

Fifth Session - Thirty-Eighth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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authority of
The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Eighth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
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.
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.
McFADYEN, Hugh	Fort Whyte	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	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	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.
VACANT	Kirkfield Park	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 29, 2006

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYER

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 10—The Adult Literacy Act

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth (Mr. Bjornson), that Bill 10, The Adult Literacy Act, Loi sur l'alphabétisation des adultes, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. McGifford: Today, I'm pleased to table The Adult Literacy Act to the Legislative Assembly for the first time. The proposed Adult Literacy Act, the first of its kind in Canada, will commit the government of Manitoba to the development, implementation and evaluation of an adult literacy strategy. As part of the strategy, the act will establish the Manitoba Adult Literacy program to help fund qualifying agencies that offer programs for adults wishing to improve their literacy skills.

I recommend the bill to all members of the House.

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

Petitions. A bill, do you have a bill? Okay. We'll revert to first reading of our introduction of bills.

Bill 208—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): I move, seconded by the Member for Morris (Mrs. Taillieu), that Bill 208, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, be introduced for the first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Rowat: Essentially this bill promotes safety for passengers while travelling in or on a vehicle. This bill prohibits people from riding on the outside of a vehicle or any other part of it that is not designated to be occupied, except in specific instances, which

certain exemptions have been outlined. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

PETITIONS

Headingley Foods

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

These are the reasons for the petition:

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

The majority of Headingley's population lives off Roblin Boulevard and uses Roblin Boulevard to get to and from Winnipeg rather than the Trans-Canada Highway. Additionally, the highway route is often closed or too dangerous to travel in severe weather conditions. The majority of Headingley residents therefore travel to the Liquor Mart via Roblin Boulevard, a distance of 10.8 kilometres.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister charged with the administration of The Liquor Control Act (Mr. Smith), to consider allowing the owners of Headingley Foods to sell alcohol at their store,

thereby supporting small business and the prosperity of rural communities in Manitoba.

This is signed by Ben Rosentreter, Tammy Wood, S. Hornby and many, many others, Mr. Speaker.

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

Civil Service Employees—Neepawa

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. These are the reasons for this petition:

Eleven immediate positions with Manitoba Conservation, Lands Branch (as of April 1, 2006, Crown Lands and Property Special Operating Agency), are being moved out of Neepawa.

Removal of these positions will severely impact the local economy with potentially 33 adults and children leaving the community.

Removal of these positions will be detrimental to revitalizing the rural and surrounding communities of Neepawa.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the provincial government to consider stopping the removal of these positions from our community and to consider utilizing current technology, such as Land Management Services existing satellite sub-office in Dauphin, Manitoba, in order to maintain these positions in their existing location.

This petition is signed by Marla Fehr-Sinclair, Barb McLachlan, Barry McLachlan and many others.

Provincial Slogan

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

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

Mr. Speaker, that is signed by Eva Cachero, O. Cachero and Josephine Gutierrez and many, many other Manitobans.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table, pursuant to The Regulations Act, a copy of each regulation registered with the Registrar of Regulations after the last registration date of regulations that were tabled in this House in November 2005, and more than 14 days before the commencement of this session.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to table the following Annual Report and Recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee, June 20, 2006.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today municipal councillors from the R.M. of Elton. We have Harvey Paterson, Danny Kowbel, Jim Boyd, Dave Mazier. These visitors are the guests of the honourable Member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell).

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

* (13:40)

ORAL QUESTIONS

Crocus Investment Fund Auditor General's Interviews

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Before putting my question, I just want to acknowledge and thank the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association for a delicious beef lunch today and, once again, reminding those of us who represent city constituencies that steak doesn't come from Sobeys. It comes from somewhere else. We thank them for that lunch and for the excellent work

they continue to do on behalf of Manitoba cattle producers.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is whether he would confirm that neither he nor any of the ministers in his government were interviewed by the Auditor General's office in connection with the review of the Crocus scandal.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): The Auditor General has access to all officials and all personnel that he or she feels available for any issue dealing with any matter under investigation. I am aware, in the past, that ministers have been interviewed. I'm not going to suggest how the Auditor General does the report. They do it with complete access to anyone they choose and they have complete access to minutes of meetings. They have complete access even to e-mails between officials.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the member opposite would trust the credibility of the office of the Auditor General in Manitoba, but he may want to know that the Auditor General has a lot more power based on amendments that we made in 2001 to not only have access to government officials at all levels, including anybody in Cabinet, but also to have access to private files and financial records which weren't available before 2001.

Mr. McFadyen: It's not a trick question. I just wanted the Premier to confirm that neither he nor any of his ministers were interviewed by the Auditor General's office in connection with their review of the Crocus scandal.

Mr. Doer: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member asks, the Premier or any of his Cabinet ministers. I, quite frankly, know that the Auditor General looked at minutes of meetings that I was part of and investigated those matters. The member opposite yesterday went on an old question that was asked by the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) in 2005. The Auditor General is quite capable of reporting on all the matters. I would point out that the members opposite have used all kinds of words about the e-mail. The Auditor General confirmed that the e-mail never went to any minister, and that's in *Hansard*.

