

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

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Speaker*

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

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

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

### *PRAYERS*

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PETITIONS

#### **Education Support Levy and Special Levy**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

All Manitobans are concerned about providing a high quality of education to students.

The current model of funding education through property taxes no longer works.

Education is a provincial responsibility and provincial funding of the operation of Manitoba's public schools has fallen every year under the current Doer administration to the most current level of 56 percent.

Residential property tax bills continue to rise as local school divisions are forced to turn to property owners to offset decreasing provincial government funding.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) has shown little action in finding a long-term solution to providing school divisions with predictable, stable and appropriate funding for public education.

Manitobans pay among the highest property taxes in all of Canada.

The elimination of the Education Support Levy and Special Levy on residential property and farmland would reduce property tax bills by approximately one-half and enhance transparency and accountability in the funding of public education.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Doer) to consider accepting that the funding and delivery of public education is exclusively a provincial responsibility.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider eliminating the Education Support Levy and Special Levy from all residential property and farmland in Manitoba.

Signed by Bob Matias, Judy Matias and Vera Loader.

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

#### **Crocus Investment Fund**

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Manitoba Government was made aware of serious problems involving the Crocus Fund back in 2001.

As a direct result of the government ignoring the red flags back in 2001, over 33 000 Crocus investors lost over \$60 million.

Manitoba's provincial auditor stated "We believe the department was aware of the red flags at Crocus and failed to follow up on those in a timely fashion."

The relationship between some union leaders, the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the NDP seems to be the primary reason as for why the government ignored the red flags.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to consider the need to seek clarification on why the government did not act on fixing the Crocus Fund back in 2001.

Signed by Pablito Sarinas, Marieta Sarinas, Cecilia Catolico.

\* (13:35)

### **Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement**

**Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

The Government of Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro have stated publicly that a referendum vote including all NCN band members will be held as part of the approval process for the Wuskwatim Hydro Project.

The Government of Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro have stated that the Wuskwatim Hydro Project and associated hydro transmission lines will not proceed without the support of the majority of NCN band members through the Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement Referendum.

NCN band members were not properly informed and consulted concerning the terms and implication of the Wuskwatim Agreement in Principle.

The partnership agreement to be approved by the Wuskwatim PDA Referendum will largely determine the economic future of NCN First Nations.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro (Mr. Chomiak) and the Government of Manitoba consider ensuring an informed, appropriate and fair Wuskwatim Project Development Agreement Referendum vote, and a vote overseen by an independent qualified third party such as Elections Manitoba.

Signed by Harry Moose, Isabel Moose, Ken Moose and many others.

### **Fort Garry Hotel**

**Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman):** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

In 1987 the City of Winnipeg seized the Fort Garry Hotel from its owner, Harvard Investments Limited, a family-owned Manitoba corporation, in what has been characterized as a miscarriage of justice.

Due to deliberate actions of the City of Winnipeg, errors by the Municipal Board of Manitoba and a lack of clarity in provincial legislation, Harvard was denied the due process and natural justice that are fundamental to the property tax assessment and appeal process in Manitoba.

As a result, the company was unfairly burdened with a grossly excessive assessment and tax bill that in turn precipitated a tax sale and mortgage foreclosure, effectively bankrupted the company and caused Harvard's shareholders to be dispossessed of their business and property.

The background to this petition was outlined more fully in a grievance presented to this Assembly by the honourable Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan) on May 18, 2005.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade (Mr. Smith) to consider conducting a review of the circumstances outlined and to consider making a recommendation for redress to the Government of Manitoba.

Signed Mitch Charles, Jaren Valel, C.T. Daher and many others.

### **Teachers' Pension Plan Pension Adjustment Account**

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden):** I wish to present the following petition.

The background to this petition is as follows:

After contributing to the Teachers' Pension Plan Adjustment Account (PAA) which funds the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) since 1977 until the year of our retirement from the profession of teaching, we find ourselves facing the future with little hope of a

meaningful COLA, and with the resulting severe loss of purchasing power.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the provincial government to consider funding the PAA to ensure that we receive a reasonable COLA, and that any loss of purchasing power we will face will be minor.

This petition has been signed by Dennis Eirikson, Fred Waines, Mary Ellen Roach, Mildred Harkness and many, many others.

\* (13:40)

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to present the petition on behalf of the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen).

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

#### **Coverage of Insulin Pumps**

**Mr. Cullen:** I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

Insulin pumps cost over \$6,500.

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

Good blood sugar control reduces or eliminates kidney failure by 50 percent, blindness by 76 percent, nerve damage by 60 percent,

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

Signed by Jim Webster, Peter Kroeker, Blaine Williamson and many others.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development Second Report**

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

**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following—

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

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

#### **Meetings:**

*Your committee met on Monday, June 13, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.*

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

*Bill 207 – The Medical Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi médicale*

#### **Committee Membership:**

*Substitutions received prior to commencement of meeting:*

*Mr. Derkach for Mr. Cummings*

*Mrs. Stefanson for Mr. Rocan*

*Mr. Penner for Mrs. Rowat*

*Hon. Mr. Sale for Hon. Mr. Lathlin*

*Mr. Jennissen for Hon. Ms. McGifford*

*Ms. Korzeniowski for Hon. Mr. Rondeau*

*Mr. Aglugub for Hon. Mr. Smith*

*Mr. Dewar for Hon. Ms. Wowchuk*

**Public Presentations:**

Your committee heard eight presentations on Bill 207—*The Medical Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi médicale*, from the following individuals and organizations:

Harry Morstead, *Citizens for Choice in Healthcare*  
 Dr. Darlene Boushard, *Manitoba Society of Homeopathic Physicians*  
 Dr. Shoshana Scott, *Private Citizen*  
 Linda West, *Private Citizen*  
 Ian Breslaw, *Private Citizen*  
 Nathan Zassman, *Private Citizen*  
 Perry Kimelman, *Private Citizen*  
 Helke Ferrie, *The Glasnost Group and Cos Publishing*

**Written Submissions:**

Your committee received two written submissions on Bill 207—*The Medical Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi médicale*, from the following individuals:

Florence Matthews, *Private Citizen*  
 Father Methodius Kushko, *Private Citizen*

**Bills Considered and Reported:**

Bill 207—*The Medical Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi médicale*

Your committee agreed to report this bill, with the following amendment:

*THAT the proposed clause 36.1, as set out in Clause 2 of the Bill, be replaced with the following:*

*Non-traditional therapies*

*36.1 Despite section 36 and Parts VIII to X, a member shall not be found guilty of professional misconduct or of incompetence solely on the basis that the member practises a therapy that is non-traditional or departs from the prevailing medical practice, unless it can be demonstrated that the therapy poses a greater risk to a patient's health or safety than the traditional or prevailing practice.*

\* (13:45)

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

**Motion agreed to.**

**TABLING OF REPORTS**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report for 2003 Concerning Complaints about Judicial Conduct.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Red River Floodway Operation**

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Water Stewardship):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a statement to the House regarding the operation of the Red River Floodway.

Mr. Speaker, the Province of Manitoba will operate the floodway gates on an emergency basis today to lower river levels within the city of Winnipeg to reduce the probability of widespread basement flooding and the resulting risk to health and damage to property.

This operation is required as the result of the current high level of the Red River. It is currently 15.9 feet above James Avenue level and 749.2 feet at the floodway inlet and the forecast of continued rising levels to a crest of at least 17.5 feet or more at James Avenue by later this week. All indications are that these levels will remain high for several weeks, and there is a potential for heavy rains over the city of Winnipeg in the next two to three weeks.

As was the case in June of 2002 and 2004, overland flooding south of the inlet structure will occur. We have been able to increase our notice times through the media to allow 24 hours public advance notice. To better assist residents in their preparedness, staff from the Emergency Measures Organization have also been placing calls to individuals in the affected areas to inform them of this operation as soon as possible.

Manitobans along the river are advised to relocate movable items and equipment such as docks, pumps, vehicles and other property to reduce the damage that may occur. The Province of Manitoba will compensate property owners affected by the emergency operation of the floodway. Similar to previous summer operations, the Province will implement a compensation program for damages suffered by landowners arising from flooding caused by this operation.

Floodway operation will begin at 6:30 p.m. today, June 14. The gates will be operated in stages to control the rate of the river drawdown in the city of Winnipeg to minimize impacts along the riverbank. Rises of 2 to 3 feet per day should be expected upstream of the floodway inlet until the crest is reached. Some variation in daily rises of the Red will occur depending on where one's property is located and the rate of rise of the river upstream. Our river levels upstream of the floodway will not be permitted to rise higher than 760 feet above sea level.

The Portage Diversion is also operating to reduce the flow of the Assiniboine River water into the Red River. Diversion operations will also manage water levels from Portage la Prairie to Headingley. Mr. Speaker, the Shellmouth Dam is also being operated to prevent further increases in the level of the Lake of the Prairies while keeping flow in the Assiniboine River downstream of the dam within its banks.

The Province will continue to monitor events along the Red River and conduct operation of the floodway to provide the most effective and efficient use for flood protection for all Manitobans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, again, as yesterday, we thank the minister for the update on the flood conditions and the river levels in the province of Manitoba. I want to say to the members of this Legislature that it is because of the foresight of one Premier Duff Roblin and the action that he and his government took that we are able to now offer protection to a large urban centre, namely the city of Winnipeg, and that we can prevent basement flooding.

We must also recognize as legislators and members of society that when we do take those kinds of action we artificially raise the water levels upstream of any streams, or when we take preventative measures to stop flooding of urban areas or damages to buildings then we as a society have an obligation to ensure that proper and adequate compensation is paid to those people that occur the damages upstream. I refer in large part to areas in the western part of the province where culverts were shut in order to protect a village and other town properties.

I say to you, Mr. Minister, and the government opposite, that those people whether they be grain farmers or whether they be vegetable producers as we see along the Red River upstream of the floodway mechanism that will see probably large parts of this province flooded from between here and the U.S. border that this Province must take adequate action to ensure that proper compensation of all losses that they have incurred and the potential of the production of those areas that are flooded artificially need to be properly compensated.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen an event this spring such as we have seldom ever seen in the Red River Valley especially and in western Manitoba. I believe that it is imperative that all of us pay attention to what is going on. Some farmers will tell you in the Red River Valley, east of the Red River, that this is the fourth year that they have incurred these kinds of losses and that our farm programs such as crop insurance and the AIDA program are developed in such a manner that they ratchet down according to production levels every year. One of the farmers told me this spring, he said, "My AIDA program is no good to me this year." He said, "I will not qualify for AIDA and my crop insurance levels have dropped from 38 bushels to 20 bushels an acre." There must be something done about that, Madam Minister.

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

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

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

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister of Water Stewardship (Mr. Ashton) for his timely statement today to bring us up to date in terms of the status of the floodway and the status of the operation of the Portage Diversion. I think it is a signal of the severity of the conditions at the moment that the floodway needs to be used at this particular point of time.

I think that it is important that we express our gratitude to the people who live south of the floodway and our apologies to them for their being flooded as a result of the protection that is being offered to the city of Winnipeg. I would hope that the

Minister of Water Stewardship (Mr. Ashton) would send a letter to those who are affected with the terms of compensation but also expressing this apology for the action that had to be taken and an explanation of why this is, because I think too often the people south of the floodway feel that they have not been treated with adequate sensitivity or care. I think that this would be an important step if the minister would consider it. Thank you.

### 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 Jacqueline and Almer McKerlie. Mr. and Mrs. McKerlie are the parents of JoAnn, our Clerk Assistant at the table.

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

We also have seated in the public gallery from Concord School Grades 1 to 11 students under the direction of Ms. Helen Campbell. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler).

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

\*(13:50)

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry Request

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday we learned from the new board of Crocus that the share value may be well less than the \$7 that was announced just two months ago. Almost 34 000 Manitobans have lost over half of their retirement savings in Crocus. They want and they deserve to know the truth of what happened, yet the NDP government is intent in doing all it can to avoid the truth and to cover up the facts. The Auditor General could not answer why the NDP government ignored so many red flags, why the NDP government failed to protect 34 000 investors and why this NDP government stood idly by while they were fleeced of \$60 million.

I want to ask the Minister of Finance does he not see the need for a public inquiry in light of all these serious allegations on this scandal, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the member is actually inaccurate in his statement. The Auditor General was very clear in identifying why there was a role conflict inside the Department of Industry and how that prevented them from putting sufficient emphasis on the monitoring role and putting too much emphasis on the promotional role. He also identified that there was an overreliance on trust. We have accepted those recommendations. We are going to separate those roles, and we have brought in stronger legislation which will apply the rule of law in the place of trust in order to ensure that the public policy objectives of any labour-sponsored venture capital fund in this province are lived up to.

### Information Tabling Request

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General identified two very significant red flags, memos from officials in Industry in 2001 and in Finance in 2002. Yet, the Minister of Finance said in this House that the memos, and I quote what the minister said, "They should be released to anybody who wants to investigate any of the activities that are going on here."

Well, Mr. Speaker, we on this side on behalf of the 34 000 Crocus shareholders and all Manitobans want to investigate the actions and inactions of this NDP government. On behalf of those who have been fleeced by more than \$60 million through the incompetence, the inaction and the ignorance of this NDP government, will the Minister of Finance simply table the content of the memos, excluding the names? Will he maintain and put those memos forward today?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General fully describes what was contained in the memos on page 145. I refer the member opposite to that paragraph. An official from the Department of Finance suggested CIF's, being the Crocus Fund's continuing requests for legislative amendments could be a sign of management issues and that an independent review of CIF's operations may be in order. That is what the memo said. That is what the Auditor reported and our privacy and our Freedom of Information officer said very clearly that



the Resource Manual for our Information and Protection of Privacy prepared in February '99 should be followed. Of course all this information is available to the Auditor General. Of course all this information is available to any criminal investigation which will be followed up as announced today. All of that has been fully disclosed.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance said yesterday that we want to make sure investors are treated fairly. Well, treating investors fairly begins with knowing what the facts are and what the truth is on this Crocus scandal.

The Minister of Finance expressed concern about revealing the names of competent and capable civil servants who did their jobs warning this Premier (Mr. Doer) and this NDP government of problems at Crocus, warnings which were ignored by this NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, if that is true, the minister need only block out the names of the civil servants and put the content of the memo and table it here in the House. Why is this minister refusing to table that memo? What and who is he hiding?

\* (13:55)

**Mr. Selinger:** What we are doing is we are ensuring that the policy put in place by the members opposite in February '99 for the protection of information and privacy ensures that civil servants can have a full and frank discussion without fear or favour, without any fear that their heads will roll as members opposite have suggested. All that information—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Selinger:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All that information, that e-mail has been fully provided to the Auditor General. That e-mail will be fully provided to the criminal investigation undertaken by the police officers. We will ensure that our civil service can give us advice and opinions without fear or favour. We will ensure that any criminal investigation has full access to the information, and we will make sure this does not ever happen again.

### **Crocus Investment Fund Information Tabling Request**

**Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East):** Mr. Speaker, this Minister of Finance has made so many conflicting statements about the internal memos and the memos that he received and I think—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Finance has confused himself with the conflicting answers that he has given on this issue. All that the shareholders and the taxpayers of Manitoba want is the truth. They want to know what went on behind closed doors in the Minister of Finance's office.

Mr. Speaker, a very simple question. Will the minister stand up today, come clean, black out the names of the officials who did their job in his department and table the memo so we can get to the bottom of this scandal?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I will take the strong advice and recommendation of the Freedom of Information officer in my department, and I will follow that as he has strongly recommended under a—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Selinger:** —policy put in place in February '99. Members opposite followed it.

Today we have an announcement of a criminal investigation, the special prosecutor. We said we would follow up on everything the Auditor General has recommended. Immediately upon receiving a draft copy of the report, we arranged for a special prosecutor in the province of Ontario to examine the report, the final copy of the report, plus any other information that has been referred to him, and he has come back today and recommended a police investigation. That will ensue, Mr. Speaker.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Speaker, the lack of confidence of taxpayers in the province of Manitoba as a result of this Minister of Finance's flipping and

flopping; one day he sees the memo and the next day he does not. Can we have the truth from this Minister of Finance?

Mr. Speaker, taxpayers have entrusted \$8 billion of their hard-earned money in this minister's hands. Will he stand up today? Will he tell the truth? Will he share the memo?

