



Third Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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Speaker*



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Seventh Legislature

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ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
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CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
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DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
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DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
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ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
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STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, November 23, 2001

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 4—The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I move, seconded by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen), that leave be given to introduce Bill 4, The Order of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Ordre du Manitoba, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, and members of the House, this amendment will change the number of people who have been appointed to the order each year from eight to twelve. It is a recommendation that has been unanimously made to the Legislative Chamber by the selection committee, who were absolutely overwhelmed with the number of excellent applicants that came in from people of all walks of life in Manitoba for the Order of Manitoba. I would highly recommend it to the House. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today the Honourable Bradley Green, Attorney General from the province of New Brunswick.

Also, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery

where we have with us today a class of students studying politics and the mass media at the University of Winnipeg. This class is led by Mr. Don Benham.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

HOPE Learning Centre

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this entire education issue is about how the Government deals with people. It is about how they treat one group one way and then how they treat another group another way. It is about how they tell the Legislature one thing one day and then completely change their story the next day. It is about how they try to hide the truth and fool the public. It is about the lack of standards that the Premier has for his ministers and for his Government.

My question is to the Premier: Can he tell Manitobans that with respect to the Government's relationship with HOPE that he has been consistent, open and honest?

* (10:05)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): The Auditor's Report has been tabled and made available to all members of the Assembly. We certainly are operating in a way that is consistent with the recommendations of the Auditor's report and the findings of the Auditor's report. This side of the House respects the office of the Provincial Auditor.

Mr. Murray: The question, of course, was asking the Premier whether he has been consistent, open and honest, and he did not answer the question.

My question again is to the Premier. I would like to quote his own words. My question is to

the Premier when he said, and I ask if he stands by the words that he quoted, and those were: I am responsible for all financial decisions.

Mr. Doer: Given the misrepresentation of the member opposite with the Auditor's words, one would be very careful not to be misrepresented by members opposite, who have misrepresented words all week. The Provincial Auditor's report is a product of a request by the Department of Education in March of 2001, when apparently in '98 and '99 the recommendations in the department to have an audit were stopped at some level. The audit is before the Legislature. The facts are fairly clear.

The expenditures in the 1999 Budget were \$6 million. The expenditures that were made were \$17 million. I heard the other day that members were going back and forth about when they knew, but clearly on a tape it was absolutely clear that during the "writ period," which is a very specific legal definition, the writ period is a legal term not a term that could be interrupted in a false way, the members opposite knew. Then I also saw in a radio interview that the overexpenditure was accounted for in a supplementary warrant. Well, I checked back to the supplementary warrant during the writ period, and the \$11 million overexpenditure was not accounted for, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Murray: I would like to ask the Premier: Is there anything else he would like to add about the funding of HOPE?

Mr. Doer: I am again disappointed the member opposite did not apologize to the Provincial Auditor. I am disappointed that the members opposite who made statements that were factually not true yesterday, the day before and the day before that, have not corrected the record.

I do want to correct the record from a statement I made yesterday on the issue of an investigation that was being conducted. The investigation I referred to has not been completed, but the process of the Deputy Minister of Justice determining whether in fact an independent prosecutor is required is the same process in place now as it was with the previous government, and there are other precedents

where the deputy minister has chosen to use the Department of Justice and where he has chosen to have an outside investigator or outside prosecutor. Mr. Speaker, I wanted that clear for the record.

* (10:10)

HOPE Learning Centre

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, in light of the provincial audit being conducted, HOPE's funding was frozen in May of 2000. This was after the funding was granted earlier that month. It was then reinstated in July of 2001, prior to the completion of the Provincial Auditor's comment. Then, again, it was removed on October 4, 2001, the date of the provincial audit release, and according to the minister, who was quoted on Friday, November 16, in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, "We terminated their funding the minute the report was released."

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Education: Is HOPE receiving any taxpayer money directly or indirectly from the Government of Manitoba today?

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth): Mr. Speaker, we tabled in this House earlier this week a letter to Lionel Orlikow dated August 1998, indicating that Upward Bound would be subject to an audit, an audit that never took place. I would like to know, and I am sure Manitobans would like to know, who stopped that audit from taking place from members opposite because this Government when allegations were made took action, and we are dealing with an adult learning centre fiasco designed by members opposite.

Mr. Tweed: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table today HOPE's education program advertisement that is being placed through ads throughout Winnipeg and also on the Internet. It basically says that the programs are free to all people who wish to apply.

I also would just like to refer to the minutes of the School Board Division No. 1, where they have entered into an agreement with the Department of Education and Training and HOPE to run adult learning centres.

I want to give the minister a second chance, Mr. Speaker. Will he answer today: Is the provincial government indirectly or directly funding any HOPE operation?

Mr. Caldwell: Well, Mr. Speaker, it has been an extraordinary week in this House. Certainly there has been more mud and innuendo, comments of integrity and character assassination. We have seen more requests for resignations in this Chamber in the last two days than perhaps has occurred in the last decade. Yesterday we had the unprecedented activity of the Provincial Auditor's integrity being undermined by members opposite.

We care, Mr. Speaker, as a government, about adult learners in this province. We care about stability for adult learners in this province and stability for the educational programs that they participate in. We have acted in the most judicious manner possible given the fact that we came into office and inherited a program with no controls, no accountability, massive over-expenditures. We will continue to act in a responsible manner that both supports learners and brings accountability to a program that had none previous to this Government.

Mr. Tweed: Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister of Education again: Will the Minister of Education confirm his words of Friday, November 16, in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, where he states: "We terminated their funding the minute the report was released," or is he continuing to fund them?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, this Government has put into place a system of funding for adult learning centres that has accountability, something that was sorely lacking before this Government came to office. This Government has put into policy and practice a system of funding that supports programs and not a per-capita grant that obviously, as identified in the Provincial Auditor's report, led to serious, serious problems to the degree that the whole issue has been referred to the RCMP, whom I have confidence in, if members opposite do not. I have confidence that they will provide us with some answers to these questions.

* (10:15)

HOPE Learning Centre

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, this is now about the credibility of this minister and this Government. This minister told the people of Manitoba, as quoted in the *Free Press* on November 16, that he said, "We terminated their funding"—that is HOPE funding—"the minute the report was released." We know today that they are operating offering free tuition. We ask the minister if he is providing funding and he refuses to answer.

Mr. Speaker, we have a tale with this organization: It was granted funding; it was cancelled; it was reinstated in July. It was cancelled on October 4, says the minister, and now it seems to be continuing. Could the minister explain this very peculiar situation on funding HOPE?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I was hoping the Member for Lac du Bonnet would stand up and correct the record from yesterday: "I want to ask the Premier why he would order two senior deputies who are in a power relationship with the Provincial Auditor to call and ask him to revise his statement." That sentence had three factual errors: (1) I did not order anybody to do anything; (2) they are not in a power relationship with—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: (1) I did not order anybody; (2)—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite made three factual errors in the statement he made yesterday: (1) That I ordered two deputy ministers; (2) that they were in a power relationship with the Provincial Auditor, which they are not; and (3) that they asked him to revise his statement.

Would the member opposite, who last year had me fishing with people I have never fished

with before, stand up in this House and start taking responsibility for his own truth in this House?