Mr. McFadyen: The Auditor General, in his own report, indicates that a more in-depth review of certain issues and transactions may be warranted, that they undertook a limited examination. I wonder if the Premier could just one more time, it's not a trick question, confirm that neither he nor any of his

ministers were interviewed in connection with the Auditor General's review of the Crocus scandal.

Mr. Doer: I can't confirm whether the Auditor General met with any minister. I can confirm that he didn't meet with me, and I can confirm that he had access to minutes involving meetings we had. I can confirm or I have confirmed it before.

I know the members opposite had to ask a question that was asked in this House in 2005 and repeat it yesterday as part of their pledge to the lawyers suing the Manitoba public as a part of their pledge to the lawyer that apparently they're not working with. But, Mr. Speaker, it was on their Web site.

Another one of the absolute contradictions, the issue of the, quote, superfund, was discussed fully in the Auditor General's report. I'll clearly indicate to the member opposite that we said no then, and we say no now.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Requests for Legislative Amendments

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): On a new question, and again, we've got three more evasions, Mr. Speaker. I think we're well over 160 questions now put to this Premier and completely evaded. He can't even answer a simple question like whether or not he was interviewed in connection with the Auditor General's review. If he can't even answer a simple question like that, provide a straight answer to Manitobans, it underlines why this situation cries out for a public inquiry, why it cries out for a situation where members of government are put under oath and asked direct questions that they're compelled to answer.

Now, another question to the Premier and, once again, we can anticipate another evasion. Let's try again, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Premier is whether he can tell the House whether he was aware of the repeated request made to government by the Crocus Fund for legislative amendments to deal with pacing and liquidity requirements. Was he aware of those requests as they were made which were cited as red flags by the Auditor General?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I would point out that, in terms of evasions and accountability, the member opposite is the member who went out to the public, was quoted in the newspapers and was on newscasts saying that Ontario didn't even mention Manitoba

once, when he condemned the sale of Manitoba Hydro. He still hasn't apologized to this House. He is in no position to be the so-called moot court arbitrator of issues of accountability.

If we have to choose between the appointed inquisitor of the member opposite, one Mr. Don Orchard, if we have to choose between Don Orchard and the Auditor General of Manitoba, we will choose the Auditor General's report any time; where clearly the Auditor General goes through the issue of liquidity and pacing; the Auditor General goes through the issue of the superfund. He goes through all the issues, again, after the report was prepared in May of 2005.

The Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) asked a question about the individual who was asked about yesterday. They recycled that question yesterday like they're recycling questions today. The Auditor General then goes to Public Accounts last year and clearly identifies in his 200-page report. I will table a copy of the Auditor General's report for the members' attention, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. McFadyen: I again thank the Premier for that very entertaining reply to what is a very serious question about his government's involvement in the Crocus scandal. I know it's highly entertaining to members opposite to watch the Premier skate and evade in the way that he does.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's not so entertaining for those 34,000 Manitobans, some of whom live in places like Selkirk, some of whom live in places like Rossmere, Brandon East and constituencies around the province, who are asking the government to call an inquiry into this scandal. These are people who, their own MLAs won't even stand up for them. They don't find the Premier entertaining. They don't find his evasions convincing.

Let me ask the Premier a very simple and direct question again, and he doesn't need the Auditor General to help him with his answer because it's directly within his personal knowledge. Was the Premier aware between 2000 and 2004 of the repeated requests coming forward from the Crocus Investment Fund from legislative amendments, in order to deal with pacing and liquidity issues that were then being faced by the Crocus Fund? Was he aware: yes or no?

* (13:50)

Mr. Doer: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite wants to go back to moot court at Robson

Hall, he's quite welcome to do so. If he wants to diminish the role of the Auditor General in this House and rely on Don Orchard, who has already been cited by the Auditor General as being a member of the Cabinet that did not identify rate of return as a primary purpose for the Crocus Fund to begin with; Don Orchard who was cited for having confusing implementation of enforcement between the Industry Department and the Finance Department; Don Orchard who is also responsible for the initial hiring of the CEO and the Director of Investments, Mr. Umlah, the one that went and shook down the Conservatives a couple of years ago.

The Auditor General already dealt with the question being raised: Did the Auditor General deal with the questions raised: yes or no? Yes, he did, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. McFadyen: The Auditor General, by his own admission, didn't deal with some of the issues that we're talking about, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General says that his expanded examination dealt with the following areas: board governance, management of the investment portfolio, compliance with The Crocus Investment Fund Act and compliance with The Securities Act. He goes on to say: "We have suggested that a more in-depth review of certain issues and transactions may be warranted." The Auditor General has indicated that he didn't interview any members of Cabinet in connection with the preparation of the report.

