. Elections Manitoba is investigating. Does that mean this Chamber should supersede what the Member for River Heights asked Elections Manitoba to do because that's what the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is trying to do? He is trying to be political, and he's trying to usurp the process.

His very leader has asked for Elections Manitoba to review information on this side of the House, of which there's an investigation with respect to individuals who work for Crown corporations, and now he is standing up and saying, oh, on other allegations, or any other allegations we must debate on an urgent nature, even though I've known it since September. That speaks of political opportunism in the worst kind, Mr. Speaker. That's the worst kind of

political opportunism that you can subject yourself to in this Chamber.

I could go further, Mr. Speaker, but suffice to say the member's had ample opportunity. It is inappropriate. The Premier (Mr. Doer) answered the question yesterday, and he contradicts the very course of action that his own leader advocated when he stood up in this House and said Elections Manitoba ought to review certain appointments to Crown corporations. Elections Manitoba is doing that, and they are interviewing the individuals.

\*(15:00)

Now his own Member for Inkster stood up and said, I am making allegations that I can't confirm from a letter that I haven't seen to a question that the Premier did answer, and saying we should do it on urgent public importance, Mr. Speaker. Not only is the basis not there, but it is inappropriate and it doesn't even meet the test of timeliness.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I thank the honourable members for their advice to the Chair on whether the motion proposed by the honourable Member for Inkster should be debated today.

The notice required by rule 36(1) was provided. Under our rules and practices, the subject matter requiring urgent consideration must be so pressing that the public interest will suffer if the matter is not given immediate attention. There must also be no other reasonable opportunities to raise the matter.

I have listened very carefully to the arguments put forward. However, I was not persuaded that the ordinary business of the House should be set aside to deal with this issue today. I do not believe that the public interest will be harmed if the business of the House is not set aside to debate the motion today.

Additionally, I would like to note that there are other avenues for members to raise this issue, which include questions in Question Period, and I would note that the issue has already been raised in Question Period. There are also the avenues of Members' Statements and the Throne Speech Debate that could be used to raise the issue.

Therefore, with the greatest of respect, I must rule that this matter does not meet the criteria set by our rules and precedents, and I rule the motion out of order as a matter of urgent public importance.

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Before we move on to Orders of the Day, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us Brian, Leanne, Conner and Brendan English who are from Rivers, Manitoba. They are the guests of the honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat) and the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Cullen).

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

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

### ADJOURNED DEBATE

#### (Fifth Day of Debate)

**Mr. Speaker:** Resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Member for St. Norbert (Ms. Brick),

THAT the following address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, thank Your Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this Fifth Session of the Thirty-Eighth Legislature of Manitoba, and the proposed motion of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen), in amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Morris who has nine minutes remaining.

**Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to resume my comments on the failures of this Throne Speech this year. I just want to address some issues very quickly because I know other people want to speak, but certainly these comments need to be made.

In regard to the rebate on the tuition fees, Mr. Speaker, this really does not address the problem of our young people leaving our province in droves. We have to retain our young people. This isn't really a solution; it is just a Band-Aid over a bigger problem. This will do nothing to keep our young people here. When you get BC Hydro coming into town to recruit people to go to British Columbia to work, and you get a hundred people lined up for application forms, they know it is fertile ground here to come and recruit people here. Our young people are moving, and that is disgraceful. That speaks to the mismanagement of this current government.

In terms of agriculture, I just want to say we did have the debate on the Wheat Board, Mr. Speaker, but I want to say that farmers want their choice. They want to market their grain how they want. The NDP don't want farmers to have choices, only if it is their choice. They don't believe in the individual rights of property. They are socialists. How would they believe in the individual rights, and the individual right of people to sell or market their property?

You know, the worst thing about this government, they are politicizing this whole thing and they are drawing farmers into it. They are drawing farmers into that as pawns. The farmers are just pawns in the NDP chess game. It is all about them. They pretend it's about the farmers. It has nothing to do with the farmers. It is all about them.

Mr. Speaker, what a farce we see. What a farce. How hypocritical is this government when, on one hand they make a commitment or an incentive package of \$28 million to locate a hog processing plant in the city of Winnipeg, and, on the other hand, turn around and say, oh, but then we better curtail any hog production in the province, we better put a moratorium on it? Oh, but they want to call it a pause. Well, a pause means to stop, and a moratorium means to stop. They're not fooling anybody. They are putting a damper on the farming industry. But, then, of course, they're destroying rural Manitoba. All they want to do is criticize the farmers. They are destroying the farms. They've destroyed the rural economy, and then what does the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) say? She says, well, they can go and get a job on the floodway. Well, then, what do they do? Oh, over budget on the floodway. We'll have to scale back there. So now what are they supposed to do? Well, maybe they could get in line for the BC Hydro people, and there they go.

What about taxation? Well, we are the highest, the Manitobans in this province are the highest-taxed province west of Québec, Mr. Speaker. So what do they do? What do they do? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Do they address the capital tax? No. Do they address the payroll tax? No. What have they done with the PST? Our neighbours to the west have reduced the PST. What have we done in Manitoba? Nothing. Nothing.

But what do they do? They see income splitting as popular with the Canadian government, the Canadian Conservative government, so what do they do there? Oh, well, let's jump on board with that, Mr.

Speaker. That sounds popular. Anything that's proposed by this side of the House or the federal Conservative government, oh, that's not a bad idea. Maybe we'll do that. Yeah. That's good.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about the infrastructure commitment. Well, they have not done their job in seven years, and we have a crisis in infrastructure, a crisis in our highways. Our bridges are falling down. The bridge at Portage la Prairie fell down, and then what do they do? Then what do they do? They close it, and then they say they are putting more money in. Putting more money in? They could never address the deficiencies in infrastructure that this government has caused for seven long years of lack of attention to this area.

But spending, oh, they know how to spend, Mr. Speaker. They know how to spend, and they do it with spirited energy; \$49 million in spending in July; in August, another \$8.6 million; in September, \$430 million; in October, \$92 million; as of November 7, \$579 million they've spent. Does that sound like an election call coming up? Well, it sure sounds like it to me. But I say bring it on because, if this is government, if this is the best they can do, well, they better be watching out for us.

Health care, health care, where have they been in seven years, Mr. Speaker? Where have they been? They haven't done anything to review the regional health authorities and, oh, seven years they talk about, oh, well, maybe we should put new ambulances, but they're not about ambulance transfer fees. Well, we have been calling on them to fund rural ambulance transfer fees since 2002. Finally they got it, but only after four years of us hounding them and hounding them to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, and I know that I'm running out of time here, but I also call on the Minister of Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick) to be a better steward and manage her department better, because we don't need to have constant drought and then flood and then drought in this province. We need a management strategy for water management in this province, and I call on her to get that done.

\*(15:10)

Mr. Speaker, this budget does little, little to address the deficiencies that have accumulated over the last seven years: multiple failures in family services, failure in agriculture; failure in highways and roads; failures in health care; failure to protect the privacy of Manitobans; failure to be open and

accountable with the release of information; failure to have meaningful strategies to keep our young people here; failure to keep our communities safe and our seniors safe in housing; failure to make Manitoba competitive; failure to call a public inquiry into the Crocus scandal.

It is time for a government with vision, and I would look forward to the next election and a Conservative government in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade):** Mr. Speaker, It is certainly a pleasure for me to rise in the House today to speak on matters regarding the Speech from the Throne that was delivered on November 15 of this year.