Mr. Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, me doth think the Premier protests too much. I quote the words of his own Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that he terminated the funding immediately. I ask the Premier, who says he is responsible for all financial decisions: Is HOPE currently receiving any provincial taxpayers' money today, directly or indirectly? Please, Mr. Premier, answer the simple question.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, this member has no credibility with members on this side of the House. I repeat, the member—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

* (10:20)

Mr. Doer: The member opposite yesterday said, and I quote: I want to ask the Premier why he would order two deputy ministers—wrong—who are in a power relationship with the Provincial Auditor—wrong—to call—wrong—and ask him to revise his statement. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Three strikes and you are out, Mr. Speaker. It is time for the member to apologize to this House.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, since the Premier is totally incapable of answering a very simple question, I would like to ask one of the Minister of Finance. Can the Minister of Finance tell this House if he met on, I believe it was March 1, 2001, or early March 2001, with an administrator named Antoinette from the HOPE learning centres?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was approached and did meet with the so-named person, and I undertook to refer her concerns to the Department of Education, and the Department of Education

took it upon themselves to call the Provincial Auditor in to investigate the entire situation.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, on a new question.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I would now like to table for the House a series of e-mails between Pat MacDonald, who is, I believe, the secretary-treasurer of Morris-Macdonald School Division, who was—oh, pardon me. She is the individual the law required to be fired. She is the superintendent that the law required be fired, but they kept because they very much trusted her. It is a series of e-mails between her and her then-employee, Bill Bumstead, which references that particular meeting. I think the e-mail speaks for itself, that it does tell a somewhat different story than that implied by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), but he can answer that one later to others.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Education why in these e-mails Pat MacDonald, whom he has had enough trust to keep in office, I want to ask why she, after meeting with his deputy, was able to make the comment, and I quote: "Obviously, Government is very concerned about anything related to adult education going media, particularly related to Classroom 56 and HOPE." Why is his minister so concerned that the public would find out about Classroom 56 and HOPE?

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth): Mr. Speaker, obviously this Government is interested in getting to the bottom of this situation, something that cannot be said for members opposite. When they had the opportunity to call in the Provincial Auditor in 1998, they chose not to. It is a very curious situation we have here where members opposite, every day in this House, malign and character assassinate individuals—myself, the Provincial Auditor, whoever happens to be walking by it seems.

We on this side of the House care about education in this province. We care about learners in this province, Mr. Speaker. We care about accountability for the education system in this province, and we will continue to do so.

Mr. Praznik: I would like to ask the Minister of Education, given that his department ordered an audit, funded HOPE, took away their funding, reinstated their funding, took away their funding, and funds today—I want to ask this minister to tell the House if he or his deputy had any meetings over the course of—since January of this year with the Orlikow family or administrative representatives of HOPE.

Mr. Caldwell: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I have had no meetings with representatives of HOPE. I should also add that on October 4 the Department of Education sent a letter to HOPE indicating that funds, and I will quote directly from the letter: This letter is to provide your organization with official notification that funding from the Department of Education and Training to HOPE will be discontinued as soon as possible and no later than December 31, 2001.

This comes to the nub of this issue in terms about cut, cut, cut, now, now, now. We are interested in ensuring that adult learners in this province, as well as young students, some of whom are in the gallery here today, have the opportunity to continue their education in a manner that does not destabilize and interrupt the opportunities available to them.

*(10:25)

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister then if his tough stand of last week: We have terminated them right away, I would ask him if there is no expectation that HOPE is going to continue, why are they in November still continuing to take their students?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, I know that the member from Lac du Bonnet does not have much of a concern for students. That was expressed by his own school board in Agassiz in the press the other day. Unlike the member opposite, we do care about students. We care about providing stability and accountability for the programs that they are—

Point of Order

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order because I heard from the minister's colleague sitting next to him that it

was because of the students that the HOPE funding is still continuing.

I would like to advise the minister that, as a result of his decision with Morris-Macdonald School Division to terminate ALC centres as of December 31, there are going to be a number of teachers laid off, which is going to directly affect all the students in Morris-Macdonald.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to recognizing the honourable Minister of Education and Training on the same point of order, I would just like to remind all honourable members that when the Speaker rises that all members should be seated and the Speaker should be heard in silence. I would ask for the co-operation of all honourable members for a little decorum in the House.

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, I guess it is fortunate that we did not—

Mr. Speaker: Is this on the same point of order?

Mr. Caldwell: The same point of order. The member has no point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Morris, he does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, I think that the comments raised just point to the fact that if members opposite were in office, this program would have been shut down on October 4 and all the students would have suffered. That point was made quite eloquently just a second ago.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, on a new question.

Mr. Praznik: Yes, on a new question, Mr. Speaker, the minister's words were terminated the minute he got the report. Those are his words.

I would like to now go back to the course of events for this year approving \$640,000 for HOPE in this year's Budget, then cancelling it in May, reinstating it in July, cancelling it in October, and now continuing to fund it. Mr.

Speaker, I would like to table for the House today a copy of the 2001 funding applications for adult learning centres, which HOPE would have had to have filled out, would have had to have come to the minister's department in order to receive funding. I want to ask this minister, given that at the time he had already ordered an audit of adult education because of HOPE, how did they ever approve HOPE for \$640,000 when one of his own criteria is proper accountability?

* (10:30)

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, I can say that I am very grateful that Winnipeg No. 1 took a leadership role in providing adult learners who were being served with the opportunity to continue being served and providing the opportunity to continue their education. We on this side of the House believe very strongly in adult education. We believe very strongly in providing programs of some quality. We believe very strongly in providing accountability of fiscal resources.

When we came into office, as I have said many times in this House, \$6.6 million was budgeted for adult learning centres; \$17 million had already gone out the door when I came into the minister's office. This is not an issue about \$400,000; this is an issue about tens of millions of dollars that members opposite seem quite content to have no accountability over.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, if the minister is so concerned about accountability, I want to ask him then to explain. We give him the chance to explain why, while he was ordering an audit based on HOPE, his department approved for them, yes, under Winnipeg No. 1, \$625,000, a month or so later cancelled that, reinstated it in July and now it is still under No. 1. Why is he now telling me he is terminating it at the end of the year? What is he doing?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, there is a letter of termination that I referred to earlier in this session here today. There is also a letter from 1998, urging an audit to take place that did not take place in 1998, in 1999, and I think I would like to know, and I am sure Manitobans would like to know, who stopped that audit.

Mr. Praznik: My last supplementary is for the Premier (Mr. Doer). I just would like the Premier to tell the House if when in this Chamber on November 16 he made the comment in a long ramble, and I quote: "Hindsight says we should not have entered into that contract with HOPE in July," if what he really meant was that the political decision to reinstate their friends he now regrets.

Mr. Caldwell: I know members opposite have been—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Caldwell: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that members opposite have literally hurled everything but the kitchen sink in the last week. This has certainly been an instructive lesson for me as a rookie in this House. I have never seen such behaviour in my experience as a community representative. It is very scurrilous.

There is nothing more public than a Provincial Auditor's report. We engaged the Provincial Auditor to undertake this as soon as allegations were made, unlike members opposite.

School Divisions

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education. The Provincial Auditor indicates on page 98 and again on page 100 of his report that there are likely problems in other school divisions in addition to Morris-Macdonald and Agassiz. I would ask the minister to tell this Legislature what he is doing using his best sleuthing to uncover these problems in the other school divisions.