So, the issue is this: The Premier is obsessed with Don Orchard and is—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: As the Premier smirks from his chair, Mr. Speaker, in response to the heckling from members opposite while 34,000 Manitobans are currently out in the range of \$100 million, according to the Minister of Finance's (Mr. Selinger) latest estimates of what's been realized through the liquidation, \$100 million lost by Manitobans who live in their constituencies; as they laugh and smirk from their chairs, I wonder if the Premier would take the opportunity to set the record straight because his Minister of Finance, in the hallway yesterday, indicated that he did know about the requests for legislative amendments for pacing and liquidity issues, that he was aware of those repeated requests, that he was aware of that red flag.

So I wonder if the Premier can indicate today, given that the Minister of Finance yesterday admitted that he was aware of these important red flags, he was aware of issues related to legislative requests pertaining to pacing and liquidity, since the Minister of Finance got the red flags but didn't act, I wonder if the Premier can indicate whether he was aware of the red flags, and, like the Minister of Finance, failed to act.

Mr. Doer: If I recall correctly, the recycled questioner, the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik), asked a number of questions to the Public Accounts Committee last year. No wonder they walked out in March, Mr. Speaker, because they couldn't handle the truth.

The Auditor General basically said at that committee on December 8, 2005: I would be hard-pressed to think of what more could have been done in the last few months than has been done to respond to what was a very complex and difficult situation. The Auditor General went on to confirm that the so-called red flag e-mail never went to a minister. Of course, the member opposite—[interjection] Well, the member from Wellington West can get up, because certainly she knows that the underwriting company, Wellington West, donates money to the Tory party in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind members when the Speaker is standing all members should be seated and the Speaker should be heard in silence.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Premier's Knowledge of Problems

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, if members opposite put half as much energy into sticking up for their constituents as they do into cheering for the Premier's antics, Manitobans would be well ahead of where they are today. It is absolutely shameful.

My question is to the Premier, because he has evaded throughout the process. He makes reference to his Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), who, in committee, in response to a question from the former Member for Fort Whyte on whether he was briefed by Mr. Woodbury on the issue of the valuation crisis, here is what the Minister of Finance said, and I

quote: "The question is completely hypothetical. I am neither indicating one way nor the other. I think the member is fishing, and there is no fish to be caught here," is what the Minister of Finance said.

Now this is the type of evasion that Manitobans get time and again from this minister and this Premier in connection with Crocus, and it is why we need a public inquiry. So my question is to the Premier. Now that the Manitoba Securities Commission review has been indefinitely suspended, and now that we know that the Auditor General has indicated his review was limited and that there was no interview of the Premier or the ministers in connection with that review, the Auditor General did not even purport to examine the sorts of issues that are important to Manitobans in connection with this government's negligence; in light of all of these facts, will the Premier confirm that he was briefed by his former political adviser, David Woodbury, on the crisis at Crocus and he ignored that briefing? Instead, he directed his close political adviser and he directed government officials to keep the lid on it at the same time as this government promoted investments in the Crocus Fund.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): First of all, we stopped the promotion of funds going into the Crocus Fund. The members opposite stuffed civil servants' envelopes with promotion to the Crocus Fund. We actually stopped that.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite promoted Crocus with their investment in Isobord, with Winnport, with Westsun, a number of other investments where they lost millions of dollars. The recycled question that was asked by the member from Lac du Bonnet two years ago was repeated as a big scandal question yesterday, a two-year-old recycled question. The member opposite said, and I quote: We'll never get the money back from Maple Leaf Distillers. Wrong, wrong, wrong.

In terms of evading the truth, Mr. Speaker, yesterday the member opposite said that the legal team was not collaborating with the Conservative Party. The lawyer for the Crocus shareholders writes a letter to all shareholders that the Conservatives have scheduled Tuesday, November 28 for questions in the Legislature—they didn't say recycled question—and may read your letters; if you're interested in attending you may call Brendon. I assume the member opposite knows who Brendon is. I assume he reports to him. Meet at room 227. Where is 227? Oh, we're not working with the lawyers for the

Crocus shareholders. Oh, not us, says Mr. McFadyen. No.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. When members are addressing other members it's by the portfolios they hold or the constituency they hold.

Mr. Doer: The Member for Fort Whyte.

Superfund

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, of all of the bizarre evasions that we've been treated to so far in this House that is right up there.

Now I've asked the Premier two very simple factual questions, two very simple issues within his knowledge. He won't answer questions about whether he was interviewed. He won't answer questions about whether he knew about the request for legislative amendments, so let's try again.

Let's try again, Mr. Speaker. The Auditor General's report refers to the fact that senior Crocus officials met with the Premier in November of 2002. Coming out of that meeting, the minutes indicate that Crocus officials were to operationalize a working group of very political people and were going to push this as hard as we can.