I would first like to welcome the pages that we have. The pages do a very, very integral piece of work for us here in the Legislature. They work very hard, and I would like to welcome them to the Legislature and thank them for the diligence and the work that they do. The interns that we have, on both sides, I know the work that they do. The thought process and the educational background that they have assists and helps us all on both sides and the amount of work that they do. I would like to congratulate them for joining us all here in the Legislature and assisting us in delivering our jobs. And to all the members, I welcome all the members back, and certainly I know the commitment all members on all sides of the House make in making each one of their constituencies a better place and the dedication that all 57 members of this House have to the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne certainly is a speech that builds on energy in Manitoba here, and as the member opposite for Morris likes to speak about a great campaign that we have, "Spirited Energy," in Manitoba, I couldn't agree more. This develops on energy that's developed over the last seven years and, if you will, if you take it as building blocks, you compare records. I know the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) on the other side doesn't like to talk about the past. But you can look at the past and certainly anyone that doesn't look at the past is doomed for failure and you build on your mistakes.

We have year over year over year from the Speech from the Throne delivered a vision for Manitobans, a vision for building Manitoba, and we are seeing successes in that in bite-size pieces, year over year over year, both on benchmarks,

deliverables and what's factual out there, Mr. Speaker. The Speech from the Throne is a document and certainly something delivered by the government that allows Manitoba to see the insights of the vision for the future and the building that a government has in store for Manitobans. It's developed with Manitobans on the direction they would like to see Manitoba develop. We've heard Manitobans say continually: We would like to see Manitoba as a competitive province, Manitoba in a position that we can compete with anyone in the world internationally both from our producers or industry to the average Manitoban that is out there, saying all we need is a fair and level playing field. All we need is to be in a position we can take anyone on in the world and do it well. We have done that year over year with fiscal management, with reductions of debt, with putting us in a position that is one of the best that we've seen in 25 years.

I know a lot of the members opposite like to consider themselves as financially astute. All you need to do is look at the facts. They don't have to take it from me, but I know taking it from the Fraser Institute is someone they listen to, and I know taking it from folks like Moody's and others is someone that they would listen to. When you follow, from 1999, the province when we came in, you look at debt ratios and you look at competitiveness, it's improved year over year over year. It's been with an investment in health care that's unprecedented; it's been in investments in our agricultural industry and support; it's been in investments which we believe is the No. 1 economic strategy in the province of Manitoba, which is a strong educational system and a retention of professionals in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen), it is interesting to note, uses the analogy: he flips like a bass in a boat. Quite frankly, the 10 percent reduction in tuition fees we introduced when we came into government has been incredibly successful. We've seen an increase in our post-secondary education that's been unprecedented over the last seven years and it continues to grow. We see it both on the community college side. We see on the university side. We see the retention in high school education improving as well.

When you take the year over year in the building, you take the '90s where we were losing youth in Manitoba—I know the members opposite like to throw out accusations and look at that fact. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, from 1990 to 1999 in the age group of 15 to 24, we were averaging a loss of

2,000 per year. Now we're seeing a net gain in that same category of about 1,100. So it's a 3,100 person difference. Members opposite may not think it's a large number, and we will continue to do better on our initiatives. We have turned around a loss in that area to a gain: 3,100 difference. If you take that over seven years, it is well over 21,000. I mentioned before, that's a population size of the city of Portage la Prairie. It's a population size combined with Portage la Prairie, Minnedosa, Gladstone and Killarney. When you take that context, those are four cities, four important cities in towns in the province of Manitoba; you can look at the difference.

Now, if members opposite don't think that's substantial, Mr. Speaker, it's like taking Portage, Killarney, Minnedosa and Gladstone and removing it from the province. If they had still been in with their record, and a continual record of a decade, that's exactly what would have happened again. We've invested in education and it is one component. That's one piece with many other components we've had. The retention of that in the appreciation from families and average families out there, we hear back constantly. It does make a difference. With this new Throne Speech, the 60 percent credit back to post-secondary students we have when they come out of universities is another component. It's a piece added on. It's a bite-size doable piece.

Unlike members opposite and some of the other provinces, Mr. Speaker, our commitments have been kept. We do things with diligence. We do it certainly with a lot of thought, and we don't turn back on promises we've made. When you combine them all, Manitoba's net debt, and it's something, it's a measure the Auditor General says matters, went down by \$151 million from last year alone. The net direct and guaranteed debt relative to GDP is estimated at 23 percent as of March 31 of this year, placing Manitoba at the lower spectrum in the Canadian provinces.

As I mentioned, members opposite don't have to take it from our side, but when Fraser Institute recognizes Manitoba as an excellent fiscal performance, ranking us third among the provinces, with only B.C. and Alberta ahead, and the second lowest per capita spending of any province in Canada, those are substantial. Those are numbers they want to dance around the outside, but that's the reality.

We're the first government in Manitoba to address pension liability. I know the members opposite want to say: Well, that doesn't make much

of a difference, Mr. Speaker. The responsible approach that we took has given Manitoba two credit upgrades and Manitoba's credit rating is now at one of the best in Canada. Moody's Investors, Dominion Bond Rating and Standard and Poor's have all placed us in that position. Members opposite may want to say it's rhetoric, but I don't hear them saying that it's rhetoric to Moody's. I don't hear them saying that's rhetoric from Dominion Bond, and I don't hear them say that's rhetoric from Standard and Poor's.

Quite frankly, the province is growing. The province is growing both in human resource in population, and certainly, in our debt reduction, it's growing in our net wealth and it's growing in our comparable GDP ratio, certainly compared to debt in a better position by 1.4 percent alone over the last year.

\* (15:20)

Now, Mr. Speaker, massive projects like Manitoba Hydro and looking at the billing of Manitoba Hydro, certainly is something that Manitobans have always been proud of. We were always proud of our Manitoba Telephone System that we had here in the province of Manitoba. It strikes me as passing strange. Quite interesting, when the Leader of the Opposition was a senior adviser for Premier Filmon back in '96, '97, we were fighting for the Canadian Wheat Board at the same time they were selling Manitoba Telephone System at that time. It's now a decade later. We're still fighting for the Canadian Wheat Board and members opposite are fighting with Alberta to have a destruction of our Canadian Wheat Board, which is a substantial employer and economic benefit to Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and all our western provinces.

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need someone to stand up for Manitobans. We need someone to be with Manitobans on their visions, on developing a better province for everyone, not a select few. And this Throne Speech does that.

The immigrants that we see annually coming into the province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you take, I would suggest, the 57 MLAs in this House within three generations had immigrated to Manitoba or Canada from another place. I believe the majority of that would be true. The immigration that we've seen over the last three to four years has been incredibly substantive. We will continue on that path, and that is recognized in our Throne Speech as a key and

important role for Manitoba's government and developing Manitoba.

The commitment that we've seen in infrastructure in Manitoba is substantial as well. Both on economic development performance, and certainly for social viability for small communities and large alike, throughout the province of Manitoba, is dependent on our infrastructure. Now you take the comparables, and I know the members opposite don't like to actually look at facts. Their 4.4 percent increase in spending on highways over a decade is a fact. It's a factual number that they've ridden basically flat line for a decade while we had a destruction of our infrastructure here in the province of Manitoba. Last year in our budget we took it from about \$175 million to \$257 million, a massive increase and then again, through this Throne Speech, up to \$400 million per year. That's a doubling of infrastructure dollars, since we've been in, on highways. It's something that's very substantial, something we heard loud and clear from Manitobans, and we've had a substantial increase year over year over year as it's been affordable.