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth): After the integrity of the Provincial Auditor has been impugned, the integrity of most of the members of this House, myself repeatedly, I am reticent to further impugn the integrity of adult learning centres around this province. We have put into place as a government a policy that is based upon

program funding. There is clear accountability in terms of the programs, unlike the system that was designed by members opposite. We have announced in the Throne Speech that there will be legislation this session to bring in a legislative framework, a legal framework to this whole operation that should have been put in place four years ago.

Mr. Gerrard: My supplementary to the Minister of Education. I would ask the minister when problems surface in other school divisions whether his approach will be to slip them the \$450,000 under the table, as he did in Agassiz, or to remove the trustees, as he did in Morris-Macdonald.

Mr. Caldwell: The hypotheticals posed by the Member for River Heights are outrageous. The Auditor's report contains the information salient to this matter, and we on this side of the House have acknowledged the Auditor's report as being our criteria for action. I accept the criticisms in the Auditor's report. I also accept his recommendations.

Mr. Gerrard: The Auditor has said there are likely problems to surface. I just ask: When the minister has a suggestion of an irregularity in other schools divisions, will he stop the audit, as he did in Agassiz, or will he bring in the Provincial Auditor, as he did in Morris-Macdonald?

Mr. Caldwell: I do not know if the member has been paying attention this last week, but we did not stop any audit. In fact, we are the ones who commissioned the Provincial Auditor to undertake one. When an audit was stopped in 1998, the Department of Education was urging its political masters, the members opposite now, to undertake an audit. In 1998 it did not occur, in 1999 it did not occur. It took a change of government to engage the Provincial Auditor in getting to the bottom of this.

University of Manitoba

Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia): I would like to ask the Minister of Advanced Education for an update on the status of the capital project, Building on Strengths, the fundraising campaign

at the University of Manitoba. It is important for our students.

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education): I thank my colleague for the question. Of course, advanced education in this province under this government is all good news. It is particularly true as of yesterday when the Premier (Mr. Doer) and I joined officials and dignitaries at the university to announce the beginning of the Building on Strengths campaign.

When we inherited government, there was a \$200-million fiscal deficit with regard to capital at the University of Manitoba, capital deficit. Last fall, November 2000, this Government committed \$50 million to the ailing infrastructure at the University of Manitoba. Yesterday, the campaign folks were able to announce a total of \$132 million in—

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

HOPE Learning Centre

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba are having an extremely hard time believing the scene of events that took place with HOPE. They were approved in May, and then the funding was frozen. They were reinstated in July and then the funding was removed or terminated, according to the Minister of Education, which we learned today is not true. Why the flip-flop back and forth? Is this perhaps Education and Finance fighting over funding?

* (10:40)

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education, Training and Youth): Mr. Speaker, I have been astounded at the disingenuousness of the members opposite again. We have heard allegations in this House that have been completely outrageous. Yesterday, in fact, took the cake when the Provincial Auditor's integrity was impugned repeatedly by members opposite, who have yet to apologize for that impugning of his character.

We on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, respect the Provincial Auditor. We respect his criticisms and we respect his recommendations. It took a change of government to engage the Provincial Auditor in undertaking his review of the adult learning centre programs in this province.

In 1998, the Department of Education was asking for audits. Bells were ringing; flags were waving, as members opposite said in the press in 1998. They did nothing. This Government will not do nothing and we will respect learners at the same time.

Mr. Tweed: On a new question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the funding was approved in May. It was frozen later that month.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

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

Point of Order

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the member has had plenty of time to put together supplementary questions for today. I am just wondering if you could remind him of his obligation to respect the rules of this House. A supplementary question requires no preamble—Citation 409.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader, the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain was up on a new question.

* * *

Mr. Tweed: Mr. Speaker, just for clarity of the members, on a new question.

Mr. Speaker, the funding was approved in May. It was frozen later in May. It was reinstated in July.

I want to ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger): Who made the decision to reinstate the financing in July?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, you know, as we sit in the House here right now, we have the members opposite saying we want action; we want action there; close the programs; turn the students out into the street. For Morris-Macdonald, I have a press release from the—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would once again ask the co-operation of all honourable members, please.

Mr. Caldwell: Today in the House we have had calls to shut down programs, turn learners out into the street. On November 5, there was a news release from the Progressive Conservative caucus: Tories call on Doer government to delay Morris-Macdonald adult education and teacher transfers. Do not make victims out of students—Gilleshammer, in the headline.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would once again remind all honourable members when referring to other honourable members in the House, refer to the members by their constituency or ministers by their portfolios. I would ask the co-operation of the honourable Minister of Education and Training.

Mr. Caldwell: First, Mr. Speaker, I apologize. It is the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer)—I was reading the headline of the press release.

Mr. Speaker, the Morris-Macdonald fiasco has been identified and has been the subject of a 110-page Provincial Auditor's report. We have been dealing with one paragraph in this report for the last week and a half. I remind Manitobans there are tens of millions of dollars that went out the door here.

Mr. Tweed: Mr. Speaker, I am going to make this as clear as I possibly can. HOPE, whom the controversy of the Auditor's report surrounded, their funding was approved and then frozen. While the audit was continuing by the Auditor of Manitoba, while that audit was taking place, the funding was reinstated in July.

My question to the Minister of Finance is: Why?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): You know, Mr. Speaker, the question why really bears back to the issue of why in 1998 they did not call an audit. The question why really bears back to the fact why the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) did not follow up in 1999 when he was aware of it.

What we have here is a minister and a department that took the proper action and called for a provincial audit. When the audit result came out, they immediately sent a letter out saying the program would be terminated December 31 with due regard and consideration to the continuity of the educational experience for the students while at the same time ensuring financial accountability for the program. If only you would have done that while you were on the watch, we would have been so much better off and saved so much money.

HOPE Learning Centre

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I have one question for anyone in that Government who will answer, if anyone will answer this. They have said they reinstated HOPE in July because they cared about the students. They talked about the audits.

I just want one person, maybe the Premier (Mr. Doer), to explain why the Premier admitted in this House, and I quote: "Hindsight says we should not have entered into that contract in July." Why did you say that, Mr. Premier?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, we have a stark contrast here. People that refused to call audits, people that refused to follow through when they made a mistake, people that make allegations about fraud and then refuse to apologize, and on the other hand we have a Premier that is willing to say the right thing when it is required. We have a Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) that is willing to apologize when he makes an error and then follow up and do something about it. If only this side would have done that, we would have saved millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Phoenix Elementary School

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today—

Point of Order

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): I just wanted to ask the Assembly whether they could probably be quiet long enough so the member could make his statement so the children in the galleries could at least hear.

* (10:50)

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Perhaps if the member had also been concerned not only about children in the gallery but children in classrooms, adults in classrooms, been concerned about the integrity, anything that might be left over on the other side in terms of their credibility, when day after day in this House members opposite get up with statements that cannot be shown to have any truth whatsoever, when they get up and make scandalous allegations about members on this side and officers of this House. Perhaps he should have got up on a point of order then.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable—order. I would just like to remind all honourable members that a point of order is a very serious matter and I would ask the co-operation of all members of the House.

On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Emerson, he does not have a point of order, but he has an excellent point. It is hard to hear the comments of the member who has the floor. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

* * *

Mr. Pitura: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In some respects, with all that has been going on, I would almost want to redo my member's statement, but this is the way it is.

It gives me great pleasure to rise today and share with you that hardworking students and staff of Phoenix Elementary School in Headingley have donated almost 600 pounds of vegetables to Winnipeg Harvest.