Can the Premier indicate who were the very political people that he put in charge of operationalizing the superfund concept in order to provide a bailout for Crocus because he knew there were problems at Crocus at that time?.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the very senior people who deal with legislation and deal with possible changes in any investment portfolio would be the Legislature, No. 1. If it's legislative change, the Cabinet and obviously the Premier. We said no to the superfund. I don't know which part of the word "no" the member opposite doesn't understand. We said no to the superfund proposal.

The members opposite asked a recycled question yesterday. They're asking us about an issue that we determined we would not proceed with. What part of no does he not understand?

* (14:00)

Public Inquiry

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, once again the Premier is completely wrong. What happened was that there

was a group of people who met within his office, senior Crocus officials who met in his office. They came out of that meeting with direction to expedite the superfund as aggressively as they could with very political people. His then-Minister of Industry signed a memorandum of understanding with his good friend Peter Olfert in order to advance the idea of a superfund.

The reason it didn't happen, Mr. Speaker, was that the fund manager said no. The fund managers weren't going to buy into this scam. The fund managers of these funds who are responsible people, who are prudent managers, the fund managers weren't going to buy into the scam—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: —that is why the superfund didn't go ahead, Mr. Speaker.

So in light of the fact that we have an admission by the minister that he was aware of the request for legislative amendments relating to pacing and liquidity; in light of the fact that the Premier was aware of the solidarity transaction which took place in order to deal with the looming liquidity crisis at Crocus; in light of the fact that the Premier was driving the creation of the superfund which was intended to provide Crocus with a mechanism to bail out Crocus and cover up what was then a looming crisis; in light of the fact that he was aware of and involved in these things; in light of the fact that he ignored the red flags that his political adviser was actively managing the Crocus Fund and reporting to him; in light of the fact that the Manitoba Securities Commission investigation is stalled; in light of the fact that the—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is shouting insults from his seat. If Manitobans could only see the conduct of this Premier day-in and day-out, the personal insults and the way he chatters from his seat. He is so defensive about this issue, and we know why. It is because he was in it up to his neck. He was aware of the request for legislative amendments. He was aware of the solidarity transaction design to inject liquidity into the fund. He was aware of and was driving the creation of the superfund until the fund managers

said no. He ignored the red flags even as Crocus shareholders were buying units in the funds.

He has been using the excuse of the Manitoba Securities Commission to not call an inquiry. That is now stalled. The Auditor General didn't interview him or his ministers. The Auditor General says there are more areas that call for an inquiry.

In light of his stonewalling, in light of his ignorance of red flags, in light of his evasions and in light of the entertainment that he provides instead of leadership, will he today demonstrate some leadership? Will he call an inquiry into the Crocus scandal?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I would confirm that the government of Manitoba did establish a superfund with Crocus. I will table the document.

Yes, the document is dated June 29, 1999. I believe that is the date the member opposite was the chief of staff of the premier, obviously sitting in the same office as the premier from time to time. The superfund, a \$10-million fund, was announced by Minister Tweed, Sherman Kreiner, Mr. Speaker. It was going to be a science technology fund. It had various representatives. It had money from the Workers Compensation Board, the Crocus Investment Fund. There was an individual called Mr. James Umlah who was appointed as the CEO of the superfund.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, there was a superfund. The member opposite knows there's one. There was a super investment. It was June 29, 1999, months before we were elected to government.

Crocus Investment Fund Auditor General's Interviews

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, the NDP's fingerprints are all over this Crocus scandal. Today the Premier can't even confirm whether he or his ministers were interviewed by the Auditor General. So I refer the Minister of Finance to the minutes of the Public Accounts Committee where the Auditor General states that: We didn't interview any of the ministers in preparation for the Crocus report, so I cannot be specific as to what they did or did not know.

So I ask the Minister of Finance: If the Auditor General didn't interview him, the Premier or other ministers, how would the Auditor General know about the NDP's political interference in Crocus?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the members will recall that the Auditor General, under our new legislation, had full access to venture capital funds to find out where the tax dollars went. They could interview anybody they wished. They could look at any document they wished, and they were not encumbered in any way, shape or form in their investigation.

We put an implementation team together to follow up on all those recommendations which resulted in two new pieces of legislation. When we went to Public Accounts, the Auditor General of the day said: I would be hard-pressed to think of what more could have been done in the last few months than has been done to respond to what was a very complex and difficult situation. In other words, he felt that we had sincerely and thoroughly followed up on all of his recommendations.

Public Inquiry

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, the NDP continues to deny and deflect all questions related to the Crocus scandal. The Minister of Industry even went so far as stating in Public Accounts that the Auditor General reported that there was no political interference. That's what the minister said. In an effort to bring the minister in line at the March 15 meeting of Public Accounts, the Auditor General corrected him on page 120 of *Hansard*, indicating that he did not make any assertions one way or the other about whether or not there was political interference.