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**An Honourable Member:** It is just asking to tell the truth.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Information brought to this Chamber by all members is factual information as far as the Speaker is concerned. I caution all members to pick and choose their words carefully.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, but I only have to quote the Premier (Mr. Doer) when he said that the truth shall set me free.

Will the Minister of Finance stand up today, echo his Premier's words that said the truth shall set me free and table the documents, table the memos so that Manitobans can get to the bottom of this cover-up?

\*(14:00)

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, let us remember it is only because we gave this special power to the Auditor General to investigate labour-sponsored venture capital funds. It is only because of this special power that the Auditor General was able to have access to this e-mail, and he has made his comments on it fully on page 145. We have fully accepted that.

We have also followed up on our obligation to protect freedom of discussion, freedom of expression of opinion among our public servants. Without their ability to do that without fear or favour, without fear of their heads rolling, we will not get the advice we need. We have received, we have carefully reviewed this matter. It is completely available to all the authorities which wish to investigate it, and members opposite know why they put their policy in place.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Speaker, the officials in the Finance Department and the Industry Department did their jobs. They raised flags with this Minister of Finance, and he chose to ignore them—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Members who wish to have a conversation, we have empty loges that members are welcome to use. Remember that the clock is ticking. We are trying to get as many questions and answers in as we can.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The 34 000 Manitobans who have been fleeced by the incompetence of this government and the taxpayers of Manitoba who have had to bear the burden as a result of the incompetence of this government and this Minister of Finance deserve to know the truth.

Will the Minister of Finance stand up today, come clean and ensure that the memos are tabled so the shareholders and the taxpayers can see what he is covering up?

**Mr. Selinger:** Once again, Mr. Speaker, with the legislation we have provided the Auditor General, he has had full access to the e-mail conversation between public servants inside the system. He has full access to it, and, in addition, we have ensured that civil servants can operate with full and frank discussion of issues without fear or favour without any recrimination. Both of these things are being addressed properly.

We have fully disclosed anything the Auditor General wishes to pursue. At the same time we have protected the integrity of civil servants to have a full, free and frank discussion. We have struck the proper balance between disclosure to the authorities and the ability of a civil service in a democratic society to function without fear or favour. That is the appropriate balance. We have struck it.

#### **Crocus Investment Fund True North Entertainment Centre**

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Mr. Speaker, the minister should be protecting his own integrity by tabling the memo with the House immediately.

In 2001 and 2002, while the government was aware of problems at the Crocus Fund regarding liquidity, the government had been informed by their department then at the same time they were negotiating a deal with the private sector to construct a new downtown arena. As part of that deal, they agreed to give Crocus Fund and the owners of the Manitoba Moose, of which the Crocus Fund was 50 percent, credit for a \$10-million in-kind donation for their contribution of the hockey team into this project. This was agreed to in a letter dated March 23, 2003, from the government.

I would ask the Minister of Finance today if he can stand up and assure Manitobans that, as a result of this negotiation, there was no further money lost by the unitholders as a result of the negotiations undertaken by this government to construct the True North centre.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the member refers to a document. I would ask him to table this document in the House. We will look at the document, but I can assure the members opposite that we are very clear they opposed the True North arena downtown. They have made that very clear from day one. That arena is up and functioning. There were contractual arrangements entered into on that. It—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I need to be able to hear the questions and the answers in case there is a breach of a rule, so I ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

**Mr. Selinger:** The member asks whether any specific arrangement will have any negative impact on shareholder value. There are a number of allegations with respect to valuations being currently reviewed. They are listed on the Web site by the Manitoba Securities Commission. They have the full prerogative, and we have asked them to go back as far as they wish to go within the Crocus Fund with regard to reviewing anything with respect to valuations of any transactions which they have entered into.

**Mr. Loewen:** Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the minister I am fully prepared to table this memo, regardless of whether he is going to table his memo, but I would ask him to do that at the same time.

The facts are clear. I spoke with the president of the AHL in January, Mr. Speaker. He indicated that there were AHL franchises available for sale for in the neighbourhood of 2 to \$3 million U.S. Yet this government has given in their negotiations a \$10-million credit.

It is a simple question. The unitholders have a right to know. This government has had the valuations for a number of weeks. I am simply asking them to stand up and assure the unitholders that, as a result of negotiations undertaken by this government, the unitholders have not been penalized, that they have not lost money and had to have one of the Crocus investments devalued as a result of something that was given up by this government in negotiations.

Can the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) answer that?

**Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Industry, Economic Development and Mines):** The member opposite again is confused about whose job it is to make deals on behalf of the Crocus Fund. We do not manage the Crocus Fund. We do not do the deals on the Crocus Fund.

So what we have done is we have allowed the Crocus Fund to work and manage the fund day to day. They managed the investments on a day-to-day basis. We do not do that as a government, and so what has happened is we have allowed that. If you look at the issues, the issues as have been brought to our attention are on the pacing and other issues that we have never denied. What we are trying to deal with now is the issue of valuation that was not brought up to us earlier.

**Mr. Loewen:** Mr. Speaker, the reality here is that this is a direct and government involvement. It is a direct negotiation that took place between government, and the government agreed to give a \$10-million value to the owners of the hockey team, 50 percent of which was owned by Crocus.

The Premier (Mr. Doer) on a number of occasions has stood in this House and said quite proudly that he put the puck in the net. All we are asking is at the same time did he stuff 34 000 Manitobans in the net with that puck. Unitholders have a right to know. As a result of negotiations undertaken by this government to construct the True

North Centre have unitholders been penalized? Has there been a writedown at Crocus of the value in the Manitoba Moose hockey team as a result of \$10 million in credit given by this government?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, in every province it is the role of the Securities Commission to review any issues with respect to valuations, prospectus disclosures, the accuracy of those disclosures. We have already asked, as a result of the Auditor General's recommendations, for the Securities Commission to go back and to review any matter related to any valuations or disclosure items, including any specific matters. This matter is fully available for review by the Securities Commission.

The current allegations that they have made with respect to the Crocus Fund are listed on the Web site. Public hearings will be available. Normally public hearings have public access provided to them. The Securities Commission has the full ability to investigate any specific transaction for whether or not it has been properly valued.

#### **Crocus Investment Fund Manitoba Securities Commission Review**

**Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General reported that the Manitoba Securities Commission knew that Crocus broke Securities' rules three times over the last four years.

The Securities Commission handled all three infractions internally and never disclosed them to the public. In 2002, the Securities Commission was placed under the responsibility of the Minister of Finance. All trades of Crocus were required to be reviewed by the Securities Commission, but they were not.

I ask the Minister of Finance were you aware that Crocus was breaking the rules and that the Securities Commission was not reviewing all trades of Crocus shares.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should know and I believe he does know that the Manitoba Securities Commission is a quasi-judicial body. It has the powers of the Court of Queen's Bench with respect to any investigations, and to quote—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I remind all honourable members I need to be—

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

\* (14:10)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When the Speaker is standing all members should be seated and the Speaker should be heard in silence. I need to be able to hear all the questions and all the answers. I ask once again the co-operation of all honourable members, please.

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, a quasi-judicial body does not report on its day-to-day activities to a minister. A quasi-judicial body stands independent from government. The former Premier, when the members opposite were in government, said very clearly that I am sure the members opposite would not want me to intervene or interfere with a quasi-judicial tribunal such as the Manitoba Securities Commission. The member knows that. Why is he asking for us to do anything different?

**Mr. Hawranik:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance should also know that the Manitoba Securities Commission reports to this minister. The Auditor General has stated that the Securities Commission is a critical control feature of the Crocus Fund. It was the responsibility of the Securities Commission to monitor Crocus and since 2002 the Securities Commission is the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

I ask the Minister of Finance this. The Securities Commission is within your Department of Finance. Why did you not fulfil your responsibility to the 34 000 unitholders? Why did you not protect them?

**Mr. Selinger:** I just simply must correct the member on his inaccurate facts. The Manitoba Securities Commission is not within the Department of Finance. It is a quasi-judicial body. It stands separate and independent from government like the courts do. The courts do not report to the Minister of Justice. The Manitoba Securities Commission does not report to me on its day-to-day activities.

We are responsible for ensuring funding and a legislative mandate for the commission, and then it operates freely and independently to do its job to

ensure that valuations and disclosures are properly done by anybody issuing securities within the province of Manitoba. The member opposite knows that. He surely is distorting reality.

**Mr. Hawranik:** Mr. Speaker, this Minister of Finance continually stands up and takes credit for some of the things that the Securities Commission does, and now he should take responsibility for what the Securities Commission has done.

You cannot have it both ways. In 2002 the Securities Commission was placed under the watch of this Finance Minister. The Securities Commission handled all three breaches of the Securities' rules internally within the Finance Minister's own department, yet he chose to turn a blind eye to all those red flags.

I ask the Minister of Finance why did you choose to turn a blind eye to all those red flags. Was it direction from a higher authority or was it because of advice from your union friends, or was it both?

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite was responsible for the Securities Commission and he did what he is suggesting, if he interfered, if he had a commission, an independent quasi-judicial body report to him, he would have to resign. He knows that. It is an independent body and the body is functioning exactly as it should. If there are legislative changes required on the job it does the implementation committee will make recommendations to government. We will bring forward the appropriate legislation. In the meantime, it has to operate freely and independently without reporting to anybody. The member knows that.

#### **Trading Activity Information Tabling Request**

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the Crocus scandal has resulted in more unanswered questions from this government than answered questions. The Attorney General in his report clearly indicates that those in government, pardon me, Auditor General, I am sorry. He indicates very clearly that those in government had more information than the public at large. Trades that were made in Crocus could well have been made on the basis of inside knowledge about the situation at Crocus.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Finance if he will table the trades that were made in Crocus for the last three years. Will the minister table the trades that were made by Cabinet, senior government officials, senior government appointees and the members of those families?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** This is really an incredible question from the member opposite. The member opposite is asking for blatant interference in the affairs of an organization set up in 1993. When that organization was set up in 1993, the Minister of Finance of the day, the one Clayton Manness, the member of the time, said he wanted that organization to operate independent from government. He wanted the organization to operate as a private corporation independent from government. They are responsible for their trades. They are responsible for monitoring their trades, and the Securities Commission, the quasi-judicial arm's-length body from government, is responsible for the monitoring of that. The member opposite knows that. His request is clearly outside the bounds of proper procedure in this province.

**Mr. Derkach:** I am sure that the Minister of Finance understands the term "insider information on trading." For the last three years, individuals inside government obviously knew far more than the public about the situation at Crocus. Mr. Speaker, 34 000 unitholders and taxpayers want to know if those in government who knew more about Crocus than they did had an advantage in terms of trading at the Securities Commission.

I ask the minister if he will table the trades over the last three years for members inside government, his Cabinet, appointees to government, senior government officials and also families.

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, when we received the draft report from the Auditor General, and the draft report indicated there could have been criminal activity, we immediately referred it to the Deputy Attorney General who immediately referred it to an outside special prosecutor. That special prosecutor has come back with a recommendation for a police investigation.

If the member opposite has any specific information or allegations with respect to any improper behaviour of a criminal nature I recommend he refer it directly to the Deputy Attorney

General or the RCMP, who have agreed to conduct this investigation. He should not play politics. He should make sure that any information is brought to the attention of the police authorities doing the investigation. They will do an investigation completely free of fear or favour.

**Mr. Derkach:** The only way that Manitobans will know, the only way that those who are investigating will know is if the minister is able to table today those trades that were made by Cabinet members, government appointees and their families. I am asking the minister if he, in fact, will table that information so that indeed we can get to the bottom of this.

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, this is really quite amusing. There is only one conversation that a politician has put on the public record that is part of the criminal investigation. The criminal investigation is completely independent of government. It is conducted by the RCMP. They can review any of the matters that the Auditor General identified on pages 164, 165, with respect to fraud affecting the public market, with respect to a false prospectus, with respect to counselling offences or any other matter. They can go wherever the evidence will take them, and that is the kind of recommendation that we support. Let them do their job. Let them go wherever the evidence will take them.

#### **Crocus Investment Fund Information Tabling Request**

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Mr. Speaker, what the Minister of Finance is forgetting is that his government and he, in particular, have an obligation to share what information they have with taxpayers and unitholders.

The Minister of Finance, who is also the chair of Treasury Board, is responsible for the integrity of the tax system and the spending of \$8 billion of taxpayers' money. He has a special obligation to the citizens of Manitoba to act with credibility and competence and to demonstrate integrity beyond reproach. This minister seems more interested in hiding information than he does in bringing information to this House so that people can know what really went on. He is more interested in keeping information from public view than in sharing it with the public.

I would ask the Minister of Finance today to commit to the principles of credibility, of competence and to show some integrity by agreeing to table the memos and to answering any and all questions that have been asked today.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, we have provided all the information any authority has requested of us. We will continue to do that. We will continue to fully co-operate with any investigation going on. That is exactly why we referred it to an outside special prosecutor. We gave the Auditor General new powers. We provided the best consumer protection legislation in the history of the province. We have referred every criminal allegation to an outside special prosecutor. We referred any tax evasion issues to the revenue collection agency, and we have committed to ensuring follow-up that will ensure this kind of thing cannot happen again.

The items referred to, Mr. Speaker, are identified on pages 164 and 165 in the report. They will be reviewed by the proper police authorities.

\* (14:20)

**Mr. Loewen:** What the minister is purposefully ignoring is the fact that under a democratic system he has the responsibility to answer questions members pose to him in this House. He has the responsibility to the public, to the taxpayers and the unitholders to bring forward information that will be of use and vital to their cause. He is completely ignoring them. He is the chair of Treasury Board. He is in charge of the Manitoba Securities Commission. He had been warned by his department officials as early as 2001, yet he continued on with negotiations which he will not give us any information about. He was warned by outsiders, he was warned by insiders, and, yet, over and over and over again, he has turned a blind eye to everyone in Manitoba who had concerns about the Crocus Fund.

I would ask him today if he believes that this is the type of competence that Manitobans deserve from their Finance Minister.

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, members opposite had 11 years to upgrade The Auditor General Act. We did it in our first two years in office. The members opposite had 11 years to increase protection for consumers with class proceedings legislation. We

have done it and it has been proclaimed as of January 2003.

Mr. Speaker, this government has put in place better mechanisms for inspection of where public dollars go than have ever been created in the history of the province. This government has provided the best consumer protection in the history of this province, and in order to ensure that the public policy arena operates without fear and favour, this government, for the first time in history, has banned corporate and union donations. The members opposite do not support that.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Member for Fort Whyte, with his second supplementary question.

**Mr. Loewen:** Mr. Speaker, in the interest of the minister's rewriting of history, I would also remind him that his is the only government that the Auditor General of this province has ever qualified his report on the financial statements by saying, "They were misleading by omission." That is something that this government should be accountable for.

He bungled the raiding of Hydro to a tune of \$150 million when he tried to go against The Hydro Act before it had been changed. He has had the Auditor General call his statements misleading by omission, and they do not reflect the true state of the Province's finances. Now he is refusing to answer the simplest, the most basic questions on this Crocus file, which has cost Manitobans and unitholders over \$60 million and it has cost taxpayers a lot alongside of that.

Mr. Speaker, it is not for me to speak to this minister's integrity, but I would ask him if he thinks he has the credibility and the confidence to remain as Finance Minister.

**Mr. Selinger:** Mr. Speaker, I only need to point out that since we have been in office we have had two upgradings. We have had two credit rating upgradings in this province because what we have done is we have addressed issues that the members ignored during the entire period they were in office.

For example, they let a pension liability grow from \$1.8 billion to \$3 billion. We put a plan in place to deal with that, and the credit rating agencies have

said the finances of this province are under good control. The members opposite know that. They are actually orange with envy that they did not do the job properly when they were in office, and we did.

### **Crocus Investment Fund Police Investigation**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, we are seeing numerous examples of the incompetence of this government. Today the independent prosecutor from Ontario, Mr. Graeme Cameron, has recommended that there be a police investigation by the RCMP. Mr. Cameron's recommendation adds considerable credibility to those who have been concerned about the possibility that Crocus investors may have been deliberately deceived or defrauded by individuals acting to affect the market price of Crocus.

Can the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) today provide the Legislative Assembly with details of who is to be investigated; the Crocus staff, the board of Crocus, government officials or others?