Mr. Speaker, 2001 marks the sixth year Phoenix Elementary School has been collecting fresh vegetables for Winnipeg Harvest as part of its Grow-a-Row program. The food bank also asks people to grow an extra row in their garden, then donate the produce. Phoenix Elementary School expands upon that and plants an entire garden. The children take care of the garden in the spring, and staff and parents help to make sure it is looked after during the summer break. When autumn arrives the students harvest the vegetables, which are then donated.

The garden is usually situated on school grounds but plans for playground revitalization did not facilitate it this year. Fortunately the project could continue because Lori Regnier, a teacher at the school, graciously allowed her garden to be used. On the afternoon of September 28, parent volunteers drove about 30 students to the site, where they diligently pulled carrots and picked tomatoes. Soon 595 pounds of vegetables were collected. Bruce Michalski, food acquisitions co-ordinator for Winnipeg Harvest, retrieved the vegetables. To say the least, he was pleasantly surprised by the amount he saw and the speed at which the children had worked, so surprised that he had failed to bring enough boxes with him.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the students, staff and parents of Phoenix Elementary School in Headingley, many people in need were able to reap the nutritional benefits of the fresh produce. I take this opportunity to commend all those involved on their hard work and generosity and encourage Principal Dennis Peterson to remain committed to this project.

ERIK Project

Ms. Linda Asper (Riel): A pilot project called ERIK, Emergency Response Information Kit, was launched in St. Vital and St. Boniface this fall by Boni-Vital Council for Seniors with support from a number of organizations and MLAs. ERIK is a program many seniors in their homes and 20 seniors centres use to provide

paramedics with essential health information when they arrive at the scene of a 911 call. Janice Johnson, paramedic, who has participated in the presentations on ERIK to seniors, knows that it will save lives by facilitating on-site care. The kit contains a brochure, a health information form, and a living will and organ donor card. The information is placed on a senior's refrigerator so that paramedics like Janice will know where to look for it, the name of the doctor, medical history, medication and the pharmacy used.

ERIK is an essential step in providing programs and services that will not only assist seniors in independent living but will provide a valuable personal health safety package to any individual with health or communications difficulties. After the first 100 emergency calls to homes where the kits have been distributed, the information kits will be evaluated. Congratulations to the Boni-Vital Council for Seniors that initiated ERIK, to Shirley Scalleta, chairperson, and to Karen Irvine, resource co-ordinator, for all the work in our communities to implement ERIK.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it is great to see an idea that started as a small community project come into being and to be more accessible to those who never have had the opportunity to otherwise partake in its benefits. Thank you.

Pathways to Success Conference

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I would like to congratulate Assiniboine South School Division on the success of the recent international conference that they put on. The theme of the conference was Pathways to Success: Understanding and Responding to Diversity.

This two-and-a-half-day conference was held at the Winnipeg Convention Centre from October 3 to October 5, 2001. This conference featured many internationally recognized leaders in education, covering such topics as the multiple intelligence classroom, the learner-centred classroom, building moral intelligence, gender issues in literacy, to name but a few.

This conference explored a key issue for educators today: diversity. Educators work to

develop a deeper understanding of diversity in their classroom and methods of responding to this to promote student success.

Once again, the administrators, teachers and parents of Assiniboine South School Division demonstrated their leadership in the field of education by organizing and presenting this conference which was attended by over 1000 educators. In particular, I would like to congratulate conference organizers Linda Dier, Heather Rosentreter, Kim Burnett, Kendra Gowler, Leslie Chale, Jocelyne Fournier-Gawryluk, Deborah Rady, Rob Williams, Val Goodridge, Doug Tiltman, Shirley Whitaker, Wendy Moroz, Gail Watson, Jane Seals, and Sue Clayton.

Another exciting outcome of this conference is that one of the speakers on Building Stronger and Safer Communities, Sandra Dean, has chosen the Assiniboine South School Division to work in implementing her program. With a grant from the federal Department of Justice, Mrs. Dean will bring the Together We Light the Way model which brings business, community and educators together to solve problems.

Once again, congratulations to the Assiniboine South School Division on a job well done.

Alpha House Fundraiser

Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring everyone's attention to a wonderful event I had the pleasure of attending just recently. A resident of Assiniboia invited me to the Alpha House fundraising dinner. This wonderful event brought people's attention and focussed resources on a most worthwhile cause, and that is the cause of family abuse and violence. Alpha House supports abused women and their families.

At this event, we heard a testimonial from one client who was able to turn her whole life around, was able to make a change for her and her family and get out of an abusive relationship. I understand that there were over 80 families assisted by this wonderful organization. It provides personal support, a safe environment and positive employment supports so that people can move from an abusive relationship into the

future and move positively. When this person was able to talk about her testimonial and told how this organization changed her life, how this organization moved her family from one that was just horrid to a positive environment, it was very, very emotional and very touching. She had a true new lease on life. This program provides a hand up.

I would like to commend the volunteers who organized the fundraising event, the board for their unfailing support of this organization, and for all the people who came to the fundraising activity and made a real difference in people's lives. They really did make a positive change. To the staff, a huge commendation for the staff who work hard in a very tough environment.

* (11:00)

I think that it is important to note that our Government is now supporting this project, and it is one that will make society a better place to be and a better place to grow up for many families. Thank you.

Prix Riel

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, October 20 of this year was an exciting day for Jean-Louis and Marie Perron of St. Joseph. On this day, the couple was awarded the Prix Riel for their efforts in creating and maintaining the St. Joseph Museum. The goal of the Prix Riel is to pay homage to Franco-Manitobans who have contributed in a remarkable way, and especially voluntarily, to the development of their community while offering a glimpse into the French way of life. Nominations for this prestigious award are received annually at the Franco-Manitoban Society office. A committee selects award recipients in a total of nine different fields. This year the Perrons were recognized in the category of heritage.

Mr. and Mrs. Perron, Jean-Louis and Marie, have been curators of the St. Joseph Museum since its inception in 1975. I should say to you that both of them have collected memorabilia of Franco-Manitoban background all their life and have donated and contributed all their lives to the collection of this memorabilia. The museum has continued to grow and now includes an old

house, a granary used as a blacksmith's shop, a store, a doctor's office, a school, machine shop, a barn, a milk shed, a building to store stationary motors and Mr. Perron's 19th century ancestral home.

This couple has been part of building on the heritage of the Franco-Manitoban community all their lives. I was born and raised next to the Perrons and have known them all my life. They are indeed worthy of this prix award.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(Seventh Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: To resume debate on the amendment proposed by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray), standing in the name of the honourable Member for Interlake, who has 36 minutes remaining.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I realize I have 36 minutes remaining, but I am going to be a little briefer than that. I realize we are running short on time, and I would like to see as many people as possible have an opportunity to speak. So I will try and limit my remarks to roughly 10 minutes or so and ask that the Opposition give due consideration to this side as well.

If I were to use my full 36 minutes, I would continue on the theme I had begun with yesterday on how this Government in rough economic times believes in focussing on construction projects, infrastructure, and so forth, but I think I will have ample opportunity in future to go on that topic.