We've invested \$1.1 billion in capital investments alone in our health care system, and members opposite, if they have a short-term memory, I can remind them of the destruction of health care that we saw through the '90s. I know this is why certain members don't want to hear about the past. But you have to use benchmarks and comparables. When you use benchmarks and comparables of where we were and where we are now, I know the members opposite don't like to reflect on that. They fired nurses left and right in the province throughout the years. You know, when we came into power in 1999, we had seen a loss of doctors in this province, a loss of nurses in this province and the attempt by members opposite to privatize our health care system. Privatize seems to be a phase of what the members opposite are all about.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Manitoba Telephone System was something that was built in this province over a period of 75 years by Manitobans for Manitobans. While we were focussing on maintaining and keeping that Crown corporation in Manitobans' hands, the members opposite were saying, prior to the 1999 election, with the member that is now sitting in the chair of the leadership of the Conservative Party saying, as a policy adviser through those years: No, we wouldn't sell it. They did sell the Manitoba Telephone System, and they sold it at bargain-basement prices. The outcome of

that is about a tripling of costs for every single senior Manitoban on their home phone in the province right now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they say they won't sell the Manitoba Hydro. Do I believe them? No, I don't. They will sell the Manitoba Hydro as fast as flipping a coin when they're re-elected, someday. I hope Manitobans pay attention to that. We have the lowest hydro-electric power rates and the best advantage for attracting and growing Manitoba in a system that's been built by, mainly, the New Democratic Party throughout the system in the last hundred years. They haven't developed a hundred watts, enough to light a light bulb in this Chamber while in power.

The major developments of Hydro have always been under the New Democratic Party in this province. They have already said, and their leader has said, and I'm sure the Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu) would follow along with the leader, as she usually does, that they will sell and privatize Manitoba Hydro. They will privatize health care and they'll privatize Crown corporations that work for Manitobans.

Now the philosophical differences when members opposite rant and rave about their excellent financial competitiveness does not portray into fact. We're in a better position now after seven years of balancing the budget, in building health care, in building education, in building social programs and assisting Manitobans, in reducing taxation for Manitobans, and still in a better position than we've been in two decades. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know it galls members opposite to see that.

We've reduced small business tax in Manitoba. For example, when we came in, at 8 percent; now in January going, certainly, into 2008, we'll be down to 3 percent. It was the second highest when we came in in '99, on small business tax. It'll now be the second lowest of provinces in Canada now going into this next year.

They like to talk about corporate taxation. The corporate taxation when we came in was at 17 percent. We're now lowering it to 14 percent January 1. Mr. Deputy Speaker, all they can say is it's not fast enough. That's the only thing they can say about it. They didn't do it. It's the shoulda-coulda-woulda party across the way. All they can say is it's not fast enough. It's nonsense.

Quite frankly, the middle income tax bracket at 16 percent, down to 13 percent. Mr. Deputy Speaker,

the reduction in property taxation for all Manitobans, the reinstatement and commitment of educational support, taxation for Manitobans is broad-based across the spectrum, and it affects everyone in Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite here like to target individuals or small groups of Manitobans; we've seen that before. We've seen that in the sale of MTS. If you track it back and you look at it, who benefited?

**An Honourable Member:** The brokers.

**Mr. Smith:** The brokers, Wellington West. The previous member of the Conservative Party that was sitting in the chair across the way, I believe, used the term, "shook down" or something like that from Wellington West. The shakedown, the shakedown member. Certainly, the benefits of the sale of MTS, when we look at it, honestly look at it, you look at who benefited. I'm certain that the Member for Morris bought plenty of shares in MTS when it was sold, bargain-basement pricing on the backs of Manitobans. She sits in this House, and she has the audacity to say that we are not building Manitoba fast enough. She's not saying we're not building Manitoba, but the shoulda-coulda-woulda party across the way did virtually nothing.

In fact, when we look at the books, and, if you look at it as this is business books in Manitoba, when we came in, the rainy day fund in Manitoba was sitting at \$264 million. Coincidentally, guess what the telephone system was sold for? Mr. Deputy Speaker, \$264 million. Basically, they were broke. They were looking for something to sell, selling off assets. Now, a regular business, a normal business, when you get to that point that you're selling off assets, you're no longer building. In fact, you're going backwards. You're going in reverse, which was probably a good example of why people were leaving Manitoba. Youth were leaving Manitoba, and Manitoba was losing population growth every year, '94 right to '99. There was a change in '99-2000, when we came in with the initiatives that we did. This Throne Speech builds on that again. It invests in what's important for Manitobans.

Now, I know members opposite, the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson), the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) on the other side, Mr. Deputy Speaker, don't have health care as a key priority. Now, what's wrong with that? Manitobans are loud and clear. Health care is a key priority. The new member of the Conservative Party opposite, the

Leader of the Opposition, has said, and this is not coming out of thin air, he's publicly said: Health care is no longer one of our key priorities. Well, I can tell you health care is a key priority on this side, and will continue to be, as is our best economic engine, investment in education. That will continue to be a priority.

\* (15:30)

Priorities for us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, continue on the green side. They continue on the protection of our water and our environment. They continue on investing in families. They continue on growing Manitoba. The shoulda-coulda-woulda party on the opposite side, every day get up in the House. One day it'll be, you didn't spend enough. The next day they'll get up and say, you spent too much.

A good example is "Spirited Energy" for Manitoba. "Spirited Energy" is something that was brought forward by some of our best industrial private businesses in Manitoba. It's something that was advised to the Premier's Economic Advisory Council. It's something that is done worldwide. We're no longer just in a neighbourhood, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're not just competing against provinces beside us. We're not just competing against the country close by. We're competing internationally. This side of the House believes in free trade and putting us in a position where we can, and we can be the best to compete against anybody in the world.

A fair level playing field which members opposite fail to address, both on our agricultural side, our industry side, our manufacturing and our retail side is something they didn't touch. In fact, they were driving our books in this province into a negative. When you have to sell Crown corporations to even balance your budget, there's something definitely wrong with a government. Manitobans recognize that. Manitobans recognize the fiscal irresponsibility as members sitting on the opposite side, not only the fiscal irresponsibility, but the social value responsibility that they lacked for Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Throne Speech does address that. I'm proud of the fact that, when we look at the Throne Speech and we look at the investment in Conawapa that we'll be making, it's one of the largest hydro-electric projects in Manitoba's history, the building of Manitoba Hydro, as the dead dinosaurs continue to be sucked out of the ground in Alberta. The oil money is good; that's a dying resource. That is something that, No. 1, pollutes the

world, No. 2, is non-sustainable, non-renewable and you look at the reality. I use the analogy that members opposite are still trying to adjust their 8-tracks. You know they take the matchbook and they slide it under their 8-track while they're driving down the highway to get that music just right. You swing over to a party that looks at vision, and new vision, and the iPods on this side, and the satellite radio on this side as we drive down the highway are in touch with reality. We're in touch with new expanding, growing markets, new technology and we're looking at the reality of the international world.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite, they want to say you're not going fast enough. We're putting ourselves in a position to be one of the most competitive provinces, the most productive provinces in Canada and the shoulda, coulda, woulda on the opposite side, they can say, well it's not fast enough. But what Manitobans do recognize is building blocks. They do recognize year over year over year the position that we're putting Manitoba into is better and better and better each year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all you have to do, any of the MLAs in the room—and I know the Member for Tuxedo has talked to her neighbours in Tuxedo. I've talked to her neighbours in Tuxedo. In fact, her one neighbour, I actually am a friend with. Great people in Tuxedo, great people in that area, but what they tell me is the house prices that they had back in 1999, and the house prices they have today have changed. That reflects, for the average family in Tuxedo, those average folk, and those average folk in Morris and those people that are out there that are homeowners, their net worth and their capital assets are growing. Their confidence in Manitoba in the job market, if they're in business, the growth that we've seen in business, their housing values and their net worth are all getting better. That wasn't the case in the '90s. Yet a government that was fiscally irresponsible, driving us into the hole, members in the—not some of the new members, but certainly from their policies of that government, if they hadn't sold MTS they would have netted out at a zero and, in fact, maybe even a minus.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you don't sell assets to balance your books. It's just a simple principle, whether it's in business or someone that is living in a home and has to begin to sell. It's like the average homeowner having to sell their car just to make ends meet. That's an analogy of the government on the opposite side.