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Well, Mr. Speaker, the Auditor's report has identified a number of areas of potential criminality. That said, the Deputy Attorney General has been very clear on this in public that the RCMP is free to determine the scope of its investigation. The RCMP can go wherever the facts will lead them. They are completely independent on what they can pursue. They have received the entire report, as well as the transcript of what some members opposite put on the public record, and they will do their job completely independently.

### **Lowlands National Park Environmental Review**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, for months now we have seen this NDP government make mistake after mistake in handling the affairs of the Province. We see this with Crocus. We see this with the environment. Indeed, the NDP seems to care so little about the environment. As an example, the last State of the Environment Report was in 1997, and we have not heard a peep since. The sustainable round table rarely meets. The federal-provincial memorandum of understanding so solemnly signed by this government to do complete consultations of the Lowlands National Park by the end of May of

this year seems to have been relegated to the dustbin. We almost need a public inquiry into this government's ineptitude.

When will the much-delayed consultations on the important treasure, the Lowlands National Park, finally get underway, and why has there been such a delay?

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. We have an initial question, and a supplementary question should seek further information on the initial question that was raised. I am going to get the honourable Member for River Heights to tie them together somehow because—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I do not want a precedent being set here where a question and another question, because a supplementary question is seeking information on the initial question that is raised. That is what supplementary questions are all about. So I am going to get the honourable Member for River Heights to please tie the two together and rephrase your question.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Mr. Speaker, the question has to do with the broad level of incompetence of this government, the incompetence in dealing with Crocus, the environment, all sorts of things. I would ask the government why they are so incompetent.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, thank you in providing guidance on how to tie those random thoughts together in a question.

Mr. Speaker, since we have come into office we have provided more reporting and accountability in the health care sector. This is partly the outcome of negotiations with the federal government, partly a desire to make sure that the system is accountable to the citizens of Manitoba. We have provided more information with respect to early childhood development. We have provided more information with respect to sustainable development and the member, if he just holds his breath for a few moments, will find out that we are bringing forward more performance indicators that will give Manitobans a much wider picture of all the activities we undertake in government and how we are willing to be accountable for them.

\* (14:30)

### **Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry Request**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, government neglect has, in fact, killed the Crocus Fund. If we look in terms of the Crocus board, from what we understand, if they do not get the general liability insurance by the end of the month you are going to see massive resignations coming from the Crocus board once again. They are going to be turning to the Manitoba government in hopes that the Manitoba government is going to be bailing them out.

Mr. Speaker, issue after issue seems to follow this government in the way in which they have neglected this fund. It has become very clear that this government is putting the New Democrat Party interest ahead of the public interest and the public good. I am asking and we are calling for this government to do the honourable thing and to request that this government—[interjection] Yes, resign would be nice.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable thing for this government to do would, in fact, be to recognize the need for a public inquiry and today acknowledge to Manitobans for the first time that they are going to put the interests of Manitobans ahead of their own political party and call for that public inquiry.

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Every recommendation the Auditor General has made, we have followed up on. He wanted a review of criminal allegations. We sent it to a special prosecutor, even while the report was in draft stage. We have seen the results of that today. A police investigation will ensue.

We have asked the Securities Commission to go back further than they have in the past. They are going to do that. We have put in place an implementation team which has brought forward legislation which we can pass in the House this week which will provide more accountability, more public disclosure of any activities of a labour-sponsored venture capital fund. We have asked the revenue collection agency to review any matters with respect to tax matters. Mr. Speaker, we will ensure this will not happen again.



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

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Mr. Almer McKerlie

**Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman):** I would like to inform the House of the accomplishments of one of my constituents, Mr. Almer McKerlie, of Miami, Manitoba, who was introduced earlier this afternoon by you, Mr. Speaker, as a guest in the Speaker's Gallery.

A *Toronto Sun* sports writer recently released a book entitled *Baseball Canadian Style*. The author invited each province to name a 20th century all-star squad in the sport of baseball. A special committee of the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame selected two back catchers as their choices, one of these individuals being Mr. Almer McKerlie. The committee came up with a team which touched upon the decades and various parts of Manitoba based on ability, longevity and impact.

Mr. McKerlie began his baseball career in 1946, where he played with the Fort William Legion. In 1949, scouts from the St. Louis Cardinals asked him to report to their AAA farm team in Rochester of the International League.

At the young age of 21, Mr. McKerlie was discovered and signed to a professional baseball contract with the St. Louis Cardinals. Mr. McKerlie had the reputation of having everything it took to play in the big leagues. He had the size, a powerful arm and handled his catching duties cleanly. Unfortunately, due to an injury, he was forced to return home. He became a member of the Carman Cardinals baseball club of the Mandak League in June of 1949. He played with the Cardinals until 1953, holding a 300-plus batting average. He was the all-star catcher for three of his five years playing with the league.

In 1953 he was contacted and asked to play in Vancouver in an unclassified league, but St. Louis would not release his contract. In the late 1960s, Mr. McKerlie received a letter advising that he had been traded to Cincinnati, a team which he still belongs to today.

In 1954, he was offered a position as manager on a AA Minnesota baseball club but, due to family

commitments, was unable to accept the position. Throughout his life, he was involved in all facets of the game. He coached the little leaguers, played local senior ball and umpired all levels.

In 1997, the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame was established. On June 7, 1997, Mr. McKerlie was inducted into the Manitoba Baseball Hall of Fame as both a player and an umpire and on June 4, 2005, the Mandak League received special recognition at the 9th annual Baseball Hall of Fame Induction ceremonies.

Please join me in congratulating the father of one of our table officers, Ms. JoAnn McKerlie-Korol, who is proudly sitting at the table today as we congratulate her father, Mr. Almer McKerlie, as one of the two persons named as a Catcher of the Century for the province of Manitoba.

**Mr. Speaker:** Play ball. We will go to the next one.

### World Blood Donor Day

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, today June—[interjection]

**Mr. Speaker:** Oh, I am sorry. I am sorry. I usually go back and forth. I am sorry. I have to recognize the—okay, let us just finish this one.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** You snooze, you lose.

Mr. Speaker, today, June 14, is World Blood Donor Day. Millions of patients around the world owe their lives to people they will never meet, people who donated their blood freely and without any reward except the knowledge that they have helped to save lives.

Today's events provide a special opportunity for a global celebration to thank those people who donate blood around the world. Safe blood saves lives, but, for far too many patients around the world, blood transfusion is either not available or not safe. In Canada we are extremely fortunate to have access to a safe, secure, cost effective supply of blood that is available to everyone.

Mr. Speaker, my mother, Diane McDonald, passed away from ovarian cancer five years ago to this very day. While undergoing chemotherapy during her illness, she became extremely anemic and

required multiple blood transfusions. Because she had a very rare blood type, different from the rest of our family, her livelihood relied on the generosity of thousands of blood donors across our country. The 4 percent of eligible Canadians who voluntarily donate blood are the foundation of our system. It is the hope of Canadian Blood Services that today's celebrations will create a new generation of blood donors.

I would like all members to join me today in thanking Canadian Blood Services for the work they do in ensuring that a safe blood supply exists for all Canadians. I would like to especially thank those everyday heroes in our communities whose selfless act of donating blood saves lives. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

### **R.M. of Taché**

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Transportation and Government Services):** Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 125th anniversary of the Rural Municipality of Taché where my wife and I and our children have resided for 30 years. It was named for Archbishop Alexandre Antonin Taché, one of the first bishops in Manitoba, in recognition of his work in assisting its settlement of Europeans.

\*(14:40)

We still see the river lot system that we used to establish farms over a century ago, and many families still work the land first settled by their ancestors generations ago. Mr. Speaker, this region has a remarkable and distinguished history that precedes its formation as a rural municipality. Settlers were originally drawn to this bountiful region from many parts of the world, resulting in a vibrant cultural diversity very evident in the communities today. This open, optimistic character is a quality that serves to draw more families to this ever-growing area. The Seine River, which meanders through Taché, contributes both to the beauty and life of the rich and fertile prairie fields that sustain many family farms. A pioneering spirit and a remarkable work ethic characterize the people of this region who have endured harsh winters and reoccurring floods.

Mr. Speaker, the R.M. of Taché recognizes the contributions of the Métis people who played such a pivotal role in the area's history and who still

maintain a respected prominence in our communities.

The celebrations will be held on June 26 in conjunction with the opening ceremonies of the Monseigneur-Taché Historic Site in St. Genevieve and will include a parade, a Métis banquet, dance and fireworks.

I am proud to represent the people of the Rural Municipality of Taché. I wish to thank the work of the local government, the volunteers for their work in planning this event, and I wish all the people of Taché continued prosperity and happiness. Congratulations on 125 years of good government and fair representation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Neighbourhoods Alive! Program**

**Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the Manitoba Legislature in support of our government's Neighbourhoods Alive! Program which has helped to breathe new life into Brandon's central residential neighbourhoods.

The cornerstone of Neighbourhoods Alive! in Brandon is our government's partnership with the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation. Through the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, residents and other local stakeholders have developed long-term community development plans and identified target priorities for action. To date, over \$1.3 million has been approved for 52 community projects, including \$433,000 for a city park, playground, boulevard and other greenspace projects which contribute greatly to the quality of life for all Brandon citizens.

In addition, the Neighbourhoods Alive! Front and Paint Program has provided funding support to some hundred homeowners for them to do exterior repairs to their homes. These housing enhancements, along with \$8 million in provincial and federal funding for housing since 2000, has helped revive central Brandon. To date, this has resulted in the construction and renewal of over 650 housing units, providing a much-needed response to Brandon's shortage of affordable housing. Mr. Speaker, it is not just improvement projects that are making a difference in Brandon's neighbourhoods; it is the increased ability of local residents and groups to impact their environment and initiate sustainable change.

Our government is proud of the work we have been able to accomplish in Brandon through Neighbourhoods Alive! Indeed, last week we were pleased to announce that we will continue to support Neighbourhoods Alive! in Brandon throughout the mandate of our government.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our government, I would like to thank the many volunteers and community organizations who have made Neighbourhoods Alive! projects in Brandon so successful. In particular, I would like to thank the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation. Their ability to consolidate the efforts of local residents and community groups is vital to the success of Neighbourhoods Alive! projects.

#### **Mr. Mel Ham**

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise in the House today to recognize an exceptional high school teacher who has been awarded the Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Excellence in Teaching at the high school level. His name is Mr. Mel Ham, and I want to commend Mr. Ham for his outstanding achievement and for his dedication and commitment to the promotion of teaching excellence.

Mr. Ham has been a teacher at the Glenboro School for 28 years and is highly respected and admired by students, colleagues and the entire community. As one of his students explained, "Our class with Mr. Ham is first thing in the morning, and it is sure a great way to start off the day." Mr. Ham also coaches basketball and badminton. With the same quiet calm that he uses in the classroom, he ensures that all players are made fully aware of their strengths and the contributions they make to the team. Mel concerns himself just as much with the students' emotional well-being as he does with their academic process. He can quickly spot the child who is upset and not learning as quickly as others. It is not uncommon for Mr. Ham to go up to a student after class and ask if everything is okay.

In his role as guidance counsellor, Mr. Ham single-mindedly motivates his students towards excellence in ways both direct and subtle. If students need information on post-secondary education, he will explore every avenue for them to find it. Mel is seen on a daily basis, even in the hallways, checking on student process, the credits they have achieved

towards graduation and their plans for the future. He is clearly a highly motivated and dedicated teacher who works tirelessly to pass on that same motivation and dedication to everyone he comes in contact with.

The nomination of Mr. Ham was nothing less than a heartfelt endorsement of a very special teacher by an entire community. As Mel does not recognize the physical boundaries of the school as being the limits of his responsibilities by treating everyone with care and respect, he has earned the care and respect of the whole community.

On behalf of the entire community, I extend congratulations to Mel Ham on receiving this very prestigious award.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

#### **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS**

##### **House Business**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Pursuant to the sessional order, report stage amendments on Bill 207 must be disposed of first off, Mr. Speaker. So perhaps if we could call if there are any report stage amendments on that bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** Are there any report stage amendments to Bill 207?

Seeing none, the honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, under the sessional order, would you please call the Opposition Day Motion?

**Mr. Speaker:** We will proceed now with the Opposition Day Motion.

#### **OPPOSITION DAY MOTION**

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Emerson,

WHEREAS the Doer-NDP government has demonstrated its inability to manage provincial affairs including health care, Education, Finance, Agriculture, Family Services and Advanced Education; and

WHEREAS Manitobans are disillusioned, frustrated and disappointed with this NDP government because of its duplicitous approach to issues of great importance; and

WHEREAS Manitobans are being misled by this NDP government when announcements on programs are made but action plans are either not developed or not implemented; and

WHEREAS Manitobans are left in pain, and prolonged suffering, because of the ideology of this NDP government which prohibits patient treatment in publicly funded, privately run health care facilities; and

WHEREAS the Premier continues to be duplicitous in his statements about issues of utmost importance to Manitobans, especially with health care and the use of public-private partnerships; and

WHEREAS hospitals in rural Manitoba have been and are closing despite the Premier's promises on many occasions that no rural hospital would be closed or converted ; and

WHEREAS the South Beach Casino is open now, exposing workers and patrons to a smoke-filled environment which compromises their health and well-being; and

WHEREAS the incompetence of the Minister of Education has allowed the gross misuse of taxpayers' dollars allocated for educational purposes, to be used instead for the unlawful purpose of a housing development and property development; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Education abdicates responsibility for the continued misuse of taxpayers' dollars by refusing to put an immediate stop to the illegal development of land by a school division; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Education has failed to show leadership with respect to duties, programs, initiatives and funds within the purview of the Department of Education; and

WHEREAS the NDP government has failed to oversee and monitor Labour-Sponsored Capital Investment Funds, namely Crocus, resulting in the loss of millions of investor and taxpayer dollars; and

WHEREAS the Doer-NDP government with its anti-business approach to investment in Manitoba

has failed to grow, expand or diversify Manitoba's economy; and

WHEREAS in a year of unprecedented government revenues, the NDP government is forcing Manitobans to pay significantly higher fees for many services, including probate fees paid by surviving spouses and children, Pharmacare deductibles and family court fees; and

WHEREAS Manitoba's debt, under the watch of the NDP government, continues to rise at \$1.5 million per day, and cumulatively has risen by \$2 billion during the time when Manitoba has seen unparalleled federal transfers and own source revenues; and

WHEREAS it has been more than two years since the outbreak of BSE, which has put Manitoba's cattle industry in great jeopardy and this NDP government has failed to expand slaughter and processing capacities in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Family Services has shown disrespect for the legislative process of accountability and members of this Chamber by refusing to answer serious questions as they relate to the policies of the Department of Family Services and Housing; and

WHEREAS Manitoba universities are being forced to raise student ancillary fees because of the insufficient operating funds transferred from the NDP government to our post-secondary institutions; and

\* (14:50)

WHEREAS the NDP government has now forced an anti-democratic Master Labour Agreement on Manitobans by forcing non-unionized workers on the floodway expansion project to pay union dues, pension and benefit costs, when these costs are already covered under existing agreements with their respective employers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislature express its disgust and disappointment on behalf of all Manitobans in the way in which this NDP government has conducted the affairs of the Province of Manitoba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly express its grave objection to

the Premier and NDP government for misleading Manitobans, mishandling major issues and government departments and for misusing and misspending Manitobans' hard-earned tax dollars; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba respectfully requests the Premier and NDP government to apologize to Manitobans for the careless, insensitive and duplicitous manner in which it has carried out its duties on behalf of the citizens of Manitoba.

**Mr. Speaker:** It has been moved by the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), seconded by the honourable Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner),

WHEREAS the Doer government—

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense?

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

**Mr. Derkach:** I rise today, a day of opposition, Mr. Speaker, to express the disgust of members of this Chamber in the way in which this government has handled the affairs of the citizens of Manitoba over the course of its mandate. I know that it is a tired government but, more importantly, it is a government that does not care about the affairs of all Manitobans. Rather, it has put before all Manitobans the interests of its friends in the labour leadership of this province and that has caused great unrest in the province, great turmoil. It has cost those people who have invested in Manitoba millions and millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise because there is concern about how this government has mismanaged every single department that has been named in my resolution. Departments, whether they are in Health or in Education or in Agriculture or Finance or Family Services or Justice, the list just goes on and on. As we look at how this government has conducted its affairs, one cannot but, I guess, condemn the actions of this government because of its irresponsibility, as is demonstrated by its actions.