Today, I would like to discuss something that is very pertinent in today's society. I would like to focus on the events of September 11, the tragic disaster, the heinous act of terrorism that took place in New York City, and would like to draw attention to activities of the members of the Opposition here, how they have attempted to put words in our mouth, how they have been disparaging this side of the House and attempting to plant the seed that somehow this side of the House is soft on terrorism, that we do not take a firm stand, that somehow there is some division within our party as to what the

proper response should be to that act. Let me be perfectly clear. On this side of the House we unequivocally condemn what took place there. We are strongly behind the federal government and the Canadian military, which very soon now most likely will be going into the theatre in Afghanistan to fight for freedom and for justice. There is no question on our side of the House here that this is the right thing to do.

We entered into the millennium with so much hope. After years and years of strife between the first and the second world wars, a cold war that spanned 30 to 40 years, such hope was emerging. The former Soviet Union had dissolved. The Warsaw Pact countries had disbanded their military alliance and had embraced democracy. We have the former secretary-general, Mikhail Gorbachev, to thank for that, in a large part. He began the process with glasnost and the perestroika movements within the former Soviet Union. So there was so much hope coming at the end of the 20th century, the second millennium, that we would be starting off on a more positive note this millennium, and all of that came crashing to a halt with the attack on September 11. Now, once again, we are facing a new enemy, and Canada once again is rising to the task as we have in the past, as we did in World War II. We will pull our weight when it comes to this.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

What really disappoints me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is how the Opposition attempted to politicize this issue, such a serious issue, thousands of lives lost, and what did they attempt to do? They attempted to gain politically from this. They attempted a shallow little movement in the Chamber here, introducing a resolution with no consultation with House leaders, which is accepted practice. Certainly, if they had wanted to work along those lines, I am sure that our leader on this side of the House would have been more than willing to discuss this. But no, they chose to try and pre-empt the process, and I find that quite shallow, quite opportunistic, but I expect nothing less from members of the Opposition.

Certainly, we can see a very similar vein in this whole argument over the adult learning

centres. It was a disaster that was created by their government. They set it up. They opened the doors to unlimited spending, which led to a catastrophe in the system, a typical Tory attempt to privatize one of our most important institutions, that of public education in our province.

We can see how they are responding to it. Rather than accept responsibility for it, they are trying to pass the buck, trying to pass the blame over to our current Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell). When that is not enough, when they cannot make their case in that respect, they start disparaging independent officers of the Legislature, first of all the Auditor. When that was not enough, they took it further. Now they are disparaging the reputations of the deputy ministers in not one but three departments, departments of Justice, Education and Finance, which I find totally unacceptable.

On top of that, they are calling for resignations on this side, which borders on the bizarre, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Really, as the Premier (Mr. Doer) so adequately stated the other day, if they are so blasé in calling for resignations, possibly their new leader, who has a lot to learn I think in this Chamber, maybe he will pull the pin and resign himself when his scurrilous allegations prove unfounded, as undoubtedly they will.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear, well said.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Well, the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) makes comment, and that reminds me of something else in terms of disparaging reputations. Maybe you should consider apologizing to the member from Brandon West, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray), and also to the Education Minister for your scurrilous comments when you were in Brandon last. "Dumb and dumber," I read in the press. That is completely unacceptable for a Leader of the Opposition and also to the people of Brandon. These were their democratically elected choices. Unacceptable behaviour, and I would call on him to apologize on that front, as well.

Now, as I started on the topic of September 11, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to

make a couple of other points where I think that what is really at stake here is the free and democratic system in society that we have constituted in this country and North America over hundreds of years. My greatest concern given this situation is that governments will overreact, that in response to this terrorist attack, we are going to fall into their trap which is to descend into a siege mentality in North America here, which I think is a very bad route to take. It has taken centuries to establish a free and open and democratic society, and if we are going to sacrifice all that and set up fences and barriers and hide behind the tanks, then I think the terrorists have accomplished their task in destabilizing our society.

* (11:10)

So I would strongly encourage our Government, and the Government of the United States and support the provincial—

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A point of order being raised, the honourable House Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): All too often in this House we have members of the Government using words that have been ruled unparliamentary a number of times, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have been listening very carefully to the member's speech, as I have to other members on the other side. In *Beauchesne's* Citation 489, "scurrilous" has been ruled unparliamentary on a number of occasions.

I would ask you to rule on the matter of using the word "scurrilous." The only scurrilous we are seeing is the scurrilous actions of people on that side, which goes very well with the lies they are putting on the record.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think the Chair would like to take the matter under advisement, so that we can exhaust the rulings in the past and have some kind of guidance for the present operation of the Assembly.

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair has already ruled on the issue. Would the minister like to raise another point of order?

Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): A new point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The member is raising a lot of points, or factual points, or points that he is bringing to this House. The member opposite, I believe, would do well to make an apology in stating that, in fact, the member here is stating lies.

If you want to talk about unparliamentary language, what the member opposite just used is I think probably one of the most unparliamentary tones that I have ever heard.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader, on the same point of order.

Mr. Laurendeau: On the same point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on many occasions members on that side of the House say that there are people who are lying on this side of the House. It is in the same terminology that I am using the word.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Because we want to know what was said on the record, the Chair also would like to take that issue under advisement.

* * *

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I used the word "scurrilous" and it is unparliamentary, then I apologize for that and I retract that. Certainly I will endeavour to respect the rules of order in the House here. That slipped out. I am relatively new to this Chamber and do not know the full list of words that are classified as unparliamentary.

Point of Order

Mr. Laurendeau: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do believe that clears up the previous matter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable Member for St. Norbert has no point of order. I thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition, and I thank the Member for Interlake for volunteering his apology if he had offended the rules of this House as to parliamentary and unparliamentary language.

* * *

Mr. Nevakshonoff: I was speaking on how I felt that we should not descend into this siege mentality and how we should not erode the founding principles of a free and open society. As I said, I was advising that governments proceed very carefully when they draft more stringent laws that might infringe upon those principles.

For example, just recently in the United States, I believe the President was proposing the constitution of military tribunals to deal with supposed terrorists. I wonder, is there a lack of law that could deal with these people that suddenly we should set up secret tribunals that contravene so many founding principles of law such as the right to a defence, a right to face one's accusers, et cetera? So I am concerned about this, and would like to put that on the record.

I have to think back to how things were done in the former Soviet Union. That is something that Joe Stalin used to do. He created a new law himself to deal with people who were causing him problems. He classified them as enemies of the people. That was his terminology, and that was it. You were charged with being an enemy, subsequently taken out, executed, and then your trial was held at a later date, and you were subsequently convicted. That is the extreme when governments get a little heavy-handed, and I think we should always exercise caution when we attempt to regulate overly much.

In closing, because I want other people to speak, I would draw a reference to a novel written by the English writer, George Orwell, *1984*. He was a strong critic of this approach, the heavy hand of government. Most people think he was writing about Stalinist Russia, and to a large degree he was, but the underlying theme of his

work was totalitarianism—the threat that this poses to free and democratic societies. His objective, first and foremost, was to tell people to be vigilant, that people in free and open societies cannot take this for granted; that it was hard fought to establish this system and that it is very easily eroded. So I think I would just like to close on that note, that we have to be vigilant, not only in fighting terrorism, which is quite legitimate, but also in defending the free and open society that we value so much.

Mr. David Faurschou (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Deputy Speaker, It is once again a privilege for me to have the opportunity to rise in the Legislative Assembly to address the debate we are underway with regarding the Throne Speech, and the motion that has been put forward by our honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray) from Kirkfield Park.