Through the initiatives we've taken year over year through documents like the Speech from the Throne we've shown Manitoba year over year how their net worth has gotten better. We're showing how we reduced income tax for them. We show how their taxation from school tax and investing in capital for their children in school systems is a positive and a bonus.

We're showing how \$1.1 billion in capital investment in health care has grown our health care system to a point that is so much better than we had in '99 where they were selling Crown corporations, and they were firing people in our health care system. They were cutting out seating for doctors in our province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you saw people leaving the province, young people, people of all ages. Seniors: prices on phone bills going up; their taxation on their homes going up, and the net value of their homes stagnant.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a turnaround, and people recognize that. People at kitchen tables all across Manitoba recognize that. The Speech from the Throne continues to build on that, with families in mind from everywhere in Manitoba, whether it's north, and I know the members opposite think north is the other side of the Perimeter, but we have got a huge province, a beautiful province that we are investing in: the Rice River road, the east side, and investments in health care, and in our infrastructure in the north. People recognize outside the Perimeter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the University College of the North is a good example. It's both an economic development strategy and tool, and it's a social development strategy and tool. Now, the Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu), as she drives home in her vehicle, will recognize, as she drives down the Trans-Canada Highway and she drives through the development, the major development for the first time in a decade—massive amounts of dollars spent between Winnipeg and her home riding and through Headingley. I can tell you that she recognizes building, and she recognizes pavement and she recognizes intersections. She recognizes the growth, and the business growth that's out along there.

It must be extremely difficult for the Member for Morris to stand up in this House and say she drives in her vehicle home to Morris each day, and people on the street are waving and smiling and happy, and their businesses are growing, and the sun is brightly shining, and the grass is green, and the water is flowing, and Manitobans are smiling, saying the

Legislature and the decisions of this government are making my life better.

As well—[interjection] That's my point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, she says, yes, we are investing all this money in infrastructure. But the reality is they invested 4.4 percent in infrastructure growth in the '90s. So people didn't see that, and she didn't drive by new developments on highways. She didn't drive by the investment, the massive investment that we've put into infrastructure. It's not that member's fault. She wasn't part of the dark days of the '90s with the Filmon government, but their leader was. Their leader was the adviser. He was the chief of staff. He was a key guy on the advisement.

I know that the *Winnipeg Sun*, and the *Winnipeg Free Press* recognize it, and they certainly report on the massive infrastructure investments that we've had in the province of Manitoba. I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the general public sees that when they see the news at night. They see that on the development in Manitoba. Manitobans recognize the difference between the '90s and 2006-07.

\* (15:40)

The confidence level of Manitobans is at one of the all-time highs and, if you ask someone, like one of the members of the press, maybe Tom Brodbeck, or someone, what the price of his home was worth with the Filmon government, and you ask, what's the price of your home worth now, today. One of the best identifications of a good economy is home prices. It's one of the largest investments, believe it or not. Members opposite might not believe this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but that's one of the largest investments that most Manitobans ever make.

There's a confidence in the job market for Manitobans where we have one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada. That in itself is fantastic. It does leave a challenge. It's a challenge that we like. It's a challenge that I see in my department on the training needs that we need for growth in our industries. That was identified in the Throne Speech.

We have got over 30 percent increase in what I believe is one of the best economic investments in education, and we need to do more. That is identified. We will do more, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is one of the things both in Alberta and in Manitoba, two of the highest in Canada, that industry is saying we need more people, we can grow. This is a good environment in Manitoba. It's one of the best

environments in our market in this part of the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to talk for hours. I know the members opposite would like to hear more, but thank you very much for my time.

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

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, listening to the Member for Brandon West, the pride and the arrogance that he was displaying here, it is interesting that after seven years of unprecedented revenues we are still last in western Canada. So the information that he was putting on the record was, in some way, hypocritical, because certainly this is not representative of where we would like to see our province be at this point in time.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to just indicate that I am pleased to be able to speak to the Throne Speech, not because there's a whole deal of content in the Throne Speech, but because of the part of democracy where each MLA in the province has an opportunity to speak freely regarding the contents in it regarding issues that they have within their own constituencies. There are millions of people in this world who would love to have that opportunity.

It is interesting that on November 10, the day before Remembrance Day, I met a young lady. She was in her early twenties, and she saw the poppy that I was wearing. She indicated that we should be very proud of the opportunities that we had to represent our country. So I asked her if she was a Canadian citizen, and she said, no, she wasn't. She had been here for two years but was very much looking forward to becoming a Canadian citizen.

So I asked her why. The country that she had come from, she did not have the opportunities to speak the way we can, where we can be critical of others. We can be critical of the government, the shortcomings that they have; but on the other hand, we can also point out some of the good things that they do. She said in the country that she came from, they did not have that opportunity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's why I'm pleased today to be able to speak up and to just put a few comments on the record and indicate some of the concerns that I have regarding the direction that this government has taken us in the past seven years.

But the other area that I would like to address is the matter of decorum within this Chamber. I have

been noticing in the last while, and the Premier (Mr. Doer) of our province who is the leader, he is the Premier of the province. He was democratically elected, but some of the decorum that we have seen from him as our leader in the last several weeks, I would say, has been disappointing. I think that what Manitobans look to in leaders, whether that's MLAs or the Premier of the province, but they look at people who are statesmen, who treat themselves in a honourable fashion. I think that the last while within this Chamber, that has been eroded. I speak to myself as well, that I think we need to be a little careful of the image that we portray to those who are watching us, whether it is on television or the young people who watch from the gallery, that this is certainly something that we need to take to heart.

Today I want to pay special tribute to some of the retiring MLAs, and I'm thinking of the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner). The first time that I met the Member for Emerson is, of course, many years ago, but the reference I want to make today is to 1995. When I was looking at running as a MLA in the area, I asked him to come and address the gathering that I had, and so he was our guest speaker. It's not one of those times where I had to beg and ask and hope that he would come. He immediately indicated that he would be very pleased to come to speak. So I appreciated the information that he gave us that time and, of course, the friendship that we've continued to have after those times.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wanted to thank him for the—

**An Honourable Member:** Almost free.

**Mr. Dyck:** I have been asked whether he charged anything for that. No, this was free. He did come without asking for any money. He was a good Conservative, right?

So that goes back to 1995 when I was elected and, of course, was successful. I have been able to represent the constituency of Pembina ever since.

The other person I would like to recognize is the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings). Of course, I had known the member before I was elected, and I learned to know him really well after that. I have always appreciated his dry, subtle humour. He has a way with words. I have always appreciated how he has been able to bring levity to a situation that is, at times, somewhat sombre. So, again, I wish him well as he is looking at retirement.

Then the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Sale) who is retiring as well. Although we have had some disagreements, I would say over the years that he has, though, helped me and pulled me out of a few tight spots over the years, and so I am grateful for that as well. That, of course, was the time when he was the Minister of Health.

But I do want to make an observation. Within the last several days, we have had some contested nominations. There have been a lot of people out at these nominations. I think, for instance, of the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) and the nomination that they had out there, 1,300 people out there, over 1,000 people who registered as voters. Or the situation last night at Ste. Rose where they had over 1,000 people, huge memberships. All these Progressive Conservatives who are out there, and who are wanting and are encouraging a change in government, and then I look at the Fort Rouge nomination where they had around 200 people. Doesn't seem to be that same excitement out there.