Mr. Speaker, for months we have been asking questions of the government with respect to how it conducts its affairs. We cannot get any answers in this Chamber. The Premier (Mr. Doer) will not answer questions. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) will not answer questions. The Minister of

Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) will not answer questions. The Minister of Family Services (Ms. Melnick) will absolutely answer no questions. The Minister of Health (Mr. Sale) continues to, I guess, be a stranger to the truth when he stands up in response to questions. The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Smith), who has responsibility for the development in the rural side of this province for the policies as they relate to rural Manitoba, has completely abandoned rural Manitobans. The minister of industry, trade and mines, who is responsible for the business climate, ensuring that Manitoba continues to be competitive, has dropped the ball.

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

The Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson), Mr. Speaker, we have seen in the way that he operates, and it is absolutely disgusting when the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray) comes forward with a suggestion to government that we should have a summit, a forum, on bullying, and then the government goes ahead, organizes the conference, but prohibits any opposition members from attending the conference, yet he himself will bring greetings on behalf of the government. I think that is absolutely disgusting.

Mr. Speaker, that is the way this government has operated. They operate by intimidation. They intimidate ordinary Manitobans. They intimidate their departments. That is how they are trying to intimidate, now, the members of the opposition parties, but that is not going to work. There are other ways to get our message and we will continue to get that message out, that this is an incompetent government, that this is an incompetent group of administrators.

At the top of the list, I have to say, is the Minister of Education, because he has shown how incompetent he really is no matter what issue he addresses. Let us just take a look at how he has put the interests of his buddy, the superintendent of Seven Oaks School Division, ahead of Manitobans. He has allowed, under the guidance of the Manitoba Public Schools Finance Board that he is responsible for, he cannot sweep that away. He is responsible for the Public Schools Finance Board. Yet his buddy, Mr. Zaidman, the head of the Public Schools Finance Board, and his other buddy, Mr.—what is his name? Who is the superintendent of Seven Oaks School Division?

**An Honourable Member:** Brian O'Leary.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. O'Leary. Well, Mr. Speaker, his buddy, Mr. Zaidman, and Mr. O'Leary have now developed a partnership where, through the collusion of themselves with the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson), they have decided to venture into a housing development project.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister cannot tell us that he did not know about it. He cannot say that he did not know about it. He did know about it, but he did nothing about it because his buddy, Mr. Zaidman, meets with him on a regular basis. So—*[interjection]* Yes, he did. As a matter of fact, there are people who will even cite the dates when they met. The minister cannot hide from that.

Mr. Speaker, he allowed that to continue and allows it to continue to this day. He has not addressed the issue of the illegal activities of Seven Oaks School Division. More importantly, he has not even done anything to correct the wrong. He has not dismissed the board. He has not dismissed the chair. He continues to sit in his chair and do nothing. But that is the mantra of this government. They do nothing, and it does not matter what issue that we address.

I asked the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) today to look at what is happening in the rural part of this province, farmers who cannot get their crops in, farmers whose crops are drowning, and yet the minister sits there.

I take you back to 1999 when we had this same kind of situation happening in all of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, I remember the dates because I was in Cabinet then. We met in the western part of the province where the problems were most vivid, and we made a decision there and then that we would put a cash payout to these farmers because they needed it. That payout was in their hands within two months. It was not a payment that was shared by the federal government and the farmers themselves, because that is what crop insurance is. This was a payment that was made by the government of that day, by the Cabinet of that day, by the province of that day, and it was in reflection and in recognition of the hardships that were being faced by the farmers of that time.

What is this government doing today? Nothing. As a matter of fact, when they come out into our

constituencies, they do not have the common courtesy and decency to invite members of the Legislative Assembly to join them. That is the way this government operates. Mr. Speaker, you can go from one department to the other, and you find this same thread throughout this whole government.

Mr. Speaker, I look at the Crocus issue, and I regret that we have only 10 minutes to speak because I could go on all afternoon. To be honest with you, the Crocus fiasco is something that is going to be the end of this government. Manitobans are going to end their tenure, not us as opposition, but it will be Manitobans because they see the kind of scandal that this is becoming. We can talk about the Gomery commission at the federal level, but this is as big, and this is as important to Manitobans as the Gomery commission is to Canadians. Sooner or later we will get to the bottom of it. We have vowed to Manitobans that, if this government does not call an inquiry and does not deal with these issues, when we get to be government, we will call an inquiry. We will get to the bottom. So therefore the warning has been issued.

We cannot continue this way. Manitobans will not allow it. How can we ever allow Manitobans to lose \$60 million just because we have got some very close friends that are associated with our party? That is the way the NDP government, Mr. Speaker, conducts its affairs. Their labour-union buddies, their labour leaders, people like O'Leary, people like Zaidman, and I could go on and on. At the head of all of them is who but Mr. Kostyra. Mr. Kostyra has been directing this Cabinet, this government, in its affairs, misleading them in the way that they conduct their affairs.

I know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) would want to do the right thing, Mr. Speaker, but unfortunately, he has bowed to the pressures of his friends, and he has led this government into the shambles that it is in today and into the scandal-ridden history that is going to be written about this party and about this government.

\* (15:00)

We talked about Howard Pawley in the years when he was in government and the way that he left this province in a shambles. This government under Gary Doer, under Premier Doer, or under the Premier of our province, the member from

Concordia—I am sorry, I retract the names, Mr. Speaker, but this government is in the same shambles, if not worse, than it was under the tenure of Howard Pawley.

Mr. Speaker, I have never seen a Premier pay hush money to people because he does not want to disclose the events of a lawsuit that he had levelled against him. He used taxpayer dollars to buy the silence of people who were suing him, and that is the same way that they are going to try to resolve Crocus. I am predicting that because that is the way that this government and this Premier (Mr. Doer) conduct their affairs.

Mr. Speaker, it is a shame that we have to stand here today with a motion like this on the floor and condemn our government legitimately for the way it has been mismanaging its affairs. This is a government of mismanagement, misrepresentation, misuse of dollars.

And let us take a look at what the debt in Manitoba is under this administration. Under the administration of Gary Filmon, the debt was going down, there was a balanced budget; there was no deficit. Under this administration, they hide the true numbers. They hide the fact that we have a deficit. They continue to increase the debt of our province at an unprecedented rate.

When is this going to stop? I will tell you when it is going to stop. It is going to stop when we kick them out of office in, hopefully, less than two years.

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

**Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth):** I rise to speak about our record in education and health care, among other things. First of all, I guess, I could start off with education funding, but I would appreciate an opportunity so members could hear this, Mr. Acting Speaker.

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

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The Minister of Education has the floor.

**Mr. Bjornson:** Mr. Speaker, when I have been answering questions on education funding I have referenced the fact that members opposite had

announced funding levels of zero, zero, minus 2, minus 2.2, zero, and a one-time infusion of \$15.2 million. Well, actually I would like to correct that because that \$15.2 million, if you take into account the zero, the zero, the minus 2.2, there is a net investment in five years under members opposite of \$1.6 million, a net investment in education. One of the most important investments you can make in any province is the education system, and in five years members opposite invested \$1.6 million.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our record is very clear. The latest announcement on education funding was the second highest announcement in funding in 10 years. And who is responsible for the first highest investment in education in 10 years? It would be this government—\$129.8 million invested in our children, invested in our future.

Not only have we invested more money in our children in operating costs for education, but we have also invested in capital, an unprecedented commitment to capital. By year's end we will have completed over 700 projects, and we have 690 schools. We will have completed over 20 new and replacement schools, over 50 major repairs to schools, and this is an incredible, unprecedented commitment to capital. Our investment in capital is \$161 million more than the previous five years. Then we are committed to capital, and we are continuing to move forward with that. Now compare this to previous announcements of \$18.3 million for the entire system. Those were announcements being made when more than half of the schools were over 50 years old, more than half of the schools needed serious repairs.

We are committed to education by funding at the rate of economic growth, by providing meaningful investment, unprecedented investment, three years, \$45 million a year, unprecedented announcements. We are committed to do this in a meaningful way where we can provide tax relief as well.

Members opposite have said, "Oh, yes, we should eliminate all taxes off property for education." They have said that. Now what they neglect to say is how they would do that, because it accounts for \$713 million. Now, what was their announcement as their shadow budget? Their shadow budget was also saying 2% increase for education and 1% increase. So what would that do to the education system?

Well, I know first-hand what they did to the education system, just like many members in this Chamber on this side of the House know what happened to the education system. We have the member from Brandon East, the member from Flin Flon, the member from La Verendrye, the member from Seine River, the member from Assiniboia, the member from Rossmere, the member from Dauphin-Roblin and myself, all teachers, and we all knew that, if we were going to make change for the better for the education system, we had to do it on the benches of government. That is why we are in government. We are in government because we are a government that cares about education. We are a government that cares about the health care system.

Members opposite talk about a lot of the things that are happening in education except educational issues. What have we done as a government in terms of education? Well, I would like to say in terms of some of the initiatives that have been brought forward in the last two years, for example, investment in Internet resources for history, investment in community schools, investment in the Aboriginal Education Action Plan, which was the only issue that was raised by my critic last year, as why is this budget going up. That was the only issue. Well, we know that we need to work with our partners in Aboriginal education because we are not satisfied with the graduation rates. We know that we have to have a development plan for Aboriginal education. We have been working on that very hard and we have brought that forward. It is an action plan and today was part of that action plan where I happened to be at the Murdo Centre for employment opportunities and this is part of our action plan.

Community liaisons with community partners to help our young people succeed. We know that we need to reinvest in technical-vocational education and that is something that we have done. We know that we need to reinvest in the arts. Now, of course, arts, that was something that during the election, members opposite were saying, "Oh, you know, we can fund education by cutting off all the taxes and we can get rid of extraneous things like art and phys ed and things of that nature," which would only set back the education system about 50 years.

I find it offensive because I believe that the best thing we could do for our students is offer them as many opportunities as possible, offer them as many opportunities to succeed with the variety of learning

styles that we have in our schools, with the multiple intelligences that we have in our schools and with the variety of teaching techniques that we need to encourage, but in order to encourage professional development for teachers, we also have to fund professional development. That is something that we have done.

I know as a teacher in the 1990s I was locked out. I was locked out for 15 days because in the 1990s they said, "Hey, school divisions, you can save money, and the way you are going to do that is to lock your teachers out. You can cut out professional development. You can cut out administration, so go ahead, do that." And they put that onus on school boards while they were funding at deplorable levels and increasing the dependence on property taxes. That is just one of the things that was done, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One of the other things that they did was they actually established a commission to review teacher compensation. They established a commission and made teachers a target. They wanted to see if it was appropriate that teachers were paid the amount of money that they were paid to do the job that they were doing. *[interjection]*

Yes, thank you, I am being reminded that it was Shirley Render and the member from Pembina that were involved in that particular commission, and I presented at that commission. I felt really good to be a teacher presenting at that commission because that room was full of teachers and people who supported us as a profession who were being told that perhaps we should cut back the entry-level salaries for teachers. That is one of the things that was even being considered, and that is absolutely offensive that that would even be considered.

At least the government of the day had the wisdom to abandon those recommendations because they got a message loud and clear. Manitobans value the job that teachers do, and that was certainly very clearly delivered throughout the commission that had been conducted to look into this issue.

Back in 1995, in May, when I was first teaching, for my first few years teaching every May that came along under the previous administration, I was always looking around at my colleagues wondering who would not be there the next year. In 1995, with the funding announcement of zero, an unprecedented



number of teachers were given pink slips, 243 teachers given pink slips.

Now, I often hear members opposite talk about taxes and the cost of education. I rarely hear members opposite talk about the investment that we are getting for our dollar that we are putting into the educational system. It is unprecedented funding into the education system. It is a commitment by this government. It is a commitment by our partners in the school boards, and we have seen incredible achievements by our students and by our teachers. In fact, the member from Turtle Mountain talked about a teacher who was recognized for being an exceptional teacher.

\* (15:10)

Today, I had the good fortune of having more student art presented to me by seven schools, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have had a number of different students come in over the past year and a half to showcase their talent and display it in my office.

Now, I know the member from Russell does not really appreciate student art because he said in the election, when they were saying "How are we going to fund education if we cut it off the property taxes? Well, let us get rid of the art program, let us get rid of the music program." As I said, and I will say it again, this is—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** There is a point of order being raised.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The minister's comments should parallel the truth, which they do not. As a matter of fact, if the minister is so proud of the art that students bring—as a matter of fact, I had a student who brought in some art come to visit my office. One of the issues is why do all members of the Legislature not have an opportunity to see the artwork that is brought. That artwork should be displayed in our display areas of this building so that all MLAs whose students have brought in art can have it displayed for all of us.

Mr. Speaker, my point of order is the minister's comments should parallel the truth, and they do not.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Bjornson:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would invite the member to visit the Web site, the Education Web site, because they have got digital photos of the art so all Manitobans can take a look at the art. I would also invite the member from Russell to display student art in his office as well if he is so inclined and, certainly, we had 97 people through the office today who were part of the unveiling of the new gallery. I have many countless visitors who appreciate the artwork in the office. We will continue to promote and support that.

Now, we have done a number of things, as I said: launching the Aboriginal academic action plan; a sustainable development action plan in 2005, my deputy minister is taking the lead on that at a national level; the sustainable development Internet site in 2003, a partnership with Manitoba Conservation and Intergovernmental Affairs and Health developing a procurement and financial management guidelines regulation affecting education, health, municipal government sector; a partnership for learning for a sustainable future—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. The minister's time has expired.

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make comments on the motion that was brought forward by the honourable member from Russell. I think there are so many issues that we have seen this NDP government bungle that we do not have enough time in the allocation, but I will try to hit on some of the low points, because that is what they are, they are low points of this NDP government, and Manitobans are suffering because of it.

Mr. Speaker, we know that this Premier and the former Minister of Health are famous for coming up with slogans, coming with empty, hollow promises about ending hallway medicine in six months with \$15 million, about putting Grafton out of business, I mean all great, sort of photo ops, but the point of fact is that when it comes down to what is really important, when it comes down to actually delivering services for Manitoba patients, they have failed, and they have failed. That is unfortunate for patients because I think that if you looked at the opportunities that were in front of this NDP government, we know full well that the Supreme Court has come down with a ruling that basically says that governments like this NDP government are classic at rationalizing health

care services. So that is unfortunate because rationalizing means that people have to do, as was reported in the media, things like go out and take a second mortgage on their homes so that they then, for example, if they need a hip or knee surgery, have to take that money and go to another province and pay out of their own pocket for that surgery.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is what is happening under this NDP government. People are forced to pay high taxes, which should go to our health care system. On top of that they are forced to take a second mortgage on a home because they are concerned if they do not get their knee or hip replaced in a certain time period that perhaps their livelihood, their business, is going to suffer.

What we see under this NDP ideologically driven government is rationalization of health care. They do not care about a quality of life for people. People have to suffer. If they want to make a choice—and I heard the Premier (Mr. Doer) say this outside in the hallway. I was quite amazed. When asked about the Supreme Court decision about choices, what the Premier said was, "Well, my understanding is people in Manitoba have choices already. If they don't get the care here, they can go down to the Mayo Clinic." That is outrageous that the Premier would take that kind of a position. Hardworking Manitobans have to suffer enough under this NDP government that they should not have to then fly at their expense, take money at their expense and pay in American dollars for health care because they cannot get it here in Manitoba.

Now we know that the NDP are great on bringing out the bogeyman when it comes to health care. I want to be very clear to the colleagues that are listening in the Chamber, and I want to go on to the record that we have looked at the fact that they always talk about the American health care system. Well, Mr. Deputy Chair, we have looked at the American health care system. The American health care system does not work. It is not what we want in Manitoba. We want innovation. We want opportunities in Manitoba, opportunities that are here that exist, but this NDP government ignores them because of their ideology.

Mr. Speaker, we know that if you are a mom in serious issue and you need to see a pediatric doctor in Brandon, we know what the NDP solution is. The

NDP solution is call for an ambulance, make them take the ride between Brandon highway medicine all the way into Winnipeg, and that is where they can see a doctor. Well, Mr. Deputy Chair, I say shame on this NDP government for ignoring west Manitoba.