I would like, though, to begin by welcoming not only yourself back, but the Speaker and all other elected members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. I believe that all of us are glad to be back and participating in the debate, perhaps, maybe some more than others after the occurrences of the last few days in Question Period. Nevertheless, I think that all of us sometimes must pause and reflect on what motivated us to put forward our name and ourselves toward public service, and to remember those days of soul-searching that all of us went through as to what we felt that we may be able to contribute to this province of ours that undoubtedly all of us take great pride in being residents of.

* (11:20)

As we enter this building each day, which has been on occasion referred to as the most beautiful Legislative Building in all of North America, we have to take pride in and reflect on our forefathers as to their great vision for this province of ours in anticipating the growth and prosperity that at the turn of the century looked like was definitely in hand. I am tempted to go onto a track, but I will stay the course of the high road here, and not be beckoned down an alternative road travelled here by comments from members opposite. However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, every time I enter this building, I feel

energized and enthusiastic about starting again another day representing the people of Portage la Prairie. I always feel very privileged to be one of those so honoured to serve in this Chamber.

At times, we, I believe, lose a little understanding and do not have in the forefront how privileged we really are, that we are one of less than one one-hundredth of 1 percent of the Manitoba population that has the privilege of service in this legislative Chamber. I also want to go one step further for those who serve on Executive Council, that even less than one-third of that number ever have that privilege of serving on Executive Council; to truly reflect upon that in the decisions which you are responsible for and do not take the duties lightly; to recognize that you truly are in a role of leadership and responsibility for our province and for all those who live within our province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to take this time to welcome back those who serve the House: the Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff; also the Clerk's office and all who serve in the Clerk's office. As well, I would like to recognize those who provide us with invaluable service from Hansard that all of us take almost for granted, but we always must recognize the long hours that go into providing an official record for this Chamber, and the invaluable historical document that they provide to all Manitobans in perpetuity.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do want to first off talk of the situation that confronted us on the very second day of this Third Session of the Thirty-seventh Legislature, and that was to debate a resolution that was proposed by the Progressive Conservative Official Opposition of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly that recognized the events of September 11, 2001, and the ramifications that came out of that horrific, tragic event that we all witnessed through the media. All have felt a change in our life and how we perceive our role in this world of ours.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that particular resolution was viewed by the government members with suspicion, that it was politically motivated and that there was a hidden agenda as to the proposal of that particular resolution. I would like to stand in this House right at this point and clarify those statements. Those

statements are in grievous error. We looked to the Government to propose a resolution. None was forthcoming. We felt that it was vitally important that we as members of the Manitoba Legislature stood unanimous in the face of terrorism and passed a resolution recognizing the efforts of our federal government as well as those efforts of the Government of the United States and, indeed, of all of the allies that have come together in a common front to fight a common foe, those who perpetuate terrorism throughout the world.

I am very disappointed that we did not have, as a member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, the opportunity to pass that resolution so that all those across Canada, across North America and indeed across the world saw that Manitobans were united against a common threat, that being terrorism. So I do want to say, not having had the opportunity to speak to the resolution and not having had the opportunity to vote on the resolution, that I would have spoken in support of the resolution and I would have voted in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the basis of security, I think that at times we leave ourselves wanting for the common good on the basis that sometimes we are distracted by partisan feelings within this Chamber, that we feel it necessary to stand and look good to the public as a proponent of our party rather than the people of Manitoba, and I think that is unfortunate. I know since being a new member of this Manitoba Legislative Assembly, I have, at times, considered this particular building as one that is in need of review on security.

I am, after three years of service in this Chamber, still looking to see some action taken in regard to this outstanding architectural building, as I alluded to, that we should look on as a real jewel for our province, as it is known in our global community. I think we should take whatever measures necessary to secure not only this building but all those who must work on a daily basis here. I am not speaking specifically of the members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. I speak of all of the senior administrative staff who have offices in this building and are responsible for the day-to-day workings of

all ministerial responsibilities. I believe that is also a concern.

As well, I look to the members of the Manitoba security force who provide for our safety here in this building, and I am concerned about whether or not the security staff, not only in this building but throughout the province, are being provided with the supports necessary for them to conduct their duties as assigned. I hope that the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ashton) recognizes that members of the security need to be properly trained, and need to have the opportunity to have training that will allow them to fulfill their duties.

I also believe that the minister responsible should, in co-operation with those who are assigned those security tasks, provide the necessary equipment so that they can use that equipment to provide for the duties they are responsible for. We not only have a responsibility for the present day, but we also have the responsibility for the future. It is absolutely imperative that we not only think for today but we think for the future. We want to preserve the Manitoba Legislative Building for the future generations as it has been preserved for us as we are able to serve in it today. I think that is a security issue, and one that should be addressed.

* (11:30)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to move on at this point in time to recognize others that are having the opportunity to serve in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly operations this year. I know that it was mentioned, and they were introduced into the Chamber here, but I want to recognize three young Manitobans who are serving in the Manitoba Legislative Internship Program, assisting myself and other members of the Progressive Conservative caucus this year.

Allison Abra, a native of Winnipeg, has a BA Honours in history from the University of Manitoba and an MA in history from Queen's University. She has been awarded scholarships for her scholastic achievements. Allison has extensive research and work experience and is comfortably bilingual in both official languages.

Julie Goertzen has a BA in history and French studies from the University of Winnipeg. She was the recipient of several scholarships and bursaries in recognition of her scholastic merit. She participated in the Youth Parliament of Manitoba and has extensive work and volunteer experience. Julie is fluently bilingual.

Matthew Enns has a BA in criminology and a minor in native studies from the University of Manitoba. He was on the Manitoba Bison track and field team, 1997 through 1998, and while a student he held employment with IGA, Athletes World and Agriculture Canada, where he conducted scientific research in the cereals department.

I want to congratulate those three young Manitobans and wish them well in their experience here in Manitoba.

I also want to take this opportunity, not to fall into the trap of showing favouritism or partisanship here, but I also want to recognize the three young Manitobans who are serving with the New Democratic Party caucus.

John Crookshanks possesses a BA Honours in political studies from the University of Manitoba. His scholastic abilities have been recognized through the award of several scholarships, bursaries and prizes. As a student, he participated in a variety of extracurricular activities and backpacked through Europe during the summer of 2001.

Gregory Kristalovich is a native of Brandon and a graduate of Brandon University with a three-year BA in political science. He was a president of the Brandon University student union and, in that capacity, served on various committees and governing bodies of the university. He wrote for the Brandon University student newspaper.

Ciara Shattuck has an MA in history from the Joint Masters Program at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg. While a student, she was a teaching assistant in the History Department at the University of Winnipeg, a research and archival technician with Centre du Patrimoine, St. Boniface, and a

teacher of English as a Second Language and program co-ordinator in Taejan, South Korea.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these young Manitobans are indeed outstanding ambassadors, and as it is shown in the travels here, have represented Manitoba around the world. I am certain that other individuals that have come in contact with these young Manitobans now have an outlook on Manitoba that is indeed a positive one.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know we have had a lot of concern in the House over the last five days, but I do want to bring our debate into perspective, as it is on the streets of Portage Avenue, Winnipeg and Saskatchewan Avenue and in Portage la Prairie, Rosser Avenue in Brandon or any other main street in any community in Manitoba. The discussion on the street today is, in fact, whether or not we ever have to pay tax in this province again. I ask the question more specifically because, why would we expect no longer to have to pay tax? The refrain that is coming forth is that we now have the Caldwell defence. The Caldwell defence, in practice out in Manitoba right now, is that you take your T-1 form that the Finance Minister requires you to fill out, and, instead of putting down perhaps two children, you might want to put down twenty-two children. So 22 children is now on there. You sign the documentation. However, if you make a notation on that document stating that particular figure has been inflated, and therefore both parties know that this information is not factual, then it is all right.