So I am very positive about the direction that we are heading and, of course, very positive about the outcome of the next election.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to thank the constituents of Pembina for the confidence that they have placed in me again. Certainly, it is an honour to represent the fastest-growing area in rural Manitoba. *[interjection]* The Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) is saying that he is running second, but I appreciate hearing that. So it is great that our constituency is continuing to grow. I want to thank them for the vision that they have, for the foresight that they have in being able to have that kind of growth.

Also to my family, I want to thank them for the support that they have shown. For those of us who come from rural Manitoba, I would say that the sacrifice is possibly a little greater than it is for those who live within the urban area. In many cases, we leave our homes, our constituencies, on late Sunday night or early Monday morning and head back on the weekends. I know that members from both sides of the House experience that, so it is a sacrifice being away from home all week. Of course, I am closer than a number of people who come from the remote areas in northern Manitoba, but, again, we want to thank them for the support that they continue to show to us.

Now to the Throne Speech itself. Certainly, we have seen a very, very political Throne Speech. The

Throne Speech is to be a road map as to the direction that the government is wishing to take the province within the coming year. When you look at the Throne Speech, you feel as though you are living in the past because of the references made numerous times to the 1990s. I do not understand it. However, it seems as though they could not get back into the year 2000 and on. Of course, I don't blame them because, if you have seven years, you have seven scandals that they need to deal with; it becomes a little cumbersome.

\* (15:50)

I heard someone laughing about the seven scandals, but I do want to put these on record: the issue of Pharmacare or Hydra House or Crocus, where \$60 million was squandered away, 33,000 Manitobans were affected. The "Spirited Energy" campaign that's being run, we just had that in our Question Period today, or the floodway, where you've got over \$60 million going to their union friends. Or the destruction of a new bridge, where another one that needs to be replaced is going to be left. Or if you look at the Seven Oaks School Division. The list goes on.

So we see that we have a government in place who is having problems; there is no doubt about it. Another one I could suggest is the inappropriate use of funds from the Workers Compensation Board. Yesterday, of course, it was revealed to us from the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) that there's another issue out there. So we have a government who, over the last seven years, has been running into problems and is trying to continue to cover them up. But, on the other hand, we also feel that it's time for big changes.

Then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate also that any of the ideas that came out in the Throne Speech were ideas that they got from the Conservative caucus. So, while they're good ideas it just shows again that the NDP have run out of ideas, and I would refer you to such things as the review of regionalization, or the grandparents' rights, or the interfacility transfers. These were issues that we have been asking for for years, and it just appears that finally they have fallen on some ears that recognize the value of some of these changes and so they're implementing them. So I would applaud them for listening, but again I would reiterate the fact that we have a government that is running out of ideas and it's high time that we see the change.

So then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we start back into the House just following the Throne Speech, of course, in the first three days we needed to divert attentions to the Canadian Wheat Board. We had a debate on that. It was good debate. I will not argue that. But this is definitely not within the jurisdiction of the provincial government; this is a federal issue. So I do need to read a quote that the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) put on record. Again, this is specific to the Wheat Board, and it shows where the NDP, where philosophically they stand. This isn't the way they want to improve things in Manitoba, and so I want to just read this quote, and this is what the Minister of Agriculture said, and I quote: "I want to see farmers get a better return," said the Manitoba Agriculture Minister. "I don't want them to be sacrificed for value added."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have for years been talking about value-added industries within the province of Manitoba. I come from a family farm background. The only way that we could survive on our farm was if we added value to the products that we had, and so I find it disturbing that we have a Minister of Agriculture, who's supposed to be giving some direction to the agriculture community within the province of Manitoba, who would have that kind of an attitude. It's disconcerting; I don't believe that it's proper for her to make those kinds of comments. I think it's also discouraging for the young entrepreneurs who want to get into the agribusiness to hear those kinds of comments. So I hope that she will rethink her position that she has taken. I believe that the only way that we can get to be a province that is a "have" province in Manitoba is if we add value to the products that we produce.

Then I want to just briefly talk about the decision that this government has made to shut down hog production within this province.

**An Honourable Member:** Pause.

**Mr. Dyck:** The member mentions "pause." I would say it's a moratorium, a pause, whatever you want to call it, it has done irreparable damage to the industry within this province. I just want to expand and explain some of the problems that are being faced out there right now. First of all, this decision that was made to, as the member says, pause, moratorium, shutdown—I would say they're all the same with the industry—is not based on science. It's not based on science. I know that they have access to the graphs, the amount of phosphates that are within the lake. The information that they are putting out there is that

1 percent of the phosphate level in the lake is contributed, and they point it back to the hog industry, which is 1 percent. Again, there's nothing based on science here. It was just done. It was done arbitrarily, and I would fault the Premier (Mr. Doer) for this. I'm not sure that his Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) or the Water Stewardship Minister had any idea that this was taking place. I believe it is the Premier who, in a dictatorial fashion simply took and shut down the industry, and said: No more construction.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to go one step further. I had a call last night from a young farmer, and he was extremely disturbed. He had bought his farm from his father as his father was wanting to retire. He had taken the same approach as many have taken within the province to expanding their operations by adding value to their products. So, its being a grain farm, he had built a hog barn. But right now he's in a state of flux because he doesn't know what he is to do. With the environmental rules that have come out, and with some of the management rules that are out there, he really is supposed to be building a lagoon. On the other hand, though, through the directive of this government, any changes, any construction, anything, has been shut down. So he really doesn't know what to do. So he doesn't know whether he should stay on the farm, whether it's time for him to leave, to try and sell out, try and get another job. Where does he go from here?

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you can see, the moratorium that they have put on the hog industry is a real concern for farmers out there, for businessmen. They don't know what to do.

But let's take this one step further. It's not only those who are involved in the pork industry. They buy feed. They buy their products from others who are producing the products. Then there are the electricians. There's those involved in construction. The ripple effect, the snowballing effect is out there. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you can see, it does not only affect one sector of our economy and society; it affects all of them.

If I can give you just one more example, this is like if you have a conveyor belt and all of a sudden this belt stops. Everything stops, and in order to be able to get the product moving again, it takes an initiative that is difficult to get moving. So I would just, I guess, ask the government of the day: What is their rationale? What is their plan? Is it to keep the moratorium on for a month, two months, six months,

a year, two years, till after the election? What is the plan? I believe that they owe it to Manitobans to indicate to them very clearly as to the length and the duration of the time that they are planning to keep this on.

But then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the other part that I want to add to, as well, in discussion regarding the moratorium, have they, in fact, consulted with Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, MACC, or the FCC, or the banks, credit unions. Have they consulted with them? Will they be putting a moratorium on the loans that they need to pay back because millions and millions of dollars have been invested? What is the plan? Did they think this through as to the ripple effect? Or are these people actually going to be losing their farms? Or let's take it one step further. Are they going to have to pay interest on the money because they cannot be in production?

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think there are issues out here that, I would suggest to you, this government either knew and doesn't care or that they just literally did not think about. So it is a real concern to rural Manitoba. Rural Manitoba is trying to get this province into a "have" province, and on the other hand, you run into the impediments that are put out there by the government of just curtailing and stopping, and just putting a complete stop to it. So I would ask them to relook this.

\*(16:00)

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, another area that we have really lost in the value-added part of it is the biodiesel. Now, I know that one year ago I was in touch with contractors who were looking at putting up four biodiesel plants within this province, and it was month after month that I asked the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology at that time to meet with these people. It did not happen. It did not happen. So, as a result of this, as a result of the inability to meet, they have gone to the U.S. now, and so they are going to be constructing four biodiesel plants just south of the Canadian border.