So I ask the Minister of Finance: Given that the Auditor General does not absolve the NDP of political interference, will he now clear the air and ask the Premier (Mr. Doer) to call an independent public inquiry?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): The Auditor General's report is very clear. Liquidity and pacing requirements were brought to our attention, as was the idea that was put in the public domain as early as 1994 for a superfund. The politicians made a decision. They said no to the superfund. They did not respond to the demands for liquidity and pacing improvements that were excessive. They simply said: We will not do these kinds of things regardless of who's asking for it. That's why the members are chasing after interference in something that didn't happen. It's *Alice in Wonderland*. The recommendations we followed up on are the ones the Auditor put forward to us, and we followed them up by unravelling the omelette that the members

opposite created. We separated monitoring from enforcement. We made sure that the main point of the fund was rate of return.

Mr. Hawranik: The Auditor General did not interview any government ministers or the Premier (Mr. Doer) to determine the role in the Crocus scandal. The Auditor General clearly indicated that he did not rule out political interference in Crocus. If the Premier was not afraid of the truth, he would call an inquiry.

So I ask the Minister of Finance: Why does he refuse to demand that the Premier call a public inquiry at Crocus?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I know the members opposite would dearly like to create a job creation project for lawyers called the public inquiry. I know that's something that's very close to their hearts. We have had two lawyers standing up here all afternoon trying to generate work for their colleagues. The reality is we had a more efficient mechanism to get to the bottom of this and that was called the new Auditor General's act, which we brought into force in 2001. Specific to that act was the ability to investigate venture capital funds in Manitoba, something that had never before been put in the Auditor General's act. That resulted in a 245-page report and resulted in two pieces of legislation brought forward by this government. The members want to spend millions of dollars on their lawyer friends to go backwards. We want to spend money to move Manitobans forward.

Crocus Investment Fund Minister's Involvement

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): My question is to the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith), the minister who is responsible for the Crocus file today. This is the minister who has been on Treasury Board since 2001. He is the minister who was responsible for the Crocus file between 2003 and 2004, a time when Crocus was in deep trouble. He is also the minister to whom David Woodbury was assigned in the Order-in-Council.

I want to ask this minister whether he will confirm today that, in his role as Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, he had discussions with David Woodbury regarding the troubles at Crocus and whether he reported these problems to the Premier or to the Treasury Board table.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, obviously, it's not the first time I've

responded to a question on the Crocus Fund. I am surprised one of the members opposite would want to take attention off the thorough answers I've been giving them and move on to somewhere else in the Legislature. Are they afraid of getting an honest answer? Are they afraid of getting the information or are they just out fishing again? By the way, do you have a fishing licence if you're out fishing? I don't think so, and you know what? I think it's even out of season and out of date. All these questions have been asked before. You've had all the answers. Your problem is you can't hear the answers.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Member for Russell has the floor.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith), who is responsible for the Crocus file, was responsible for the Crocus file between 2003 and 2004, during the time when Crocus was in crisis. He is also the minister to whom David Woodbury reports, as the minister responsible for that individual. He also sits around the Treasury Board table.

I want to ask this minister, who has never answered a question to the Auditor General, to this House, or to the Public Accounts Committee, whether or not he had discussions with David Woodbury regarding the crisis in Crocus, and whether he, in fact, not the Minister of Finance, but whether he reported these matters to his Premier or to the Treasury Board table.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, if the member would take the time, instead of going fishing, if the member would take the time to read the Auditor General's report, the Auditor General's report is very clear that issues of liquidity and pacing were brought forward as concerns by principals of the Crocus Fund to the government. We freely acknowledge that. It's documented in the Auditor's report. It, in fact, transpired.

They had concerns about pacing and liquidity. They wanted legislative amendments to do something about that. They also were recommending the long-standing idea that had been circulating in the community since 1994 for a superfund. The government of the day, us, said no. We decided not to proceed with that. Yes, people talk to everybody. Everybody was talking to everybody, including members opposite.

* (14:10)

Public Inquiry

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): No one on the government side has denied that David Woodbury was, in fact, advising the Premier on Crocus and was advising the Minister of Industry and Trade on Crocus. Nobody in government has denied that.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that both the Minister of Industry or the Minister of Competitiveness and the Premier have now conflicted themselves because of David Woodbury, I'm going to ask the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chomiak) whether he will do the honourable thing and call for a public inquiry, in view of the fact that what has transpired in the minister's office and the Premier's Office.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I'm reminded of the expression I sometimes hear from members of the House opposite, "oh, what a tangled web we weave." The member is just manufacturing relationships.

You know what? If the member wants to do the six degrees of separation exercise, why doesn't he try this one. While the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. McFadyen) was practising as a lawyer for Aikins, the firm did work indirectly for Crocus via its underwriter, Wellington. Wellington West Capital was the underwriter for the Crocus Investment Fund. They attested to the accuracy of the fund, bing; the Member for Fort Whyte, bing; Wellington West, bing; the Crocus Fund, bing; the attestation to the accuracy of the report from the fund. If they want to inquire into something, why don't they take a look at that?

Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): We're ready to have an inquiry. Just call it.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: Today we have seen evidence of the height of arrogance that this government has reached. They're more concerned with entertaining fellow caucus members than they are in providing justice to Crocus shareholders. That's what they're here for. They come here every day, and the minister's objective and the Premier's objective is to entertain members of caucus, and see how much

applause he can get rather than getting justice for Crocus shareholders.

Mr. Speaker, the Marie Antoinette across the row, "let them eat cake," who cares about the Crocus shareholders who have lost a hundred million dollars, let's stonewall, let's put up every defence and smokescreen that we can; so, given that the Auditor General, by his own admission, wasn't looking into issues related to government misconduct, given that the Securities Commission investigation has stalled, given that we know that ministers were aware of requests for legislative changes, that they were aware of a solidarity transaction, that they were driving the creation of the superfund, and the Premier's best defence is a 1999 news release with the creation of a \$10-million Science and Technology Fund; and I am sure he's thought that he would put it last, that was going to be his strongest point today, because I wouldn't be getting up on my feet again today. It is pathetic and it is beyond arrogant, the kinds of answers we are getting today.

So, my question to the Attorney General (Mr. Chomiak) is: Given that he is responsible for upholding the law of the Province; given that he is responsible for meting out justice in Manitoba and that responsibility rises above any obligation or pressure he may feel from the Premier or members of his Cabinet; given that the Attorney General has these important responsibilities and has the ability within his department to draft an Order-in-Council to bring to Cabinet, to call a public inquiry, will he today instruct officials in his department to bring forward an Order-in-Council setting up an inquiry? Will he ask the Premier to recuse himself from that discussion, given the involvement of the Premier's political adviser and the Premier's stonewalling, evasions and refusal to get to the bottom of this very important matter?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): There are ongoing investigations that arise from the Auditor General's report that I would assume are in the jurisdiction, properly, of the police. We will await their findings, Mr. Speaker.

I would point out that the Auditor General has access to everyone in government, anyone in government; the Premier, Cabinet ministers, deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers. The Auditor General in his 200-page report even had access to e-mails between one official in one department and another official in another department.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is the Auditor General has more power to follow the money. We passed that law, and we have great faith in the Auditor General.

**NDP Nomination (The Maples)
Premier's Involvement**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. I've read the letter that indicates that clearly the chief of staff in the Premier's Office was, in fact, inappropriate in terms of his behaviour. I quote from the letter: political intimidation and bullying, unethical and illegitimate pressure, corruption and bribery.

My question to the Premier is: Did this Premier read the letter that I'm referring to?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Well, Mr. Speaker, any matter that is given to my attention that affects any law in the province of Manitoba is immediately referred to the proper authorities. I've referred lots of allegations to Elections Manitoba. Lots of allegations, some of them are obviously under investigation and some aren't.

I would point out the member opposite on November 23 said: I have sat on this issue. I first started hearing about it in September. I assume the member opposite, if he had anything, would've also sent that to Elections Manitoba.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it's a very simple question. The letter was addressed to the Premier personally. The question is: Will the Premier have the political courage to acknowledge that he did, in fact, read the letter?

The Premier did read the letter, and he doesn't have the courage to say so inside this Chamber. He's standing behind his chief of staff.

Will the Premier tell us today why he has not fired the chief of staff from the Premier's Office, given that he has, in fact, read the letter?

Mr. Doer: I have said that any letter I receive, and private letters are the purview of the individual who sends the letter; any letter I receive that deals with any matter, any allegation—Now, there are many people, particularly, who deal with nominations sometimes have different opinions of things. I refer those to Elections Manitoba.

The member opposite stated—*[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: The member opposite stated on November 23 that he has sat on this issue, that he had heard about it sometime in September. I assume if the member opposite heard allegations that he's now repeating in the House, I assume that he has a letter he could table in the House that he sent to Elections Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

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

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. *Beauchesne's* is very clear in terms of imputing motives. The Premier is trying to tell this Chamber that I sat on information, and he's using *Hansard* in order to be able to say that. If he was to read *Hansard*, he will find that it wasn't until I found out that it was reported to Elections Manitoba that I chose then to raise the issue in the Manitoba Legislature. At least I had the courage to raise an issue, as opposed to trying to hide the issue. I was even prepared to say it outside this Chamber. I'm even prepared to put my political career on the line, unlike this Premier who won't even tell us that he's read the letter. Who's the coward inside this Chamber?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind members that this is the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. When we address members we address them by their constituency. I would choose words very, very carefully. I ask the honourable member to withdraw the last comment.

* (14:20)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I just posed a question: Who is the coward? I wasn't referring to an MLA inside the Chamber. If people—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. That's enough. I'm standing.

When any member in this House raises an issue, it's not the words that are used that a Speaker can judge. I can also judge by the tone of the word that is being used, and that's what I'm basing my judgment. I ask the honourable member to withdraw that last comment.