We have heard from the Justice Minister in this House that as long as both parties—this is very serious—understand the figures are incorrect, then it is all right. That is factual. This is a discussion that is taking place in the legal aspects of our province today, because now that has been stated that it is a precedent, and our law is based on precedent, that, as long as both parties understand the figures are fictitious, it is all right. No law has been broken. Therefore, now that no law has been broken, and it is understood that these figures now are registered as 22 on the T-1 form here, the Finance Minister, understanding and believing that other departments are responsible for truthful or factual information coming to his department,

now receives that document in sincerity and understanding that it has been provided to his department. Because of the delegation of duty to other departments, he therefore receives that document and references as it should be now recognized that the individual has 22 children and therefore the dependants of that number he no longer, or she no longer, has to provide tax. *[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker, if I might ask, my time limitation is—*[interjection]* Thank you.

I just wanted to bring in an example as to the ramifications of the discussions that are taking place in this Chamber. Some people believe they are a play for media attention, but really, truly, our actions in this Chamber are being viewed in the public on a very serious note. I am giving this example in my most sincere context, that the Caldwell defence does base, when entered into precedent in Manitoba law, can therefore be exercised as Manitoba law and does, in fact, have opportunity to be argued.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to leave that as maybe a cold shower for members of the government side of the House that people are really, truly looking at this situation and taking a very serious look at how it would be recognized by themselves.

I do want to, before I begin the rest of my comments, refer to the newspaper headline October 6, 1999. Right across the page in big bold letters it said: NDP take charge. NDP take charge October 6, 1999. We have had so much dialogue in this House that refers to events that are before that figure, that date. It is just beyond me that the Government that we have here in this province does not recognize that whatever occurs today is in fact their responsibility. We do recognize that sometimes there are carryover and repercussions from decisions made in past, but what we are dealing with today is, in fact, events that are completely taking place under the New Democratic Party watch. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, having said that, I want it to be very, very clear that, in fact, what I next speak is the responsibility of the New Democratic Party.

* (11:40)

Our province is one that I hold very dear, and I do want to see that my children, my wife and I, our children, have the opportunity to live and work and raise their own families here in Manitoba as I have had the opportunity, and as my wife has had. It is really alarming to me that even though the unemployment rate, as is crowed about in this Chamber, that its being the lowest in all of Canada, one has to qualify that insofar as that figures indicate that Manitoba is in fact in last place. Last place. *[interjection]* You said 10 minutes. Manitoba is, in fact, in last place in job creation; absolute last place.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one has to ask the question. If we are not creating the jobs and our unemployment is remaining stable, what is happening to all the students who are coming out of our post-secondary educational facilities in the province? What is happening? Those students are going elsewhere for their careers. We talk a lot about the need in our health care field and how very desperate we are, in fact, to fill the job vacancies in the nursing positions. I have with me today the survey that was conducted by the Manitoba nursing faculty, and they surveyed the last two graduating classes and ask very specifically as to whether they had job openings or positions offered to them in the province, and whether or not they were going to take those job positions.

Now, not all persons responded to the survey, but in the October 2000 graduating class with a 91% response rate, which means 78 of the graduating 86 nurses, only 13 could confirm that they had accepted positions in the province. Granted, virtually all of them had, in fact, received offers for employment, but only 13 of the 78 which responded stated that they were actually confirmed working in the province.

The graduating class of 2001: 70 graduated, 61 participated in the survey. Of those 61, Mr. Deputy Speaker, only 19 confirmed that they had taken up employees here in Manitoba, even though, as I say, virtually all of them had opportunities to work in our province. That is why currently there are ads on the radio which state that our nurses, even though trained in Manitoba, are leaving our province in droves. That is the precise quotation from the Manitoba Nurses' Union advertisement on the radio,

leaving our province in droves. That is the precise quotation from the Manitoba Nurses' Union advertisement on the radio, leaving our province in droves. So we have to ask ourselves why and how in fact we do change this occurrence, because we are investing very heavily in these young people. Close to 75 percent of those graduating from—pardon me. The graduates of our universities cost the Manitoba taxpayer approximately 75 percent of the total amount that it costs to educate the individual.

We as taxpayers have a significant investment although 25 percent by the individual student is significant in itself as well. I am just trying to make the point that for the benefit of all those that are investing in an education here in our province, should have the opportunity to take those skills garnered through our training institutions to practise here in our province. That is why I would like to reinforce our party's position, one that wants to encourage those to take up employment here in our province, and should be encouraged, not with a stick, but with a carrot, and that being through tax credits for the individuals that come and work in our province. Over a number of years through tax credits, those individuals and the costs that they put out of their own pocket towards their education, will be reimbursed. By the time that this has taken place, there is a very good chance that they have already set roots here in our province, and will not so easily leave our province for employs elsewhere.

On a personal note, I truly believe that we should encourage any and all individuals interested in a higher education, whether employed now or unemployed now, should have the opportunity to go to school. That is why I believe that we should broaden our eligibility for Canada-Manitoba student loans, so those that want to go to school should be eligible for those loans and able to further their career, which ultimately all Manitobans would benefit from because those individuals will take those improved skills and advanced education into the workplace in the service of other Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recognize that there is much more to be said, and I hope that we will have an opportunity to say more at a later time,

because I am now with the responsibility for critiquing the Department of Transportation. I am really concerned that that particular area of government expenditure is really waning, and it is not keeping pace with the expenditures that are necessary. Right now industry analysts, professionals, have recognized that we are in a deficit of over \$40 million each and every year. In other words, our roads today are in poorer condition than last year, and last year in poorer condition than the year before.

There are various opinions as to why this is the situation, but as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am new to this Chamber. I am looking ahead rather than back. I believe in operating my automobile by looking out the front window rather than by looking in the rearview mirror.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines): Today, I rise with pride in a House that is dealing with a Throne Speech that shows vision and a bright future for our jurisdiction. I want to say that I am proud to be here, just like the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Fauschou), and I want to welcome the pages, the new interns, the staff that we get to work with, and, in particular, my colleagues on both sides of the House, the MLAs that represent the people of Manitoba.

September 11 was a terrible day in history, and it will impact us in a number of ways. The economic outlook for the world has been dampened. Let us look at the economic situation across Canada. This is a report done by the Conference Board of Canada dated the middle of November, actually, it is date-stamped November 22, 2001, *Provincial Outlook*. It will go through an economic assessment of every province in Canada.

* (11:50)

Let us have a look at, well, let us start at the beginning. Prince Edward Island, where are the potatoes? Well, the member from Portage la Prairie might know what is happening there. Nova Scotia, weak growth. New Brunswick, the economy takes another blow. Quebec, bumpy ride ahead. Ontario, mild and short-lived

recession. Saskatchewan, blame it on the hot prairie sun. Manitoba, going against the grain. Going against the grain.

Now you look at this oppositional motion, and it got me quite depressed. You could look at the statistics. You can look at other factual information, and the outlook is very bright. You look at the oppositional motion, and they seem to see another vision of Manitoba—one dark, menacing and with no hope.