This again would be value added. This is something that we could produce in the province. So we know, for environmental reasons, that there's going to be ethanol out there, there's going to be biodiesel. We know the direction that it's going. For environmental reasons, we want to continue to pursue that. Added to that, I believe that's a really good way for agriculture to be able to add value to their products. But again, this was a government that

just didn't look at it, whether they weren't interested or they didn't know how to proceed with this, but the point is that nothing was done. So we're seeing the opportunities within this province, but the people are moving out of province.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

I need to talk just a few minutes on education. I mentioned at the outset that the area that I represent is the fastest—well, the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) may chirp in again, but one of the fastest growing areas in rural Manitoba. So, with that, there are challenges. I see the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) sitting there, and I want to thank him for the school that we got. But now the problem is, and he knows that it's continuing, the day that we opened up the school, we still have 900 students in huts. So our infrastructure is being challenged. I know that he is aware of it, but I do indicate though that we need to continue to work, to be able to find a spot for all the students that are out there. It is a growing area.

Now, in the province, we don't see that kind of growth taking place in all the regions. But there are certain areas within the province that are growing, and growing dramatically. Consequently, we need to make sure that the infrastructure is in place to support that.

The other area that we're looking at, and I see the former Minister of Health sitting here as well. He's heard me talk about it numerous times as the Tabor Home, a personal care home in Morden. Again, because of the growing area, we have a good mix of youth and the elderly people moving into the area, but we need to find accommodation for them as well.

Then, of course, there's that midway part where we need to find and place the elder care for those who are in transition.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do need to wrap it up, but I just want to indicate that there is so much that we need to do within this province. I just want to make a few comments regarding the things that we did or did not hear in the Throne Speech. There was no mention made of the new or competitive taxes, of the hallway medicine or, as I indicated before, the Crocus scandal, the issue that should be high on the NDP's list of priorities. Manitoba's economy is clearly not competitive with its neighbours to the west, yet not a single mention was made of improving Manitoba's economy, encouraging private-sector investment for creating quality jobs as a way to help young people in Manitoba. Young

Manitobans have the skill and ability to pursue their dreams anywhere in the world.

Now, just to confirm what I've just said, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation noted that NDP's efforts to keep young people here are useless if our taxes are still too high. The Manitoba Chamber of Commerce was very disappointed, and the Chamber commented that the government has not tackled the problem Manitoba has with retaining talent. In addition, there was no mention made of help for low income Manitobans and none of the initiatives will lead to create more jobs in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit to you that if we want to make this a have province, we need to create an environment within this province that we can become that, and we can. There are many things that we can do in this province. We can add value to the things that we do and there are ways that we can attract our young people and keep them at home.

So, with those few words, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for this opportunity. Thank you.

**Mr. Tim Sale (Fort Rouge):** Mr. Speaker, my first words are to congratulate those members in the House, three on the other side and myself, on the wisdom of retirement. *[interjection]* Every day, I gain more certainty that this is the right decision. I want to thank the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) and the former leader, Mr. Murray, who retired earlier this year to take a position with the St. Boniface Hospital Research Foundation. The Member for Ste. Rose, the Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan), we've had many interactions. The Member for Ste. Rose was my critic, and I was his critic. We enjoyed some strenuous debates, but he was always a gentleman and he took seriously our role and his role and it never became personal, which I think when it does in this House, it's sad.

The Member for Carman was particularly hardworking in regard to the health needs of his constituents, and he approached me on many occasions with health issues, always in a way that was looking for solution. I was always able to take his issues seriously. We're never able to solve all of them, but he and I maintained, I think, a very good relationship. I was delighted to be part of the process that brought the first wind farm in Manitoba to the area which he represented.

Mr. Speaker, just as a matter of interest, I was touched, actually, when I announced my retirement,

that the former leader, who was actually still then the member for Sturgeon Creek, wrote me a personal note thanking me for my service and wishing me well. I thought that was a class act on his part, and I think that that's something that speaks well for him personally. I hope that all members will aspire to the kind of graciousness that he exhibited in his personal life and in his interactions with members, but my first words of thanks.

I do want to say some things about where we're going in this province and how we're getting there. I hope the Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu) is able to hear my remarks or at least to read them because I want to give some gratuitous and unasked for advice. That is that when we want to debate important matters it's, I think, useful to at least have some facts, and it's useful to check the accuracy of the facts you think you have. So I just want to refer to a couple of things. She had some difficulty yesterday with numbers around youth retention. I want to tell her that "plus" means, we got them; "minus" means, you lost them. During the years of the minus, that is those '90s, when my colleague the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chomiak) calls them those dark years. Actually, that was not his phrase; that was the president of the Manitoba Medical Association's phrase, talked about those dark years.

Two thousand young people a year were lost to this province, on average, in the decade of the '90s. That's the fact. That's the StatsCanada Manitoba Bureau of Statistics' fact. That is a minus sign, and it means they left. From 1999 onwards the average has been 1,100 gained every year, 1,100; seven years, 7,700, that's a plus. That means there are more than there were. So I just suggest to the Member for Morris that she check some of her numbers.

She talked too about housing. Now, I was Minister of Housing. I followed the honourable Member for Southdale (Mr. Reimer), and I know that the Member for Southdale has a phenomenal memory, as well as a phenomenal collection of ties. He is, in my view, Mr. Speaker, the tie champion of this Legislature, and today in particular he has one, if it were just a shade oranger, I would buy it from him. It's a beautiful tie.

Mr. Speaker, when I came into the Ministry of Housing, one of the first things the senior staff showed me was a report from the consulting firm, KPMG—

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

**Mr. Sale:** You remember that one. Yeah, and I don't know, I'm sure you remember what it was about.

**An Honourable Member:** Yes, I do.

**Mr. Sale:** Yes. Okay. Well, what it was about, Mr. Speaker, was selling off all our public housing. It was a report on the feasibility of selling off our public housing. Now, the Member for Morris may want to ask for that report to be tabled at some time, so she can see what the Filmon government was planning to do with low-income and public housing: sell it off. Now, the interesting thing about the timing of that, when the previous government was going to do it, it was less than a year and a half after the federal government devolved the housing onto the Province and gave the Province a bucketful of money to look after it.

\*(16:10)

Now, the Member for Southdale (Mr. Reimer) and I have always had a good relationship, but I'm particularly gratified that he's laughing in his remembering of this, and I hope he will take the Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu) out for coffee and share with her the plans the Filmon government had to, not only not ever do any more public or low-income housing, but to sell off what we had.

Mr. Speaker, I was privileged to negotiate the first low-income affordable housing agreement that this country has had for more than a decade, because the Mulroney government got out of it, the Chrétien government didn't get back into it until, and this was a particularly delicious thing, I got to negotiate that agreement with Alfonso Gagliano. You know, whatever old Alfonso did—and there may be something rotten in Denmark, who knows?—whatever old Alfonso did, he was a person of his word because if he said it was going to happen, there were certain people in the federal government who jumped, because they didn't know what the consequences of it not happening might be.

We were able actually to track old Alfonso in the Château Frontenac in Québec where we finally came to an agreement after a great deal of arm wrestling. We found him by the smell of his cigars. We knocked on the door and said, we need to talk to you. And he said, how did you know I was here? I said, well, there's this coming under the door, wasn't sure whether it was a fire or you, and now we know who it is.

So I want to tell the Member for Morris that there are 4,900 more housing units in Manitoba

today that are affordable and a significant proportion of them are handicap accessible, because the former minister and myself and the former, former minister made a policy that our new units would have a significant portion of accessible housing units for people with handicapping conditions.