Mr. Lamoureux: I withdraw it.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I just want to point out what *Hansard* states in this regard. The member stood up and made some allegations. The member said in *Hansard* that he'd been sitting on these allegations, not fact, but allegations, since September. The member accused a number of individuals of events and things based on allegations that he'd sat on since September. He attempted to ask questions based on allegations and appropriateness of something that he'd heard or seen or read. The member then, subsequently, stood up and said he'd seen something and sat on it since September, and that's in *Hansard*.

The Premier has indicated in his first response and in today's response that when any allegations on private matters come to the Premier's Office, he directs it to the appropriate authorities. Mr. Speaker, as elected representatives, it's our duty to act when allegations on any matter come forward. When I was Minister of Health, dozens of allegations came forward about dozens of situations. My responsibility was not to be judgmental, but to pass it on to authorities on all occasions. That is what we in public office have to do.

The member asked if the Premier got any kind of correspondence or issues. The Premier said that when issues come to my attention, I pass them to the appropriate authorities to investigate. The member asked the question; the Premier provided an answer.

On the substantive issue, Mr. Speaker, I am still waiting to hear the member's response as to why he did not take actions when matters were brought to his attention on a particular matter.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Inkster, he does not have a point of order. It's a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I appeal to the Premier of this province to be very clear and indicate that, in fact, he has read the letter. These are very serious allegations. I, myself, have seen the letter; I've read it very thoroughly. We're talking about the chief of staff from the Premier's Office. Surely to goodness, you'll recognize that if he has read the letter, the chief of staff is in direct violation of the code of ethics and our election laws.

I'm asking the Premier to answer a simple question. Did he read the letter? Will he, at least, answer that question?

Mr. Doer: I have said repeatedly that any time there's any allegation in any letter that deals with any law of Manitoba, I immediately refer that letter to the proper investigating authority, any letter, all letters I receive. The question can be asked of all members: What did you know and what did you do?

What I knew on any letter, if there is any matter of any allegation, I refer it to Elections Manitoba. This same obligation is not just to the Premier, but is to all members of this Chamber. The member opposite said he sat on it. I don't sit on anything, Mr. Speaker. I send it to the proper investigative body, and if it's a case of Elections Manitoba, I trust Elections Manitoba to have proper investigations. They have the authority to go after and use the rules of evidence to do anything.

Mr. Speaker, in our society people have the right to have proper investigations as opposed to being convicted by just a letter or innuendo.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us from Horizon's Adult Learning Centre 14 students under the direction of Mr. Rob Campbell. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickey).

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

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Forrest Elementary School Student Safety

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Residents in the Rural Municipality of Elton continue to have their concerns over the safety of students at the Forrest School completely ignored by the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Lemieux).

The minister's attention to this matter of developing a bypass that ensures school children are able to safely cross the road has been cursory at best. It took repeated urgings by parents, school representatives, community leaders and members of this House over the course of several months to convince the minister to commission an engineering study on the construction of a safe passage between schools.

However, concerns arose with the underpass option, and it was confirmed that the water table in

the area was too high for an underpass to be built because it would be subject to frequent flooding. Elton residents have urged the minister to re-evaluate this plan. The minister's original plan to bus students across the highway to the other school so that they can attend classes such as the music program was totally inefficient as it was costly, time-consuming and largely unsafe.

Following the October meeting during which the engineering report was delivered, the minister assured residents that a second public meeting would be held within six weeks. Mr. Speaker, we are well past that deadline, and the parents in Forrest have heard nothing about this next meeting which should be held to resolve this issue.

The fundamental problem lies in the increasingly large volume of commuters travelling through Forrest every day on their way to work in Brandon. Highway 10 is also widely used by agriculture vehicles and cottage owners. Mr. Speaker, the safety of students walking or riding buses is compounded by additional hazards for all residents living near the highway.

The residents in this area have circulated a petition to urge this minister to construct a four-lane highway bypassing the village of Forrest.

This is an ongoing issue, Mr. Speaker, that demands the attention of the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. I join these petitioners in calling on the minister to take action for the safety of school children and residents and address this issue immediately.

Mining in Manitoba

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the Fraser Institute ranks the support and investment climate for mining in Manitoba as the third best in the entire world. Mining remains our second-largest primary resource industry. Mineral production in Manitoba last year was valued at \$1.56 billion. Our government understands the critical importance of the mining sector to our provincial economy. Our government balances investment with environmental stewardship.

In 1999, new mine-closure regulations ensured that environmental liability incurred during mining operations would be financially secured to cover anticipated future site remediation costs. In 2000, the Province initiated the Orphaned and Abandoned Mine Site Rehabilitation Program. Two months ago, the Province committed \$70 million for cleaning up

mine sites. There are 149 such mine sites across the province. Rehabilitation projects this year at Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids, Snow Lake and Sherridon/Cold Lake will cost \$4 million.

More specifically, earlier this summer the Province announced a two-year commitment of \$130,000 from the Mining Community Reserve Fund for an economic development office in Leaf Rapids. This office will develop business projects and promote economic initiatives and tourism.