I have said before in this Chamber that it is great that the NDP stand up and crow about the fact that they have built a hospital in Brandon, but there are no doctors to take care of the people and that is the shame. So you have a big, nice, new hospital and no doctors, Mr. Speaker, to take care of those people. So they put them in an ambulance and ship them down a highway to Winnipeg. That is the kind of health care that people in Westman are experiencing under this NDP government.

We have heard the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson), and I think that what we saw under this Seven Oaks scandal, this initiative that was driven by the former disgraced NDP campaign manager, Mr. Brian O'Leary, who got into this illegal scheme to take taxpayers' money to invest in development of housing and trying to sell it. Did they put one nickel into expanding a school or into more textbooks or something to do with education? The answer is, no, they did not. They did it on the basis that they wanted to line their own pockets somehow. I am telling you that that was illegal. The Minister of Education knows it was illegal. They went to put a report together. What did we see in the report? Well, it was a whitewash. It was an absolute whitewash because they never investigated the one person who one day denied he knew nothing about it and on the next day said, "Well, actually, I do recall, Mr. Speaker. I remember a year ago that that's what we heard."

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a situation where we see more scandal erupting with this NDP government and more ability to try to cover it up and hush it up. Well, that will not happen because those issues will continue to come forward. I just find it fascinating that the Minister of Education, under this NDP government, they were so quick to move on Morris-Macdonald, boom, went in and fired the whole lot. We know and it was acknowledged that there was illegal activity going on in the Seven Oaks School Division. Has one person been disciplined? Has the former disgraced NDP campaign manager, Brian O'Leary, been disciplined? The answer is no. Have they gone after one person? They have not. Why is that? You think there is some relationship between

monies being donated to the NDP and no action being taken? One would have to ask and pose the question. One would hope that was not the reason because they sure moved quickly on Morris-Macdonald, but when it came time to doing something in Seven Oaks, knowing that it was illegal, nothing took place.

\* (15:20)

Mr. Speaker, we know that Manitobans continue to suffer under this NDP government, particularly under this Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), because we are now past the two-year time frame on this BSE crisis, and they have not increased slaughter capacity by one, not one, and I say shame on the NDP government.

All the provinces around us, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan, Ontario, B.C., Alberta, we know that they are doing things to work with their cattle producers. They are working to increase slaughter capacity. Well, what do we get from this NDP government? We get all sorts of announcements. We get announcements about announcements. We get more announcements about the announcements about the announcements that they want to make. That is the trouble with this NDP government. It is all hollow rhetoric. It is all about an announcement, and do nothing.

What we have is Rancher's Choice. We said very clearly on this side of the House, we said it well over a year ago in our five-point BSE strategy, and we said we would be happy to hand it off to the government of the day, we would be happy to work with them because we believe that our cattle producers are suffering, and so we came up with a five-point plan, Mr. Speaker. Part of that was to increase slaughter capacity. We would support Rancher's Choice, but is it not interesting when Rancher's Choice got put into Dauphin that all of a sudden the issue is "Here comes Rancher's Choice, but we have got a problem with the lagoon in Dauphin; we do not know that it can take the capacity with this new slaughter facility?"

Well, I would suggest that the member from Dauphin, who is also the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers), have a meeting with himself to try to rectify this very serious problem on behalf of the cattle producers in Manitoba. But what we see is Rancher's Choice being disassembled, brought up

here to some warehouse in Manitoba, and what is it doing, Mr. Speaker? It sits in a warehouse collecting dust and rust. Meanwhile, our BSE producers out there, our cattle producers, are suffering because of BSE. This is a government of dust and rust. They should be taking the kind of action that we have been asking them to do, working with us so that our cattle producers, in fact, have some support rather than being denied and have their backs turned on them as we have seen by this NDP government.

We know full well when it comes to post-secondary education, what do we see happening in the province of Manitoba under this NDP government? We see university after university, and now we see some of the colleges, stating very clearly, "We are going to have to come behind this tuition freeze and we are going to have to start jacking up the user fees." Well, that has not raised a flag on the other side because this Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) is famous for jacking up user fees.

In the dark of night, what do they do? They bring in all these sneaky, sneaky taxes, these user fees. They do not announce them, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they just kind of bring them in in a very sneaky kind of way. I find it interesting that now we have the presidents of the major universities being concerned about what is happening with the user fees. I must say that on—is that time?

**Some Honourable Members:** Time is up.

**Mr. Murray:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I did not get into the Crocus scandal because that is the biggest issue facing Manitobans today. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East):** It is a dubious privilege to speak to this resolution, dubious because, really, what we are speaking to is a shopping list of right-wing Reform-Alliance rhetoric, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are nearly 23 preambles to this resolution. Preambles that speak to the very nadir of right-wing politics in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Murray) and the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), whom we have had the dubious pleasure of listening to over the last half hour or so, are appropriate spokespeople for the party of yesterday that occupies the Chamber opposite on the opposite side of the House from us on the government side.

Mr. Speaker, I was born and raised in western Manitoba, very proud to be from western Manitoba, and, of course, as Manitobans know, the rural part of western Manitoba has been the natural domain of members of the Conservative Party over the last half century. It has always puzzled me, particularly recently, why that happened. I can understand that sort of phenomenon during the years of Duff Roblin because all members of this House recognize that Premier Roblin was a statesman, someone who represented all Manitobans without fear or favour, someone that was a moderate individual, someone that had balanced policies and brought in programs like the floodway that were of benefit to all Manitobans and not just a narrow, narrow, narrow band that members opposite represent.

This brings me back to my comments about western Manitoba because really what we are confronted with across the Chamber in the House today is the Charleswood-Tuxedo party, in fact, even represent a very small band of the Charleswood-Tuxedo population. This is a party that represents vigorously and with rabid rhetoric and with frothing at the mouth, a very narrow, narrow spectrum of Manitobans, those who are of the Reform-Alliance persuasion in this province. It is a narrow, narrow band of people that members opposite represent. In fact, with the allegations of shakedowns from their Charleswood-Tuxedo friends over the Crocus Fund where the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Murray) said, "Oh, we knew this information on Crocus a couple of years ago, but we had a shakedown in my office, and we won't raise those topics in the Manitoba Legislature, Mr. Speaker, because our party fundraisers have told us to stay away from those items."

Well, you know, the integrity of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has been left in tatters in this House over the last two weeks. In fact, it has been shattered. The integrity of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has been shattered over the last couple of weeks in this House. Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has become David Filmon's loyal opposition or the Tory fundraisers' loyal opposition. Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has ceased to exist in this House over the last couple of weeks.

So we have members opposite who, you know, there are five members elected from western Manitoba, but western Manitobans are starting to have a dawning, an awakening, of who their MLAs

are really representing. They certainly are not representing the interests of people in Deloraine or Boissevain or Russell or Roblin or Souris or Virden or the other communities in western Manitoba. They are representing the interests of the very, very far right and the very, very self-interested in Tuxedo, in Charleswood, in Linden Woods, and even there, a very small band. Only the most rabid right Reformers and Alliance philosophically oriented people do members opposite represent.

So we have got this shopping list, you know, a little over two pages of right-wing rabid rhetoric proposed by the Member for Roblin that is presented as a serious resolution. In all seriousness, he puts it forth as a serious resolution for debate in this House, but all it does is serve to remind the public of the two parties that exist in this Legislature, the Reform-Alliance group across the hall that call themselves the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba, which is a shell, a shell, a shell of the Roblin Tories. This is the Reform-Alliance rump that exists across the hall, and those of us on the government side of the House who represent north, south, east, west, ethnic groups, sexual orientation, rural, urban. We represent the full and complete face of the province of Manitoba, while the group across the Chamber, although they get their support as a party from folks in western Manitoba, folks in central Manitoba, their positions and their policies only represent and only benefit a narrow band of wealthy folks that live in the city of Winnipeg and that Charleswood-Tuxedo-Linden Woods triangle, and again, as I say, not even all members of those populations in those particular constituencies.

\* (15:30)

So, in reviewing the relatively meaningless rhetoric that is put forth in this resolution, Mr. Speaker, it is worth touching upon some facts. We will start with the facts of the 1999 election, when the people of the province of Manitoba threw out a party that vote-rigged, corrupted democracy in the 1995 general election, were caught out in that and identified as being a party that was fundamentally scornful and contemptuous of democracy in this province through their vote-rigging in a number of constituencies.

Of course, that legacy continues with the shakedown we had in the Member for Kirkfield Park's office, where Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition

ceased to be a loyal opposition and became a corrupted party in this House. So it is not a leap of logic to follow from vote-rigging to shakedowns in the Leader's office to abrogating responsibility to be an opposition with integrity in this House, Mr. Speaker. It reminds us of that.

It also reminds us of the sell-off of the Manitoba Telephone System where, you know, one Eric Stefanson, the Finance Minister at that time, orchestrates, along with his colleagues in this Chamber, the sell-off of the Manitoba Telecom System, a legacy that all Manitobans owned, an Internet telecommunications enterprise that all Manitobans owned. It sold off that asset, Mr. Speaker, to the detriment of every Manitoban, particularly rural Manitobans, but to the detriment of every Manitoban forever. So that sell-off of MTS, you know, the first millionaire was Eric Stefanson's brother, Tom Stefanson. We just have to take a look at the board of directors of Manitoba Telecom System. It is the retirement fund for members opposite when they leave this Chamber.

So, you know, I am proud to be part of a government that is working hard each and every day on behalf of all Manitobans. I am proud to be part of a government that prides itself on building Manitoba. I am proud to be able to identify during this debate that Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has ceased to be anything but a Reform-Alliance rump in this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Mr. Speaker, I am certainly not going to respond to the member from Brandon East because, quite obviously, that was a speech of desperation. You could hear the tone of desperation in his voice, only being afraid of what they are going to have to face when they finally have to answer all the questions on Crocus and how Crocus was dealt with. I believe the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that we saw, today is extremely nervous about the kind of answers that he is going to have to provide when a public inquiry is, in fact, established.

It is time that the Premier (Mr. Doer) of the province step in and say that we will have a public inquiry, that we want to get to the bottom of the truth. Then we will find out who was telling the truth and who knew what when and where and why. It is time that Manitobans were given that answer because we are not dealing with government's money. We are

dealing with the people that have invested in the Crocus fund. It is their money. It is those people that we are responsible to. It is time that the Minister of Finance and the Premier of the province stepped up to the plate and said, "Let us clear the air. Let us call a public inquiry and make sure that the people know precisely what happened and why."

I want to spend a bit of time today, Mr. Speaker, on identifying some of the difficulties that rural Manitoba and many of the people in urban centres are facing because of the kind of weather conditions that we are seeing. Seldom, ever, do we see this kind of continuation of wet weather without a break in it to allow farmers to get out onto the field and put their crops in the ground and, in fact, do business as normal.

I just read an e-mail from a businessman in southwestern Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who identifies clearly what the impact is to his business and how those people that he serves and those people that he provides product to are hurting, and how those people are watching their cows give birth to calves out in the middle of the field and have the little calves drown in the middle of the field because of the wet weather.

It is also important to note that he says large areas are being drowned out, areas that had already been seeded. There will be no crop there, because it will be, by far, too late to reseed those crops if and when the ground dries this spring. And, similarly, we have this situation again, as we have had for the last three years now in southeast Manitoba, anything east of the Red River and, indeed, a significant area even west of the Red River, where people, for all spring, have simply not been able to put the heavy equipment in the fields to put a crop in the ground and expect any kind of commerce to happen in the spring of this year.

But look at what the impact of that in the fall of this year. There will be no new combines bought. There will be no new equipment bought. There will be no fertilizer bought. There will be no seed bought, and what has been bought will be returned. Be it any commerce that the urban communities, small communities in rural Manitoba that depend on that income by those farmers to be able to generate some kind of commerce, will not happen this year. That is gone. The opportunity is gone. It is only four or five days now to the end of the crop insurance deadline.

That means seeding will come to an end on June 20, and anything that will be seeded after June 20 is very risky at best. So there will be thousands and thousands of acres that will simply not be seeded.

But the biggest problem will be that the weeds that are growing in all of these fields are going to have to be dealt with some way, because if we do not take care of them, if we do not kill them one way or another, they will set seed and the weed contamination of those fields will go on for years and years after and those costs are going to have to be borne by somebody. So somebody should make the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), the minister of industry and commerce, and the minister of environment should make a decision. They should do it now. They should say, "Yes, we will provide special licence that these aircraft sprayers can be put into the fields and allow them to put chemicals on those fields that they can kill the weeds that will infest and contaminate the soil for years after." That needs to happen.

I think it is also important to note that the livestock industry that has suffered two years of virtually no net income in Manitoba is again, today, in those areas suffering badly. Not only can they not put their cows into pasture because it is all under water, but the calves that are dependent on those cows for sustenance and nourishment will not be able to get feed because those farmers have no feed left that they can feed those cows in some feedlots and even the feedlots are so soggy and wet that it is simply impossible to imagine that cows could be kept there.

But those are some of the economic impacts that this government must face. This government should step up to the plate as we did in 1999 when southwest Manitoba had a spring like this and that farmers could not seed their crops. We, then, went to visit with those farmers. I remember well a meeting in an arena. There were almost 3000 people in that arena, and then a week later we went to Brandon. The whole Cabinet went to Brandon. When we came out of that Cabinet meeting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we announced a \$50-an-acre cash payment to those farmers who had not been able to get onto their land and to provide assistance to them, that they could take care of their land and put it in proper shape, that they could put a crop into it the following year.

That is what needs to happen now. These farmers are sitting there not knowing what to do, and

our government is sitting on its hands, knowing what to do but not having the fortitude to make the decisions in a timely manner, and that has been the problem with this government from day one. First of all, when they first ran, they said, "Give us \$15 million, six months, and we will fix the health care system." Well, look at how they fixed the health care system.

\* (15:40)

I believe the budget for health care now is over a billion dollars more than it was in 1999, more than a billion dollars more, and have they fixed anything? No. Not a thing. The only thing that they have done—go to Emerson. Take a trip down 75 highway, that four-lane highway that is falling apart. Take a trip down to the U.S. border. Tell me if you can find an "H" sign, a hospital sign at Emerson. We always proudly displayed that sign. We held it up so when tourists came by and they ran into trouble, they knew where there was an emergency room that they could attend. As soon as they hit the Manitoba border, they knew there was health care there. Now this government has lifted the health care sign in Emerson. There are no more emergency services provided at that hospital.

It is amazing. The economic devastation that has taken place in this province since this NDP government took over is astounding. The people are starting to catch on now with the Gomery inquiry in Ottawa and the Crocus inquiry in Manitoba. The devastation that has been rendered to investors simply is important to note.

I want to end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by saying that the crop insurance program that was put in place that the minister refers to all the time, that we have crop insurance in place, will only function for three years. Then the ratcheting-down occurs to a point where you get no coverage, the same as the CAIS program that was put in place. That is a three-year ratcheting-down program; at the end of three years, the farmers have no income. The farmers in southeast Manitoba now, this is their third year. There will be no income for those farmers.

**Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this Bill 207 and put some of my points on the record.

This is again a very ridiculous motion coming from the opposition without any substance as most of

their recommendations and bills have been. It is two years now, Mr. Speaker, that I have been in the Legislature. It is good to have a healthy opposition, but I have seen nothing except rhetoric, hollow, without any substance, on any of their issues, which makes me very frustrated. I wish there was an opposition that would bring some positions, starting from the BSE crisis which is supposed to be their expertise. All their rhetoric was in the beginning that we need more money. There was no suggestion to say, "Let's go together and open the border," which was the main cause.

Now, I would like to say that today our government has put over \$145 million into the hands of producers, new programs dealing with crop deficiencies, feed support, drought assistance, to local producers holding cull animals, dead stock removal and a load of new programs. We have been working with our local producers and slaughter industry to expand our local slaughter capacity by providing an additional \$3 million in Budget 2005 for new efforts to build a slaughter in addition to \$11.5 million that has already been committed to Rancher's Choice projects.