I hope the Member for Morris gets that information as well, Mr. Speaker: 4,900 more units, a new housing agreement, more than \$100 million of federal funding coming into Manitoba because this government is committed to providing affordable housing for people who need it in Manitoba.

I also want to talk a bit about child care because there, too, I was privileged to be part of a government that's committed to child care, that raised wages, that has increased the number of spaces by close to 5,000 spaces. Now, the Member for Morris yesterday, it was pretty funny. She seems to be under the impression that child care costs \$100 a month.

I have a colleague here who is in the childbearing years. Well, he's not actually bearing children. He's contributing to the bearing of children, and he tells me that child care in his case is \$29 a day. Now, \$29 a day times 20 for, let's say that's the number of working days in a month. I think that every member can figure that one out. It's about \$580 a month. Now, \$100 a month, \$580 a month. Not quite the cost of child care.

But you know what was really delicious? She thought that this was going to be really helpful for people with nannies. Yes, for those poor folks who can't afford child care but can afford a nanny, this is going to be really helpful, and they should have a choice to have a nanny in their house so that their nanny can look after their little kids. That \$100 a month is just going to cut the cost of that nanny down to zero, I'll bet.

I just want to tell the member opposite that the people who need child care are single moms who want to get off welfare. The people who need child care are working families who are working at two low-income jobs to keep food on the table for their children. The people who need child care are people with children with special needs who need those children with a professional person in a child care setting.

A hundred bucks a month isn't going to cut it for those people, Mr. Speaker. The national program that we signed on to, the first province to sign on to, with

the minister who is now the Minister of Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick), taking that leadership would have provided thousands of more spaces for Manitoba children so that more families could leave social assistance, that more poor working families could have quality child care for their children. Their federal counterparts cancelled that program, and this opposition party endorses that stance, in part because they think nannies are a good idea. What a shame.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about Ontario. I know this is Manitoba, but I want to talk a little bit about Ontario. Ontario is a great province. I grew up in Ontario. I left there when I was 23 and came here, and I have now been here over 40 years. I'm really glad I came here.

Mr. Speaker, there's a Crown corporation in Ontario called Ontario Hydro. Actually, there isn't any more. There are two Crown corporations: Hydro One is one of them and OPG, the power generating side, is the other.

The Conservative government of Mike Harris came into power with a major objective of dismantling the Crown corporation called Manitoba-called Ontario Hydro. That was a Freudian slip, Mr. Speaker. I almost said Manitoba Hydro. They did such a botch job of that dismantling that it cost them billions of dollars in the market. The power prices in Ontario have skyrocketed. The morale of the two corporations is under the table, and who is the adviser to Mike Harris? The adviser to Mike Harris is someone who left Manitoba, advised Mr. Harris, among other things, on how to dismantle Ontario Hydro, which has been such standing success; and then he came back here to work for the mayor of this city; and then he sought a nomination federally; and then decided he didn't want to do that, he'd get a nomination provincially. Then he decided he wanted to be the leader, and he is, today, the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the dismantler, the adviser on the dismantling of Ontario Hydro.

This is a leader who is committed to a hard-right, far-right agenda, shown by the fact that they are actively dumping moderate members of their caucus, actively attacking sitting members, challenging them for their nominations directed centrally by one Donny Orchard, who was responsible for, remember Connie Curran?

Connie Curran, who came to Canada, had never been to Canada before, came here saying that she could save \$100 million over two years in the

hospital system in this province. When she finished her work, there were 1,800 fewer nurses; there were 119 fewer doctors, and she hadn't saved any money. There was no less expenditure in the health care system, but she got \$7 million Canadian for her advice.

You know, Mr. Speaker, she's never been back to Canada. She stayed in the United States where she can make money in a for-profit health care system that spends 15 percent of their GDP, and still leaves 45 million Americans with no health insurance and 80 million with only partial catastrophic coverage, Mr. Speaker. That's the advice sought by the former government under the former premier. The advice on Hydro that was given to Mike Harris has been the large contribution of the current leader.

Mr. Speaker, long after the last barrel of oil is pumped in Alberta, after the last gas is extracted, the water will run in Manitoba's rivers, and our turbines will be producing power. That's our water that runs through our province, runs through First Nations' territories, runs through farmlands, runs through our cities. That's our water; that's our heritage. That's our future, economically and environmentally. So not only would they like to dismantle Manitoba Hydro and sell it off like they did the telephone system, under all of these protests, oh no, no, no, we're not going to sell it. Don't throw me in the briar patch. No, we're not going to sell Manitoba Telecom system. We're going to keep it.

Less than two months after they were elected, they had hired six brokerage firms, six firms to advise them on the sale of the telephone system. Mr. Speaker, if we hadn't gotten that information out by our research, there wouldn't even have been a debate. They simply would have closed the Legislature down and sold the company as they had planned to do. I will never forget the day that I and my colleagues stood at the back of that Legislature, over on the far side, because we had been silenced by a Speaker who would not recognize our members when they tried to speak.

\* (16:20)

Our minister, now, of Family Services and Housing even came across the floor and waved at the Speaker and said, Madam Speaker, do you see me? She would not recognize us. We were silenced in the debate. The rules of the House were broken, and Manitobans were robbed of the most profitable Crown corporation they owned at \$13 a share. In six months, those shares were at \$46 a share and more.

Last year, they reached \$60 a share. Today, they are selling at about \$44.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans will not, cannot, must not allow anyone to dismantle Manitoba Hydro. It is a Crown corporation that has served us since the 1950s, when it was created out of the old Manitoba Hydro Electric commission board. More importantly, it is a research organization that is looking at hydrogen. It has helped us on wind energy. It is looking at biomass. Manitoba Hydro has trained over 50 percent of the geothermal installers in this country, the certified installers. Over 50 percent of them have been trained by Manitoba Hydro. We have 4 percent of the population. We have trained 12 times that number of the installers of geothermal, and we are the national leader in geothermal energy.

So we must not lose sight of the fact that those who promised not to sell one Crown corporation, and then do, must not be trusted with government when another Crown corporation could be in their hands for the same kinds of purposes, and for the same kind of absolute theft of the wealth of Manitobans—\$13 a share, \$44 a share, Mr. Speaker. That's the wealth that was transferred out of this province. It was transferred to brokers in the sum of \$44 million, and to lawyers and countless more millions of dollars. There were more Jaguars and Porsches on the street after the sale of Manitoba Telecom than we had ever seen in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have been part of a government that believed that the First Nations of this country have the capacity and, in fact, the inherent right to look after their families and children. We picked up the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry that members opposite had left on the shelf. When my colleague, now the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Mackintosh), then the Minister of Justice, came into his office in 1999, he found on the shelf the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry in its original wrapping. It had never been opened. So, when we made the commitment when the Justice Inquiry came out, and I take some pride in the fact that I worked on that commission with Justice Sinclair and Justice Hamilton, I had the privilege of actually writing and working on the child welfare chapters and the probation chapters of that report. I take some pride in having had that opportunity in 1991-92 to do that.

When we came into government, we said we would implement that report. In partnership with my colleague, the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), Minister of Culture; and my colleague,

the Member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), a former chief of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation; and others in this province, Mr. Speaker, Métis, First Nations, we did something quite historic, which was to recognize the inherent right of Aboriginal and First Nations' persons to look after their own families and their own children wherever they are. That is the symbol of the relationship that is so critical that we must understand in this province.

If you don't think that it is a matter of human and inherent right, at least recognize, and I call on the members opposite to recognize, that one-in-four labour market entrants in this province is an Aboriginal person, one in four. There is an immense reservoir of talent, artistic talent, cultural talent, talent in the engineering and medical and nursing and education and social work and business fields. The first Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that understands that it's not just a question of right, not just a question of history, not just a question of dealing with ancient wrongs, it is question of our own survival as a prosperous people.