Now one of the important indicators that we all watch with great interest is our housing market. Now, what about the housing market? Are people willing to put their own money on the line? Well, you know what? I understand that there is \$1 billion in sales in Manitoba the first time ever. You know that housing increases and dollar values over the last year have increased 20 percent, 20 percent for house values, and 70 percent is the value of the sales to listings. That is the best ever. In Manitoba, there is 12.7 percent in house building. These numbers represent the best in sales and values since 1903 when the Real Estate Board was established. So you can look at doom and gloom across the House, or you can look at statistics and what Manitobans think of Manitoba. They have confidence.

I am one to try and address the problem at hand. I was told that we are voting on the oppositional motion, and the motion suggests that we do not have a strategy on rural or agricultural policy. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is so far from the truth. All they have to do is open any piece of economic evaluation of Manitoba, and they know that they have their head in the sand from the past.

Agriculture: We have moved aggressively to diversify the industry from the money-losing grains and oilseeds into the livestock industry. Who set us up for a very tough time was the PC government's previous administration offering up the Crow rate, slashing and hacking agricultural supports. You know, it is an unusual strategy to offer up what you have to support your own domestic subsidies even before there are negotiations available on agricultural subsidies. They betrayed the farmers of Manitoba six years ago by giving up the

supports for the Crow rate. You know, it was not until one week ago that we actually had the world agree to look at export subsidies. For six years, Manitoba farmers have been suffering because of the policies of the previous administration. But those are the facts.

How have we moved with the times, and dealt with these stark realities? Diversification. We have our Livestock Stewardship. We have added specialists and resources. We have added more for the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. You know what? It is working. Livestock has contributed to the record levels of \$1.56 billion, or 50.2 percent of total farm cash receipts in the year 2000. That sounds pretty impressive. What does that mean? That means overall farm cash receipts have increased by 18 percent since 1999. If you look at the Manitoba statistics publication that just came out this month, it points out that the January to June statistics show that farm cash receipts are up by 19.6 percent. That says something for the farmers of Manitoba. Those are the facts.

Now you know it is very difficult to understand what reality the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) is coming from. In fact, his own party in today's paper suggests that there are two views: there is one of doom and gloom presented by the Opposition, and one that is built on consensus and looking positively to the future.

There was a recent policy session, I understand, and an individual called William Ashdown says this is not a problem that can be addressed by party line. There must be consensus on behalf of all the players. I do not know if that side listens to their own party members, but I would strongly recommend it. I would recommend it. The perception of Manitoba by the other side is one of doom and gloom, as reflected by this Opposition, which is clearly one that actually has no basis in fact, has no basis in public opinion, and has no basis to even be in the House. That is why it is important to vote it down, because it does not show any example or evidence of the reality of today. We continue to look at this article, and I understand that there has been a series of meetings across the province by the Opposition. They say that one of the major problems is the self-denigrating

attitude by Winnipeggers who refuse to blow their own horn, and it came up over and over again.

Well, I think they would be very disappointed with this piece of literature that the opposition members have concocted. In fact, I do not think it has one shred of evidence and actually has no evidence based on housing statistics, which clearly a 20% rise in house value means that people are willing to invest in Manitoba and are optimistic about the future. We have strategies that deal with rural Manitoba, northern Manitoba and obviously with investing in Manitoba.

You know, one of the other areas that they focussed on was taxation. I do not know why, because which party was the one to reduce corporate income taxes, for example, the first time since the World War? The NDP government is reducing corporate income taxes, and that is something that the other side has never done and never considered to do. The last two budgets have introduced major reform of the personal income tax system, reduced income tax rates, enhanced tax credits, reduced the income threshold that higher tax rates kicked in, delivered two increases in education property tax credit, totalling \$150 for each homeowner and renter. The cumulative annual value of these tax reductions, when fully implemented in 2003, will be \$218 million annually. This value does not include the \$40.5 million in personal income tax reduction announced and implemented in this current session. Manitoba's marginal tax rate is 17.4 percent, the third lowest in the country, and is also less than the middle rate was in 1997 at 17.5. Small business tax is dropping, 8 percent in 1999, now 6 percent, and will fall to 5 percent January 1, a reduction of 37 percent over three years. As well, the amount of business income eligible will increase by 50 percent January 1.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Pursuant to subrule 43.(3), I am interrupting the proceedings in order to put the question on the motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray). That is the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

* (12:00)

Mr. Speaker: THAT the motion be amended by adding to it, after the word "Manitoba" the following words:

But this House regrets

(a) the Government's inability to fulfill the promises outlined in its Throne Speech of November 13, 2001, including the following failures: not ending hallway medicine; not addressing the province-wide shortage of health care professionals; not reducing waiting lists for health care services; not providing adequate resources to Manitoba's justice system, including a commitment to maintain the minimum of 1180 police officers in the City of Winnipeg; rejecting compulsory standards testing in Grade 6, Senior 1 and Senior 4, while at the same time announcing annual reports on student achievement outcomes across subject and grade levels; not ensuring a viable future for the family farm in Manitoba; failing to adequately promote rural economic diversification; failing to secure adequate levels of income loss compensation for Manitoba farmers; and not forging a new strategy for economic development; and

b) the Government's failure to address the challenges facing the province's health care system; and

(c) the Government's failure to bring Manitoba Hydro before the Public Utilities Board, despite the Government's commitment to projects that may potentially cost the Province of Manitoba \$10 billion; and

(d) the Government's failure to release long-term strategies for economic growth which include meaningful tax reductions, thereby making Manitoba less able to compete in the national and global economy; and

(e) the Government's failure—in this time of a slowing economy—to provide any meaningful measures to maintain economic growth and stimulate job creation, thereby making Manitoba a less attractive place in which to live, work, invest and raise families; and

(f) the Government's failure to back up the Member for Concordia who earlier this spring made a commitment to the citizens of Manitoba that there will be "no forced amalgamation (of school divisions). It is not the Manitoba way."; and

(g) the Government's failure to arrive at a national farm safety net program that adequately addresses the needs of the province's agricultural producers; and

(h) the Government's failure, as promised by the Member for Concordia, as promised in the Legislative Assembly on May 9, 2001, to arrange a meeting—"any day, any place, any time"—between the Prime Minister and a delegation of farm, business and municipal leaders in order to address the challenges facing the agricultural sector; and

(i) the Government's failure to address the issues raised by its complete mismanagement of the expansion of gaming through the creation of five First Nations casinos; and

(j) the Government's failure to address issues pertinent to seniors; and

(k) the Government's failure to address issues pertinent to women.

AND has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba and this House.

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

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Formal Vote

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

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

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray), that is, the amendment to the motion for address and reply to the Speech from the Throne. Do members wish to have the motion read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise.

Division

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

Yeas

Cummings, Dacquay, Driedger, Dyck, Fauschou, Gerrard, Helwer, Laurendeau, Loewen, Maguire, Mitchelson, Murray, Penner (Emerson), Pitura, Praznik, Reimer, Schuler, Smith (Fort Garry), Tweed.

Nays

Aglugub, Allan, Ashton, Asper, Barrett, Caldwell, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Friesen, Jennissen, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Mihychuk, Nevakshonoff, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith (Brandon West), Struthers, Wowchuk.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 19, Nays 30.

* (12:10)

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

To resume debate on the motion by the honourable Member for Flin Flon—

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30? *[Agreed]*

Order. On the motion by the honourable Member for Flin Flon, the debate will remain open.

The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, November 23, 2001

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