Talking about health care, that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, bothers me more, and I am glad that the Leader of the Opposition today acknowledged that the American system is no good. But what they are proposing is precisely going to bring the Americanization of the Canadian medicare system. It is very simple. Our Minister of Health (Mr. Sale) has stated several times we have a pool of doctors. These doctors have a choice to work either in the public system or a private system. If the private health care for profit is brought into the province, these pool of doctors, some of them will leave and go into the private care system. It is very simple mathematics. If you have 400 doctors and 200 move to the private care, only 200 are left in the public care system. The majority of people, who are average earners, cannot afford to put money from their own VISA card for health care. They depend on the social system. They pay taxes, and that is what their expectations are.

We are working hard. We have been improving drastically by installing health care systems in rural Manitoba, recruiting more than 180, 160 doctors, pardon me, in Winnipeg, Manitoba now practising before '99. So the question is that if you look at what has happened, when you take 10 years, it takes a good 10 years to train a doctor. Now if you have

reduced the capacity in the medical colleges, the effect will be after 10 years. In 1995, the cut went and now it is 2005. It is 10 years. These 10 years, the doctors will be now when we are going to have a hundred doctors in the medical college, 10 years from now, these doctors will be practising in rural Manitoba and all over.

So it is the vision of a government that tries to see how to fix society for futuristic and sustainable ways. The health care traditions by the government is absolutely Americanization, and I am sorry to say, you know, the Supreme Court ruling, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is clearly stating it is a privately funded, private facilities, private insurance given. What they are suggesting, that the private, for-profit operate but let it be publicly funded, that is not the Supreme Court's judgment. So I think this is confusing the issue, confusing the patients in Manitoba and we are working hard, we are not there yet, but we have come a long way from the previous years when I have repeatedly stated in this Chamber about my own family children leaving the province as practitioners of medicine, including my brother who passed away waiting for heart surgery.

So we have come a long way. We have a lot of things to do, but to suggest a private health care system is like infecting a virus in your body that will literally kill you. The Canada Health Act is like the sacred cow to me. I came to Canada because it is a universal social system, and I would not like to get that system dissolved and dismantled by anyone.

I would like to read a letter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which has come from a young constituent from my area. I think the member from Carman should perhaps listen to this, because this has some interest on one of the things that he introduced. So we like to work together with the opposition on some constructive motions and positions.

There is a young fellow, my constituent, whom I think is the future of our society and I read his letter to me. He says, "I am currently a Grade 12 student. I am just writing to you today, first off, to say how thankful I am to have someone completely committed to Radisson for once. It is just good to have someone with whole experience in this type of field (politics and business). My first real issue is to have about the smoking ban." I think the member would be happy to hear this. "I have to say I really like the spirit of the by-law because no one should have to be

influenced by someone else's choice to damage their own body. Thus, by doing it outside, it is much less of a threat to other non-smokers. The only problem with this law is that federally controlled Aboriginal reserves are exempt, and by no authority of your own have their own little loopholes which is not fair to other business owners. So, since you have no control," Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is worth noting, "Since you have no control over this issue, let me be one to congratulate you and your party on looking out for the well-being of all Manitobans and hopefully reducing the stress on our health care system down the road.

"The second reason I am writing to you today is to talk about the state of Manitoba Hydro." This is a 12-year-old high school student, who is going to be the future, the future, maybe, leader, maybe a social worker, maybe somebody who builds the society. Now this guy writes to me, "The second reason I am writing to you today is to talk about the state of Manitoba Hydro. For years, it had been successful for the Province to run the business, but now it seems to be taking a financial hit and talk of selling it to the private sector makes me a little uneasy." I do not know how he got this impression, but this is what he says in the final. "I know that the NDP says they will not sell it and so on, but after seeing what happened to MTS, it is doing bad now. It kind of looked like you sold it behind Manitobans' backs. I just hope that you fight for it and do not allow the same fate for Manitoba Hydro."

\* (15:50)

Now, this is what I take pride in, when one of my constituents is telling me do not sell Manitoba Hydro. "So that I just really want to thank you for taking time to read my letter, and once again, say how thankful I am to have someone like you representing my community."

I take a great pride that I have a young fellow that has the same doctrine as our party in government. I take a tremendously great satisfaction that these people, young people like that, are writing me e-mails of building a future in the positive note, not like what I hear from that side. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today to speak to the opposition motion and to echo the dissatisfaction that Manitobans have with

this NDP government. They are dissatisfied because they see a government plagued by scandal. Manitobans are frustrated and disappointed because, under this government, they have witnessed countless opportunities for Manitobans to slip away. They have witnessed their tax dollars being misspent time and time again. They have seen forced unionization. They have suffered through rising waiting lists for surgeries, have seen our universities crumble and have witnessed a continued struggle of our rural communities under the crisis of BSE.

Moreover, time and time again Manitobans have witnessed this government's attempt to cover up its inaction and lack of real solutions by bombarding the public with press release after press release. Maybe, with all their press releases, this government thinks it can pull the wool over the eyes of Manitobans and convince them that they are doing the right thing and what is best for hardworking Manitobans across our province. We have all seen just how experienced this government is with wool as, under its watch, over 33 000 Manitobans who invested in the disgraced Crocus fund, have been fleeced of more than \$60 million.

Manitobans are not easily fooled. They are aware that this government's mismanagement, oversight and inaction have had dire consequences for our province. First and foremost, Manitobans are aware that this government ignored red flags and disregarded internal warnings about the Crocus Fund that were raised by departmental officials. This government ignored warning signs that Crocus was in serious trouble and just stood back and watched as the captain of the Crocus Fund abandoned ship while 34 000 Manitobans watched their hard-earned investments sink like a stone.

Worse still, if the truth will set you free, as stated by this Premier (Mr. Doer), why not then call a public inquiry? Despite many other unanswered questions, including who the higher authority was that quashed legislation prepared by his former Minister of Industry that would have improved the monitoring and reporting requirements of the Crocus Fund, this Premier refuses to call a public inquiry.

The Auditor General even acknowledged in the report that there were still a number of outstanding questions that need to be addressed. Why is this Premier scared to set the truth free and call a public inquiry? This is what Manitobans deserve. The



mismanagement of the NDP continues far beyond Crocus, and Manitobans again end up being the ones shouldering the burden.

Under this government, we have seen the Seven Oaks School Division engage in a risky and illegal land development scheme that was Swinford Park. Manitobans want to know where the Education Minister was in all of this. While Seven Oaks claimed that the scheme made the division money, it appears the school division's own documents over-estimated their revenues by nearly \$1 million and their losses could well exceed \$200,000. Manitobans deserve to know where the money for this land development scheme came from, especially considering Seven Oaks School Division's high-priority taxes and low-per-student spending. The resulting report prepared by the Education Minister's department fails to answer all of the questions and seems more concerned with hiding the misconduct and mismanagement of the NDP's Education Minister.

Manitobans deserve better from this government. The law was disregarded, but where are the consequences? To find the consequences of this NDP government, one only has to look at Manitoba's rural communities.

Plus que deux années se sont écoulées depuis le début de la crise de l'ESB. Notre industrie agricole continue à souffrir, parce que le gouvernement neo-démocrate a manqué d'augmenter la capacité d'abatage et de transformation.

#### **Translation**

*More than two years have gone by since the beginning of the BSE crisis. Our agricultural industry continues to suffer because the New Democrat government has failed to increase the slaughter and processing capacity.*

#### **English**

Clearly, this government is out of touch with our rural communities. Maybe this government follows the old adage if we ignore the problem then it will go away. That is what we have seen here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government that has ignored the challenges facing rural Manitoba. With the BSE crisis and the recent flooding to the west, we have seen a government more interested in press releases and photo ops than real action.

Quite simply, press conferences, photo ops and empty promises do not build slaughter capacity and do not provide flood relief. Manitobans have waited too long for a true, meaningful commitment by this government to our rural communities, and it appears that they will continue to wait under this government while hardworking Manitobans across our province and in our rural communities struggle because of this government's inaction.

Le début de la construction des éoliennes à Saint-Léon démontre que nos communautés rurales ont beaucoup à offrir à notre province, et je voudrais féliciter le gouvernement pour cette initiative. Mais c'est seulement un commencement, et doit être comparé à d'autres initiatives suspectes du gouvernement NPD.

#### **Translation**

*The beginning of the construction of the wind turbines in St. Léon shows that our rural communities have a great deal to offer our province, and I would like to congratulate the government for that initiative. But this is just a beginning and must be compared to other questionable initiatives of the NDP government.*

#### **English**

While these wind farms demonstrate that this government has made a positive commitment toward an environmentally friendly source of energy that will no doubt benefit our province in the years to come, this initiative also has to be weighed against the decision by this government to force non-unionized workers of the floodway expansion project to pay union dues, pension and benefit costs when these costs are already covered by their respective employers. This decision hardly puts an open-for-business sign in our province.

Manitobans have become accustomed to waiting for results that never seem to materialize under this government. Thousands of Manitobans continue to wait in pain and suffering for pediatric dental procedures, hip and knee replacements and other surgeries. Meanwhile, rural hospitals are closing, despite the Premier's (Mr. Doer) promise that no rural hospital would be closed or converted.

Unfortunately, recent reports point out that the deterioration of health care services in our rural

communities is having such a negative impact on Manitobans that they are left with no choice but to leave their communities that they have for so long called home and relocate to areas where they can access services.

This province's health care system is facing a state of crisis under this government's watch while, time and time again and in press release after press release, this government has promised to fix Manitoba's health care system. After six years, we see that these promises ring hollow. Manitobans want action, not press releases.

Truly, one has to question just how committed this government is to improving the health and well-being of Manitobans when it has recently permitted the newly opened South Beach Casino to allow smoking, exposing non-smokers and patrons to a smoke-filled environment that threatens their health. Indeed, time and time again, this government has failed to adequately address the threats that Manitobans face on many fronts.

To date, this year alone, Winnipeg has been the scene of over 20 stabbings, 20 shootings and 9 murders. Unfortunately, it appears that yet again Winnipeg will risk developing the same reputation that it did last year as it recorded a record 34 homicides. Of course, this government would be quick to say that they are working diligently at curbing the surge of violence in our cities. Just how are they doing this? By using VLT revenues, a far from stable source of income, to fund our new police officers and by instituting a gun amnesty program. While we support the principles of the gun amnesty program, criminals will be far from clamouring to turn in their illegal weapons. Manitobans deserve better than this, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Manitobans deserve a government that will do whatever is necessary to curb the scourge of violence and crime in our communities, and to curb the scourge of drugs, including crystal meth. Whether any of this will actually materialize, Manitobans will again have to play a wait-and-see approach, but, with this government, we have learned to not keep their expectations too high.

Although you will never hear these mentioned by any of the NDP government press releases, this is a sad reality of our province under the direction of this government. It is because of these realities, the

misuse of Manitobans' hard-earned tax dollars, NDP oversights of its own departments, the mismanagement of our province's finances, the mishandling of our province's rural areas, rural health care system and university colleges, and refusal to do what is best for our province and all Manitobans, that is why I support this opposition motion and respectfully ask that this government apologize to Manitobans for the way in which it has acted on behalf of the citizens of our province. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

\* (16:00)

**Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to speak on this motion by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach). I have a great deal of respect for the Member for Russell, but I respectfully have to disagree with him on the main body of this motion here. I am going to do a little bit of comparison, past and present, how things were done in the bad old days prior to 1999 and then how things are done today to show the vast improvements that we have experienced since September 21 of 1999.

I know the big topic of the day is health care so I would just briefly like to begin with that by stating that we all know what the Conservative agenda is here. The New Democratic Party is, in fact, the Canadian people are in favour of a public health care system. These guys and their rich backers are looking at that \$3 billion that the Province delivers in health care every year as the biggest cash cow out there and that is what they want. They want to privatize this system and start getting into it. Somehow they are trying to hornswoggle the public by saying it is going to be cheaper, but how you run a private system where a profit margin is inherent and expect to deliver it more cheaply to the people of Manitoba is beyond me.

I would love to have one of them stand up and go into depth in regard to that but I really do not think it is going to happen. They refuse to acknowledge the fact that we are in a difficult situation in some areas, especially in terms of physician shortages, but they will not acknowledge the fact that while they were in office they actually cut the number of training positions. How ironic. They were advised by the national association of emergency room physicians that there would be a shortage of doctors in the future. How did they respond to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? By reducing

the training spaces in our universities. So for them to stand up in the House today and criticize us on that front is pretty shallow, to say the least.

We have seen examples, or attempted examples, of their goal to privatize and I just have to look back to the home care system which was set in place by one of our greatest premiers, Mr. Ed Schreyer. I should say the Right Honourable Ed Schreyer, back very early on in the 1970s, put in place this system which has served our elderly people well. That was one of the things that the Tory opposition wanted to privatize when they were in office. They made a concerted effort to do so, but only after finally studying it did they realize that, yes, in fact, the public system being delivered within the province was more effective and on that basis they finally withdrew.

A parallel can be found in the field of education. I remember when I was first elected in 1999, I remember what they were contemplating doing. They were going to let corporations right inside of our schools. We all remember the situation with YNN. This was a company that was going to supply computer equipment to our children, but in exchange for the opportunity to run some advertisements by them. Now, if that is not corporatization of the system and the sellout of a social responsibility, I do not know what is.

If I look at Education, we have to look at their rhetoric in the House today about education taxes and how if they were ever given the opportunity they would eliminate education taxes overnight. Well, again, talk is cheap, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They had 10 years in office to address this issue, 75 percent of their caucus comes from rural Manitoba and they did nothing. Well, I should not say that. I should not say nothing. They did increase the portioning on farmland, I recall. So, rather than reducing the burden of taxation on the farm communities, they actually increased it. So, you know, 10 years to act and all the farmers ended up with was more taxes at the end of the day.

This government has addressed it. We have committed to eliminating the ESL, and are a far ways down that road already. In recognition of the hard times that farmers are experiencing, we announced in the Throne Speech a very unusual move that we were going to be reducing the special levy on farmland, which we followed through on. We did it 50 percent

for this year but, given the seriousness of the nature, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we actually did it retroactively by 33 percent to the previous year. So our commitment to education is there.

I do recall in the 2003 election campaign, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), who introduced this resolution, actually let slip what the Conservative policies were going to be when it comes to education. I think he referred to it as schools of excellence where the gifted students would go, I assume, or the gifted communities, no doubt places like Tuxedo or Charleswood or Kirkfield Park. These were going to be the schools of excellence, but the rest of us out in Poplarfield, or Fisher Branch, or Arborg, it was going to back to the three Rs, basically. That is all we need out in the country, I guess, as far as they were concerned. The schools of excellence were going to be in areas of special interest to them, no doubt. So I do not think we have any lessons to learn from members of the opposition on either of these two critical fronts, on education or health care.

When I look to the field of agriculture, again, it is just more of the same. Here we are stuck in the midst of a serious crisis, and I will acknowledge words of the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), usually he and I do not really see eye-to-eye on issues, but today he actually said something very true at the beginning of his speech when he referred to one of his constituents who said that never have we seen such continuous bad weather for such a long period of time. Those are very true words, Mr. Speaker.

We can roll out program after program, and our government has done so, but at the end of the day, when Mother Nature has turned against us, as she obviously has, and I recall, going back to the election period, we were in the midst of one of the worst droughts that I have ever seen in my lifetime to be followed in succession with two of the worst flooding periods in recent history. So, yes, we are faced with some considerable challenges, but rather than everybody pulling together in times of crisis, which we would expect from elected honourable members of the Legislature, rather than that, they insist on playing politics once again.

Rather than pulling together—and I just have to look at one of the programs that we introduced right after we got in office back in 1999, which was

something very prophetic, I might add, which is excess moisture insurance, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again, the former Member for Lakeside, Mr. Harry Enns, had said, "Oh, if we got elected in '99, that was going to be done. We were going to roll it out. That was the next thing on our agenda." Same story, just like their promises to reduce education taxes on farmland, same thing, 10 years in office to do it. What did they do? Nothing. Once they are in opposition: "Oh, we would have done this long ago."

So I really do not think we have too, too much to learn from members opposite and, quite frankly, I do not think the people of Manitoba are fooled by their rhetoric.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

The member from Interlake has referred to the Honourable Harry Enns that was from Lakeside as announcing a program that never came true. He did announce that, and I have the press release here, on May 29 of 1999, and I will table that for the member if he needs it. The Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), in January 4 of 2000, tabled their program. Therefore, I would ask the member to withdraw his remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Clearly, the member knows that these disputed announcements over the facts are not points of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Member for the Interlake, two minutes.