If we do want to have a prosperous future, a future of inclusion, a future of tolerance for all of our children and grandchildren, and I do, Mr. Speaker, then we must work in partnership and with respect with all of our First Nations on all issues. And, yes, sometimes getting it right takes time.

Mr. Speaker, I worked with a number of First Nations in regard to Wuskwatim, for example. I worked in an initial way with Fox Lake First Nation in regard to Conawapa. I've worked with other First Nations in regard to other issues, and, yes, it takes time. Yes, you should consult thoroughly. But, if you do that, and if you do it out of respect, the solutions that come forward are better than we could have thought out by ourselves or over a shorter period of time.

I think, particularly, of the solutions that we came to in regard to the transfer of cases in the child welfare system. We went into that to look at what the problems might be and the opportunities might be, not with a road map, and it took a while for everyone to understand we didn't we have a road map. We had a series of opportunities. But, once that was clear, the partnerships and the solutions that came forward were phenomenal, Mr. Speaker, and I am honoured to have been part of a government that truly believes in those kinds of partnerships.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to those in our caucus and those in our province who have championed the abilities, the inherent rights of, the great skills of, and, frankly, the patience of First Nations' people in dealing with the many issues that need to be dealt with if we are all together going to prosper in an inclusive and tolerant way.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take a few minutes to speak about an education policy that has been so, I think, effective. When you get a 40 percent increase in enrolment in our universities and community colleges, something has to be happening that's right, a freeze in tuition. But now you know, there are those who are suggesting that the rebate may not be as effective as some other measures. I disagree. When you are a northern Manitoban, whether you're a First Nation person, a Métis person, or a non-Aboriginal person, and you're faced with the costs of going to university, the cost of tuition, yes, but the costs of housing, the costs of food, the cost of travel, being able to look forward four years and say: I'm going to get 60 percent of my tuition back over the next few years for staying in the province that I was born in and love, and work in that province, I think that's a powerful inducement for people not just to pursue post-secondary education, but to make the commitment to our province. I think it's exactly those people who will be influenced to stay, who will want to work in our province, that this tuition rebate will serve very effectively, and I congratulate our Premier (Mr. Doer) and our ministers on coming forward with their very useful, I think, suggestion.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I've been appalled this week at the debate around the Wheat Board. There are 500 direct jobs in this city that depend on the Wheat Board. There are many more, generally, we think three to four times that are the indirect jobs that depend on the Wheat Board.

Let me remember for members, if they don't, why we have a Wheat Board. We have a Wheat Board because the railways of this country, the shipping companies of this country and the great grain companies of this country extorted value from farmers in the 1920s and the teens. Do you remember what the curse was in the Prairies in the 1890s? God damn the CPR. That was the curse that was the universal epithet of farmers. We have a Wheat Board because it gives farmers a collective power against those Archer Daniels Midland, against Lazard Frères, against Cargill, all of which are fine companies, but I don't know a fine company that won't take advantage of an opportunity to make more

profit. To say that farmers shouldn't have a vote, shouldn't have the right to determine their own future is simply appalling from a party that says it's a Conservative Party that has a history in Canada of supporting democracy. To be opposed to the vote for farmers on the Wheat Board is simply appalling, simply appalling.

So, Mr. Speaker, we put \$1.1 billion in health care infrastructure. We put \$380 million in our public school system. We've triggered \$300 million in our university system. We have a floodway that's going to protect us from a 1-in-300 flood for this coming year, up from 1-in-70, and they're still complaining because it's on time and on budget. It will give us 700 years of protection when that event rolls around, which I don't expect to be during my lifetime.

Finally, my thanks to you for presiding over a sometimes raucous House, and I apologize to you, Sir, for my occasional contributions to that level of raucousness. I wish you well in your continued role, and thank you for your service to this House.

\* (16:30)

#### House Business

**Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader):** On House business, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** On House business.

**Mr. Goertzen:** Mr. Speaker, in accordance with rule 31(9), if Private Members' Business is held next Thursday, I would like to announce that the resolution that will be considered is the resolution on Seven Years, Seven Scandals sponsored by the honourable Member for Southdale (Mr. Reimer).

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been announced that Seven Years, Seven Scandals is the resolution that we will deal with on Thursday morning.

\*\*\*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hour being 4:30 p.m., pursuant to rule 45(3), I am interrupting the proceedings in order to put the question on the motion of the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard). That is the subamendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the subamendment read?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense? [Agreed]

THAT the amendment be amended by deleting items (a), (b), (o) and (r) and by adding at the end of item (v) the following words:

(w) the government's failure to provide meaningful tax changes, such as elimination of the payroll tax, that would make Manitoba more economically competitive;

(x) the government's failure to resolve the underlying cause of the unprecedented number of children in care housed in hotels, namely its failure to provide adequate resources and assistance to help keep struggling families together in the first place;

(y) the government's failure to provide a stable policy environment to promote growth in Manitoba's agricultural sector, one that involves genuine consultation with agricultural producers and representatives from rural municipalities;

(z) the government's failure to commit to the principle of accountability in the delivery of public health care services in Manitoba;

(aa) the government's failure to legislate a legal right to timely access to quality health care and to provide the public policy framework required to implement this right;

(bb) the government's seven years of neglect of the importance of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders in Manitoba, their connection to criminal activity and the desperate need to diagnose and treat this condition;

(cc) the government's failure to properly address the issue of phosphorus loading into Lake Winnipeg, because of its preference for hollow policy announcements, such as buffer zones;

(dd) the government's absurd decision to place a moratorium on all hog plant expansions after blatantly ignoring widespread opposition to locating the OlyWest hog processing plant inside the city limits of Winnipeg;

(ee) the government's failure to facilitate the creation of an agri-industrial park outside of the city of Winnipeg to support developments such as the OlyWest plant;

(ff) the government's failure to respond to the health care state of emergency declared by Cross Lake as well as its failure to resolve the difficulties in the provision of basic health care services to other First Nations communities in Manitoba;

(gg) the government's failure to work co-operatively with the Métis people of Manitoba;

(hh) the government's failure to adequately promote and encourage the tourism across all of Manitoba; and

(ii) the government's refusal to commit to a process leading to meaningful electoral reform and improved democracy in Manitoba.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the subamendment?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

#### Voice Vote

**Mr. Speaker:** All those in favour of the subamendment, say yea.

**An Honourable Member:** Yea.

**Mr. Speaker:** All those opposed to the subamendment, say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Speaker:** In my opinion, the Nays have it.

**An Honourable Member:** On division.

**Mr. Speaker:** On division.

#### Formal Vote

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader):** Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

Order. The question before the House is the motion of the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard). That is the subamendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

**Division**

*A RECORDED VOTE* was taken, the result being as follows:

**Yeas**

*Gerrard, Lamoureux*

**Nays**

*Aglugub, Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Brick, Caldwell, Chomiak, Cullen, Dewar, Doer, Driedger, Eichler, Goertzen, Hawranik, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maguire, Maloway, Martindale, McFadyen, McGifford, Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Rowat, Sale, Santos,*

*Schellenberg, Smith, Stefanson, Struthers, Swan, Taillieu, Wowchuk.*

**Madam Deputy Clerk (Bev Bosiak):** Yeas 2, Nays 43.

**Mr. Speaker:** I declare the subamendment lost.

Those in favour were 2 and Nays were 43, so the subamendment is lost.

\* \* \*

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

The hour being five o'clock, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 23, 2006

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