\*(16:10)

**Mr. Nevakshonoff:** Talk is cheap, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Announcements are fine. The member of Emerson was talking about it today. When they had problems in '99, they rolled out an ad hoc program. It was not something carved in stone like it is today. Now, our farmers know that excess moisture insurance is out there, so they do not have to come hat in hand maybe for some special program—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Member for Arthur-Virden, on a point of order.

**Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden):** I just rise on a point of order. The member from the Interlake is saying how talk is cheap, and, if I were him, I would be embarrassed because of the situation that they have with education taxes. They have had an increase in their transfer payments of \$359 million, a budget that has increased \$549 million. If they cared anything about rural Manitoba, they would have at least taken the education taxes off of farmland. It was \$40 million. They have been drowning in money in regard to the transfer payments, the largest being one of the second or third largest they have ever received in this province, if not the largest, and it is just embarrassing to have this kind of misleading fact put on the table.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Member for Interlake can now complete and round up his speech.

**Mr. Nevakshonoff:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, once again, our record speaks for itself. We implemented a 50% reduction on the taxes. When they were in office, all they accomplished was raising the portioning on farmland for the farmers. So it boggles the mind to listen to members opposite today, more disinformation and nonsense. Thank you.

**Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I, too, appreciate the opportunity to get up and speak on this very important resolution put forward by the member from Russell.

Clearly, there are quite a few different areas we can discuss here. I know the member from Brandon East went on about our long resolution, but in all honesty we could have went even further with the incompetence of this government in terms of misleading all of Manitobans.

I do agree with one of the statements that the member from Interlake did make. He did say that we have had very bad weather for a long, long period of time, and I think I want to follow it up. We have really had bad government for a very long period of time as well. Certainly, this government, it is clearly mismanagement every week. Every week we sit in the House, it is just another episode of mismanagement. This particular government is managing by

crisis. They are just running from one crisis to another and trying to address those crises and put out the fire in that manner. There is no such thing as long-term planning, no vision for the future, no vision for Manitoba and no vision for economic development, no vision for our families and our kids and our future.

All we have is more tax and more spending. Tax and spend. That is the nature of this government. Tax and spend. We certainly on this side of the House keep track of the debt that this particular government is rolling up and very close to the \$20-billion mark. Quite frankly, we find that atrocious. This government is spending more and more money every year, and quite frankly, we are not sure what we are getting. We do not seem to be getting bang for our dollar.

Our provincial budget now is over \$8.1 billion, more and more money every year going into different areas of Manitoba. Unfortunately, we are not seeing a big benefit in our health care. We are not seeing big benefits in our highways. We do not see a big benefit in our economic development strategy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the last few months, I have had more and more calls about the crisis or the scandal involved in Crocus. Quite frankly, clearly the government of the day has put their head in the sand, or in this case, they put their head in the mud because they are not addressing the issues, the very serious issues with the Crocus Fund. There have been red flags raised time after time after time, and they are just not willing to deal with those issues. Clearly, the only way to have this issue resolved is by a public inquiry, so we can really get to the bottom of this particular issue so that all Manitobans, including the 34 000 shareholders of Crocus, know what the government knew, when they knew it and just how badly they mismanaged this entire Crocus affair.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the second highest number of calls I am getting is in regard to our provincial highways. Quite frankly, the highways in rural Manitoba in the western part of Manitoba, at least, are in major disrepair. In fact, on my way into Winnipeg this past week travelling on No. 2 highway, the residents of the Fannystelle area have put up a sign, and the sign says something to the effect of if you are concerned with the condition of

Highway No. 2, phone Minister Ron Lemieux, and provides the phone number. So I am sure Mr. Lemieux and his office will be getting a number of phone calls in regard to the state of No. 2 highway. Clearly, clearly, we need some assistance. My apologies. The minister of highways and transportation will be fielding a number of calls in regard to the condition of No. 2 highway.

The other issues, too, and there are a number of highways that I am getting calls in regard to, No. 2, No. 3, No. 5, No. 23 and some of the gravel roads. I am talking about provincial roads 340 in the Wawanesa-Shilo area I am getting calls on. Highway No. 350 in the MacGregor area, Highway No. 352 in the Austin region. Clearly, there is nobody in charge looking after the maintenance of these particular highways. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am getting videos. The residents of that area are sending me videos showing me just how bad of a condition those particular roads are in, and I have taken the opportunity to send those off to the minister's office, so, hopefully, he will be taking the time to view those videos and just see the very important concerns that the people of that area are raising.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, clearly, some of the people that are phoning about the condition of the highways are the agriculture producers. They are having a hard time shifting their produce out of their yard. They cannot get their trucks down the yard, out of the yard, to ship their produce and their goods to market. So this whole infrastructure mess we are into is affecting the economy of all of Manitoba.

We have seen a real demise in all of agriculture. We have just one crisis after another. We have basically lost the PMU industry in Manitoba, the potato industry has been cut back fairly substantially over this past year and the other major issue, of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the BSE crisis we are in here in Manitoba. It has been over two years now since the BSE crisis, and quite frankly, all we have got from this government is announcement after announcement, and we have not been able to increase our slaughter capacity in Manitoba to any degree at all.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we still have only one federally licensed slaughter plant in Manitoba, and what we are finding is every other province in Canada is moving ahead in their slaughter capacity. So what it means to me is that we are going to be

falling behind here in Manitoba again. We have a growing number of beef animals throughout the province. Our producers are expecting, hoping, to have some kind of a market for the animals, but this government of the day is not taking any initiatives to develop slaughter capacity. So what we are being forced to do is export our beef and export our jobs to other jurisdictions outside of Manitoba.

What does that mean for the future of our youth in Manitoba? Are they going to have jobs down the road? I think it could be wonderful here in Manitoba with the increase in the livestock and the industry we have in Manitoba, but we need that infrastructure to deal with those particular animals. We need processing facilities to do the processing, and from there we can develop markets to sell our products abroad.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it appears that this government is hanging their hat on the U.S. market becoming open to our product, and we are not sure if that is going to happen right away. We are not sure if it may ever happen. In fact, the reverse may be true. It may be closed down or restricted even further, and where will that leave us?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Manitobans have been misled by this government. They have been misled by this government. They have been told that they have committed money to slaughter capacity, yet we have not seen one piece of ground moved in development of slaughter capacity. We have talked about a plant in Neepawa. We have talked about a plant in Dauphin.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the issue comes up about waste water treatment. Well, where is the government of the day in trying to assist people with their waste water treatment?

\* (16:20)

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I recognize that I only have two minutes, but there are so many issues there that I want to bring forward. One of the other issues, too, that we are facing within rural Manitoba in relation to agriculture is the reorganization of the entire agriculture sector. The whole Department of Agriculture is being reorganized. So what we are finding is the formerly phrased agriculture offices are now vacant, a lot of vacancies throughout the province of Manitoba.

Quite frankly, agricultural producers need somewhere to go for a little bit of guidance. The industry is getting more technical, more complicated, all the time. There are certainly a number of programs out there where these producers need assistance. Quite frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have nowhere to go to get those answers. The Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) stated that she is reorganizing; she is coming up with new job descriptions. Unfortunately, those people just are not coming into place to address some of those issues, and we find it shameful that the Province is not moving ahead in a more expeditious way to get these people in place to actually help the producers of rural Manitoba.

We talk about water issues in Manitoba. Clearly, we have got a fundamental problem here with way too much water. The weather has not co-operated at all. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is very important that this government of the day have a look at how they are going to deal with these very serious problems out there in rural Manitoba. Obviously, it varies from area to area, but there are very significant situations out there developing in rural Manitoba. We hope that the government of the day will look forward to making some changes. Thank you.

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** I have been interested this afternoon to listen to the opposition members who go on and on about how bad things supposedly are in this wonderful, if wet, province. I am simply not sure where they are spending their time because it is certainly not speaking to and listening to Manitobans. I know that when our government brought in ground-breaking election finance legislation to remove corporate and union donations, there was a great deal of screaming and crying from the opposite side because they were terrified about the fact they would actually have to speak to real Manitobans. That is not something that they are used to.

I wonder, since they are not used to speaking to Manitobans, where they actually get some of the lines that we hear in this House. I think we can hear it. Perhaps they get those lines over the clink of glasses in their single malt Scotch at the Manitoba Club. Maybe they get their lines above the lapping of waves if they go on a spin on the yacht in Gimli harbour of the brokers that were involved in the sale of MTS. Maybe they are wined and dined by the B.C. shareholders in the Maples Surgical Centre,

who can probably tell them the yachts in English Bay are even better than the yachts in Gimli harbour. Or maybe it is over the sound of the mowers at the country club because those are the only Manitobans who are giving the gentlemen and the women across the way lines that they are using in this House, which they are trying to portray as the points that Manitobans are raising.

Those of us who listen to real Manitobans, who are out in the streets, who are in our schools, in our community clubs, in our friendship centres, hear people telling us that this province is moving ahead and this province is doing well.

I look at the resolution that was brought forward by my friend, the member from Russell. Of course, when you put things in writing, you do have to be careful what you say. He used a few adjectives which I think can very easily be turned back on him and the other members who sit across the way. The member from Russell uses the word "careless." Well, "careless" is a word, the most generous word that I could use, for selling off a Crown corporation, our Manitoba Telephone System, for anywhere between a third and a half of its value—

**An Honourable Member:** At the dawn of the communication era.

**Mr. Swan:** At the dawn of the communication era, as the Minister for Healthy Living (Ms. Oswald) would say.

Of course, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) uses the word "insensitive." The unmitigated gall from the Conservative Party, to use the word "insensitive." I could go on all day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the insensitivity that this opposition showed when in government in the nineties.

Let us start with welfare snitch lines. That was their solution to serving the welfare system, was to have neighbour turned against neighbour by a snitch line. These were the individuals who suggested that workfare would be a good thing. Let us get single moms with young children and let us force them out to do employment that would not give them any benefits or any development.

These are also the individuals who thought it was a great idea to claw back the Child Tax Credit from people who were collecting employment and

income assistance. These are the same people who thought it was a great idea to close friendship centres providing services to Aboriginal and Métis people across the province. These are the same individuals who thought it was a great idea to freeze minimum wage so that people on the very lowest rungs of the ladder would never rise up anymore. And, of course, these are also the individuals who thought it was a great idea when gangs were sweeping across the province to set up a gang hotline which was not confidential, and it certainly was not hot because if you left a message it would take weeks and weeks before anybody returned the call, if at all.

And, of course, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) also uses the word "duplicitous" in his motion. Well, duplicitous, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a system to defraud the electoral system of Manitoba by trying to fix elections by putting up phoney candidates. Of course, it was the same crew that the gang who could not shoot straight, who tried again in 1999—

**An Honourable Member:** Smear campaign.

**Mr. Swan:** —with a smear campaign against my friend, now the MLA from Interlake, to try and subvert the electoral process again.

It is interesting, you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was in a trophy shop here in the city last week, picking up a trophy for the ball hockey game at the Ellice Street Festival, which I must confess was won by my friend, the MLA for Wolseley. While I was in there, I saw there were two PC caucus trophies sitting on the counter. It was very interesting. One was great. The one I saw, the Member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire) won the golf tournament last year, so I give him full credit for that, but the other, it was wonderful. They had a trophy with little plaques for the constituency which had won an award for that year, and, indeed, the winner of the constituency award for 1995 was the constituency of Interlake.

**An Honourable Member:** Really?

**Mr. Swan:** Yes. One wonders how much was known, but I digress. Let us get on to the positive things; let us get on to the good things. My friend the Member for Russell, of course, included Family Services, an area of concern to him. So let us talk about some of the things this government has done in the area of Family Services.

On this side of the House we know that early childhood development is an important part and a very, very good investment in our young people. Since 1999, this government has increased funding for child care by 64 percent to a total of \$80 million per year. We have created since 1999, 3500 new child care spaces. There are 3500 more families in this province that know they have a safe and effective place if they choose to enter the workforce. We know the number of funded child care spaces for children with disabilities has included by more than 50 percent since 1999. We believe in the Healthy Baby program which provides parent education programs for mothers-to-be in 65 Manitoba neighbourhoods and communities, together with a nutrition income supplement that has benefited over 4000 low-income families just in 2003-04 alone. Small investment, big rewards.

We on this side believe in supporting foster families who are prepared to step in when a child needs to be placed in the event of apprehension. Now, foster family rates have increased three times since we took office, in 2000, 2003 and 2004. Now, rates for foster parents never saw a single increase between 1992 and 1999, and, indeed, the Tories who are now yammering across the way are the ones who cut foster parent rates three times in 1993, 1994 and again in 1996. But, of course, the Foster Family Association was established to provide support for foster families. Well, in 1993, those hard-hearted Tories cut the funding to that organization.

**An Honourable Member:** Do they have a heart?

**Mr. Swan:** I do not know if they have a heart. We reinstated the Foster Family Association in 2000. We doubled its funding in 2004 because we believe in providing those services to the people of Manitoba.

I already mentioned the end of the clawback of the national child tax benefit. That was one of the first things that we did putting \$13.7 million into the hands of low-income families in Manitoba. We know that it is better to use a carrot than a stick to try and get people off social assistance and working, and that is why we have expanded programs to help income assistance participants return to the labour force.

\* (16:30)

We have made significant enhancements to training, to work readiness programs. We have given

better access to day care subsidies to make it easier for people to rejoin the workforce, and we have also enhanced earning exemptions. The result of all of that, of course, is that now Statistics Canada tells us there is 32 percent less Manitobans on social assistance in 2003 than there were a decade before.

In this year's budget, we have increased the northern food allowance rate by 20 percent to work to combat the high prices of food in northern or remote areas. I see my light is flashing. I have not even touched on housing in that portfolio. I have only talked about family services. I will leave it to some of my colleagues to continue talking about the policies that are moving this province forward in a very positive way for all Manitobans, not just the ones at the country clubs, not just the ones with the yachts and not just the ones drinking Scotch at the Manitoba Club, but everybody in this province.

**Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose):** As in any good Opposition Day debate, we see some efforts at defending their government from the members opposite. I am glad I have an opportunity to speak at this particular spot in the rota, because to have just listened to the honourable member talk about how they have been able to expand programs and how things were bad in the nineties, he obviously ignores or does not know or deliberately redirects his thoughts relative to the financial circumstances of this province in the 1990s.

He might be interested to know that the year-over-year growth in revenue to this province dropped below zero as a result of the mismanagement of government during the late 1980s by the party that he now represents. For those who are aware of the finances of the province, I think they will understand what I am talking about, but I cannot let that comment about the country club and comments about the yacht club—perhaps he would like to come out and put his shiny shoes on my corral fence and talk to my neighbours about the problems they are having. That is not country-club living. That is real life, my friend. I doubt he even knows where Silver Ridge and Lonely Lake are.

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

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about moving this province forward and I listen to



the government members talk about moving this province forward, I come from an area and I come from near an area where we are trying to establish two slaughterhouse facilities to improve marketing opportunities for cattle in this province. If this government truly believed half of the rhetoric that they are putting on the table about enhancing slaughter capacity in this province, there would be a SWAT team in both Dauphin and Neepawa right now working with the authorities and working with the engineers to make sure they get a clear picture of what it would take for infrastructure to establish both of these plants.

The one in Dauphin, which is not in my constituency but is very important to this industry in this province, and a matter of fact, has a number of its principals from within my constituency, are putting their reputations, their money and their efforts on the line to try and make something happen. This government, despite its best efforts to convey to the public otherwise, has done nothing of an aggressive and direct nature to assist this company to get going, because they continue to hide behind the fact until we get sign-up, we cannot commit money. When we get sign-up, now we have to see what it is going to cost for the plant. Now we have to see what it is going to cost for infrastructure.

All of these things could have been dealt with in a more aggressive manner by the government if they really had their heart in this but, of course, it seems to me, that what they are afraid of is that they would be perhaps accused of socialized cow slaughter capacity in this province. Regardless of what their fear was, the net result is what the people in this province are going to have to live with.

What we have got to live with is in 2006, Canada will become self-sufficient in its capacity to kill cattle. Now that is a little bit of a gross way to put it when we think of it as part of the food supply chain, but for those of us in the country who rely on livestock as a significant portion of not only the family income in many cases, but certainly as a large portion of the economy, what this amounts to is nothing more than abandoning the industry at the very time that it needs government leadership the most. Saskatchewan had 24 applications to expand slaughterhouse capacity, Manitoba had 3 that I know of for sure, and maybe 5. That tells the whole story right there, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

People, first of all, were not comfortable or not confident in what they thought was the economic opportunity in this province. Secondly, it also, I believe, speaks directly to the lack of leadership and lack of direction on the part of this government. I see the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) settling into her chair, and I know that I am going to get my ears verbally boxed in a couple of moments, but the fact is that she cannot deny that every other province in this country has the opportunity to expand dramatically, and is taking advantage of the situation. That, to me, is the criterion that this government will be judged by. It is the criterion that we, collectively as legislators, will be judged by.

When Québec, the Maritimes, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and B.C. can all, and Ontario, of course, which had some idle capacity that they were able to put money into and encouraged redevelopment, when all of those provinces are expanding their capacity, and Manitoba which is the only jurisdiction during the 1990s, and the member from St. James wanted to talk about the 1990s and how bad things were, let me tell him that in rural Manitoba and in the cattle industry, we were the only province, the only jurisdiction in North America not just in Canada, but the only jurisdiction in North America that was actually expanding its cow herd. We were growing in that area, and if ever there was an opportunity for government to seize the moment, take leadership and provide opportunity, it was handed to them on a platter.

It was handed to them on a platter and they, for whatever reason, have not picked it up. I will leave the government to explain why it did not pick up the ball and run with it, but, on behalf of my constituents, I can only say it is a source of complete frustration and some bitterness on the part of the people that I represent who are involved in the cattle industry.

There is a huge hurt coming out there right now with the people who are suffering from excess water. All of those issues, I will leave my colleagues to expand on. I just want to focus the members of this Chamber for a few minutes on what has been the golden opportunity. You know, there was probably some sarcastic laughter among the cattlemen of this province when people sort of quietly said, "Well, maybe we can turn this disaster into an opportunity." When you are on the verge of having to meet your banker, when you have got to go and talk to your

creditor about whether or not you are going to be able to make this year's bill payments, that is not even funny at the dinner table.

The fact is there is an opportunity there and it seems very clear to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have missed that opportunity and I lay that squarely at the feet of this government. Perhaps it is because they did not understand, perhaps it is because the Premier (Mr. Doer) did not want to understand, but the responsibility lies right in the Premier's chair because he could have said to his Treasury Board and his minister: Do something, and they did not.

\* (16:40)

**Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples):** I rise to put a few words and to say a few things about this Opposition Day motion put forward by the member from Russell. While I disagree with everything, that he says, it is so heavy with negative WHEREASes and THEREFOREs, and, Mr. Speaker, I think what the opposition is failing to see is—and he used the words "fail to show leadership," "fail to oversee and monitor labour-sponsored capital," "fail to grow, expand and diversify Manitoba's economy."

Mr. Speaker, I think what they have failed to see is the economic good news and the economic initiatives that the NDP government has done since it became the governing party, and I would like to remind the opposition and reaffirm some of the good things, the good news, the economic good news that we have done since we became government. I would like to remind them because those are the things that they overlook and most of the time fail to see the good things that we have done as a government.

On the economic front, Mr. Speaker, our performance as a government shows that business profits have risen by an average of 11.9 percent each year since 1999. From 1988, as compared to 1988 to 1999, business profits rose by an average of only 2.7 percent each year. The business profits in Manitoba are up 60 percent since 1999. For 2004, they estimate it to be up by 16.5 percent. Private capital investment increased by 8.1 percent in 2004. Private investments in Manitoba have increased more than \$1 billion over the past five years. Since 2000, an average of 7200 jobs have been created in Manitoba, each year, more than double the annual average created in 1989 and 1999 that is only 3091. Eighty-seven percent of the 36 000 jobs created since 1999 have full-time

jobs. Housing starts are up 73 percent since 2000. From 1990 to 1999, housing starts declined by 5 percent. House values in Manitoba are up 36 percent since 1999. From 1990 to 1999, during your government, house values went up by a mere 8 percent. CMHC forecasts that Manitoba housing start values will rise more in 2005 than in any other province. Listen to these statistics.

From 2000 to 2004, Manitoba experienced a net in-migration of 9000 people. During your term, 1995 to 1999, Manitoba experienced a net out-migration of 8189 people. Over the past five years, real, disposable incomes in Manitoba increased by 5.2 percent. This contrasts with the previous decade of 1990 to 1999 when real disposable incomes actually fell by 4.2 percent.

As to our fiscal responsibility, Manitoba has the second lowest per-capita spending of any provincial governments in Canada. The Auditor General recommended full implementation of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to both the Filmon government and to the NDP government. The Filmon government rejected his recommendation outright. Our government is doing it.

Dominion Bond Rating Service reported recently that Manitoba has a firm rein on program spending and prudent fiscal management. Our fiscally responsible approach has earned Manitoba two credit upgrades since we took office. When Moody's upgraded our credit rating, it cited our solid economic growth, balanced budgetary performance and a reduced debt burden.

As to business, where the opposition is most interested, when we took office, Manitoba's corporate tax rate was 17 percent, the highest in Canada. We have already reduced it to 15 percent. This has been the first reduction since the Second World War. We have already doubled the threshold to qualify for the small business tax rate to \$400,000, the second-most competitive threshold in Canada. We also reduced the small business tax rate from 8 percent to 5 percent, a 38% reduction. Since 1999, we have cut business taxes by a total of \$75 million. That is quite impressive.

So those are some of the things that I would like to remind the opposition. I know that I disagree. I disagree with their point that we have an anti-business approach to investment in Manitoba. This is

not quite true. Our record shows that we are engaged in expanding and encouraging more business in Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris):** I rise today to speak to the motion put forward by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach). It speaks to the misgivings that I have of the mismanagement and misspending of this government.

I would particularly like to speak about the Department of Family Services and Housing. Also, the minister has, in her responsibility, people with disabilities. This minister has been one that has been extremely reluctant to answer questions, both in this Legislature, in Estimates, in concurrence. In fact, she goes out of her way to disallow information to be brought forward. We have asked her for many pieces of information. We still do not have it.

She hides behind privacy legislation, saying, "Oh, third parties cannot provide this information. I have to get a legal opinion." Well, we certainly know that in the end she is forced to table some of these documents and she really does not know what she is talking about when she says these things. All she is trying to do is hide and not bring information forward. We are concerned about that. We are concerned that she is gagging her department.

We have heard that from a number of people that are very reluctant to speak up. In fact, people have left anonymous messages on my phone talking about things that are going on within the department, but they are reluctant to leave their name because they are fearful of losing their jobs. Certainly, we have heard that they are not supposed to talk to the opposition, they are not supposed to talk beyond their department. There is a very much of a fear going on within the department that something is going to come out that the minister does not want us to know. She is gagging herself, she is gagging all of the people within her department.

This is very problematic because Manitobans want to know some of the answers here. Certainly, when we ask the minister questions in regard to issues, and there are many within the department, in regard to Hydra House, for example, or in regard to the Aiyawin Corporation, and she refuses to come forward with the information or she skirts around it in a way that the wording is such that she just goes around the issue, it raises concerns to us as

opposition and to Manitobans, particularly those who may have dealings with the Department of Family Services, whether they be foster families, whether they be staff within the department, or whether they be people in Manitoba Housing, whether they be people with disability issues that have asked continually to meet with the minister and have been told, "No, that will not happen."

\* (16:50)

Certainly, we have had e-mails and phone calls from the minister's own staff remarking on how fearful they are of what is going on, of the process that is going on throughout the devolution of Child and Family Services into the four authorities. The four authorities being the southern Aboriginal authority, the northern Aboriginal, the Métis authority and the general authority.

Certainly, we recognize the need, the want, the desire and, in fact, the right for Aboriginal and Métis people to have care and control of their children. Certainly, we recognize that, but we are concerned about the process that the government is taking with this initiative that started over five years ago, but in the last six months we have seen this real push on to get this done very quickly. We are very concerned about that.

We hear from people within the department of foster parents whose children are now being transferred to another agency. We know that there were over 1500 cases that had to have file summaries done on them. Now these file summaries may only consist of two to three pages of documentation on a foster child, and this foster child may have been in care for up to 17 or 18 years, the entire life of the child. These files are very, very thick and full of information, whether that be medical information, social histories, educational information, and all of these files are being condensed into a couple of pages and those are being transferred to the agencies.

Now this has caused some foster parents extreme concern because they have been told these files now will be archived because they are government files, and the agency they are going to is seen as outside government. So those government files cannot follow the child; these files are going to remain in government. Oh yes, by the way, any social worker has access to the files, but it is up to them to go and find the file, and that file may already be in archive.

They are going to be archived—[interjection] Certainly, it is very strange, as the member from Ste. Rose points out, that information on foster children may, in fact, be kept from agencies and new foster families as it may be. We are concerned about that.

We have had questions raised to us. We have raised questions to the minister and the minister says, "Well, I have no knowledge of that." Again, she is not forthcoming with answers. We are simply wanting to find out on behalf of foster families who are concerned about the children under their care and are concerned about them transferring to another agency without the proper information going with them. What we are very afraid is going to happen is information that belongs to the child will not follow the child and, subsequently, some information that is necessary, say for medical treatment of the child, will not be there and something adverse may happen to affect the child. We are concerned about the well-being of all children in Manitoba.

We are also concerned when we hear things about children under the care of Child and Family Services who have a gun and shoot other children. These are children 13 years old, 15 years old, having a gun and shooting another child. These children were not properly supervised; they needed 24-hour attention; 13 years old, 15 years old, and they had a gun in Manitoba-supervised housing and under the care of Child and Family Services.

We also see, just recently, of another child, 17, but still a child disadvantaged in that this child had fetal alcohol syndrome and was allowed to be on his own. At 17 years old, he went out at night and he ended up fatally stabbed that night. Again, no supervision within this department to look after the children. This department, this minister is charged with the well-being of children and families in this province, and yet, she is failing miserably at every turn when we see these kinds of things happening.

There is a case right now before the courts examining whether or not the policies that Child and Family Services has to reunite children with their families is, in fact, a proper policy. I would be the first one to say that the children belong first and foremost with their families if, in fact, the family is a safe and supportive place for the child to be. Unfortunately, we know that not all situations are that way or there would not be a need for our Child and Family Services system.

But, we know that there is a need. We know that there are some families that need help in this regard. We hear about this case, this poor little two-year-old boy that died in his crib because he was returned to a family that, in the view of the workers that were working with him, should not have been returned there. We need to look at these things and learn from that and I am concerned that the minister, over and over again, is not answering the questions that we asked in regard to foster families, in regard to the policies in her department.

I want to speak a little bit about the Aiyawin Corporation as well. Again, the secrecy involved around there with not providing the plan that was to be submitted by Aiyawin because she refused to table that. In fact, she did end up having to table it. The allegations around misspending were raised last November and, certainly, an investigation ensued and the Auditor General is doing an investigation. That report will be forthcoming shortly, in a few months, I believe, but at that time the minister said that she would withdraw the funding if they did not submit a plan that was to their liking.

The plan was submitted on December 13 and it was not good enough, so an extension was given, two more weeks to the end of the month. Then a plan was submitted and did not hear anything more except that the funding was continued to Aiyawin until, just recently, when we pressured for the plan. We looked at the plan and found that, in fact, all of the concerns that were to be addressed from the operational review last November, we found that they had not been addressed.

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

**Mrs. Taillieu:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Water Stewardship):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must admit when I read this Opposition Day Motion, I was amazed. I was amazed because when, in this House, we brought forward the idea of opposition days a number of years ago, you know, we really had the sense that this gave the opposition the opportunity to put forward a concern and an issue, a burning issue, facing Manitobans.

I really thought that this would be a great opportunity to bring about some real parliamentary

reform, some more relevance in our debate, that an opposition could have the opportunity to put forward exactly what the key issue of the day was. Well, then I read this motion and, you know, I do not know who wrote this, but I suppose you might give it some marks for creative language, but words like disgust and disappointment, but I read the sense here of misleading, mishandling, misusing and misspending. I am wondering if it is a frustrated rapper that put this resolution together.

You know, then I realized that really this Opposition Day Motion symbolizes what this opposition is all about. I come to calling them the shake-and-bake opposition, Mr. Speaker, because that is what this is. You know you have the shake-and-bake Leader of the Opposition, the shakedown king of Manitoba, who, I think, showed a really interesting side of, I mean, let us be up front, when you are Leader of the Opposition, you are the would-be, the wannabe Premier, and it really says a lot about the strength of, the backbone of that opposition that, on something involving Crocus, a visit from two people, two high-profile Conservatives, can get the Leader of the Opposition to back off.

I do find it interesting watching the dynamics across the way on a daily basis, Mr. Speaker, because in the end I recall that, on Crocus, the Leader of the Opposition actually fired his critic. It is kind of interesting watching some of the dynamics, but if the members opposite think we are going to distract from some of the internal problems that they have, if they think this Opposition Day Motion is going to do it, I think they had better think again because I do not know which planet members opposite are on, but I talk to most people, you know, if it were not for the rain. We still have not figured out how to turn the tap off on that. I do not know which planet members opposite are living on, but I look around this province and I see a lot of people who see a lot of progress that we have been making since 1999.

\* (17:00)

I love asking people a very simple question. "In the nineties," I could ask them, "What's your house worth?" and no one wanted to start that discussion because house prices were depressed. They were down. It did not matter whether it was in Thompson or Brandon or in Winnipeg. You know what? Now, we have had an increase in housing prices because of

the strength of this economy of 36 percent across the province. I say to members opposite that is a good indication of the strength of our economy.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

Our unemployment rate continues to be one of the lowest in the country. We are moving ahead. This summer, we are going to see the start of the floodway agreement. I notice again in this so-called Opposition Day Motion not a reference to the fact that now, as we face flooding across the province, that this government is going to extend flood protection for 450 000 Manitobans. No reference of that. You know, there is a brief reference to the floodway, but it is the same old story we have heard from members opposite, no reference to the fact that we have seen dramatic improvements in everything from health and education, Mr. Speaker.

I look at my own community where this summer we are going to have the first personal care home ever constructed in Thompson. It took an NDP government to accomplish that. When I look around the province, what is happening is we reinvest in terms of highways. There is a lot happening in northern Manitoba, and we make no apologies for that, but I wonder how members like the—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hour being 5 p.m., pursuant to Rule 28(14), I must interrupt the debate and put the question on the motion of the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach).

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, say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

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

### Formal Vote

**Mr. Derkach:** Why, why, why, Mr. Speaker? I guess we have to have a recorded vote.

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

\* (17:10)

The question before the House is the Opposition Day Motion moved by the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach).

### Division

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

#### Yeas

*Cullen, Cummings, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurschou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Hawranik, Lamoureux, Loewen, Maguire, Mitchelson, Murray, Penner, Reimer, Rocan, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.*

#### Nays

*Aglugub, Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Brick, Caldwell, Chomiak, Dewar, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith, Struthers, Swan, Wowchuk.*

**Madam Deputy Clerk (Bev Bosiak):** Yeas 21, Nays 31.

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

\* \* \*

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could canvass the House to see if there is leave for, on

Wednesday and Thursday, that at 1:30 on Wednesday, we would have prayers followed by Orders of the Day to be interrupted by Routine Proceedings at 2:30, and, on Thursday, to have Orders of the Day from 1:30 to 2:30 followed by Routine Proceedings. That is to accommodate some issues with regard to the leaders in the House so that essentially Question Period starts roughly around 2:30 on Wednesday and Thursday.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House for Wednesday and Thursday to have Orders of the Day at 1:30 and then at 2:30 to have Routine Proceedings? Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

So that means that Question Period would happen after 2:30. Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, we just wanted to recognize the fact that we were just advised of this. We did not feel this is an appropriate way to be managing House business, but we are prepared to allow for the leave as it has already been given.

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery. We have with us Claire Buys *[phonetic]*, mother of our legislative page, Julene Buys.

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

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to call it 5:30?

**Some Honourable Members:** 5:30.

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

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 14, 2005

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