This year, \$500,000 will be invested in rehabilitating the Sherridon/Cold Lake mining site. In addition, \$1.1 million has been allocated for the construction of a water treatment plant and sewer and water lines. The total investment of this project is estimated at \$3.3 million.

Our support of the mining sector includes the Mineral Exploration Assistance Program, the Mineral Exploration Tax Credit and the Prospectors Assistance Program. For the second time in five years, Manitoba has hosted the NOAMI Conference, that is, the National Orphaned and Abandoned Mines Initiative Conference. Participants hailed from all across Canada as well as from the United States and Britain.

Mining gives a huge boost to our provincial economy. It creates high-paying jobs, largely in northern Manitoba. Our mining sector is first class. We intend to keep it that way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (14:30)

Ralph Kennedy

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to stand in this House today and recognize the accomplishments of an outstanding Canadian and true hero, Ralph Kennedy, who was recently awarded by Her Majesty's government for his service north of the Arctic Circle during the dark days of the Second World War.

When the Soviet Union joined the Allies to battle the Axis in World War II, they were not capable of producing enough food or war materials to survive. Brave allied soldiers were then needed to open up a sea convoy route to Murmansk, Russia, the most northerly city in the world.

The sea route was considered by many as the most hazardous sea route in the world. Many ships were sunk as Ralph Kennedy and his brave colleagues traversed the ice-filled sea as they sailed

along in complete darkness. Through the Norwegian Sea, Arctic Ocean and the Barents Sea, Ralph Kennedy traversed past Norway, Sweden and Finland, all of which were occupied by large Axis air and naval bases ready to attack at any moment. The entire sea route was located entirely north of the Arctic Circle.

Recently Her Majesty's government honoured Ralph Kennedy and the other brave soldiers that battled so hard in these treacherous conditions with a pin simply called "The Arctic."

So it is a great honour to stand here today because of the sacrifices made by men and women like Ralph Kennedy who fought in these most precarious of conditions that ours and younger generations will hopefully never have to imagine.

Ralph is a great Manitoban and a true beacon for all that is right in this world. I would like to congratulate him on receiving "The Arctic" pin from Her Majesty's government and wish him all the best on behalf of the residents of Springfield and East St. Paul. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Indian Agriculture Council of Manitoba

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the Chamber today to tell of an historic event which occurred at the Peguis First Nation on November 21 of this year. I am referring to the formal establishment of the Indian Agriculture Council of Manitoba, a producer association that will have as its goal the lobbying of other levels of government on agricultural issues, policies and programs as they apply to First Nations people.

On behalf of the Province of Manitoba, it is my honour to congratulate the first board of directors of this worthy and needed council who are as follows: President Darryl Bear of Peguis First Nation; Vice-President Joe Missyabit of Lake Manitoba First Nation; Secretary-Treasurer Herb Hudson of Peguis First Nation; Chief Ralph Beaulieu of Ebb and Flow First Nation; and Chief Murray Clearsky of Waywayseecappo First Nation.

As we all know, due to the diversity and the highly complex nature of that practice that is generically known to the general population simply as farming, it is often difficult to design programs that meet all of the needs of all of the people all of the time and still stay within the parameters of balanced budget legislation. It is therefore absolutely imperative that individuals with common interests

join together in a co-operative manner to determine their needs and put forth their positions on major policy issues of the day. Farming on First Nations communities is a primary industry just as it is across our province and the needs of these producers must be equally addressed.

The formation of this council is of paramount importance in ensuring that the issues of Aboriginal farmers remain front and centre before all levels of government.

In closing, I again congratulate the council on its formal constitution and look forward to working closely with them in the days and years to come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Lake Winnipeg Algal Blooms

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the urgent action we need to take as a province to save Lake Winnipeg before we do further irreparable harm to our environment. Lake Winnipeg is slowly dying, being choked to death by excessive algal blooms, and study after study has clearly shown that this danger is the result of the excessive amount of phosphorus entering Lake Winnipeg.

Phosphorus is the key nutrient behind the explosive growth of algae and each year an astounding 6,600 tonnes of phosphorus enters Lake Winnipeg. What few people know—and I, too, was shocked when I first learned of this—is that while we scramble to find ways to reduce phosphorus in Lake Winnipeg each year, we put between 57 and 70 tonnes of phosphorus straight into the city of Winnipeg's water supply. The City does this to reduce the leaching of lead from the pipes that supply the city with its water.

Worse, the phosphorus added to Winnipeg's drinking water is a soluble form of phosphorus, and there are growing concerns that soluble phosphorus may, in fact, be a lot more damaging to Lake Winnipeg than sediment-bound phosphorus. The real impact on Lake Winnipeg may be even larger than we first thought.

It doesn't have to be this way. Right now a number of other alternatives to phosphorus are being used in other jurisdictions to control leaching. These include sodium silicate, potassium silicate and carbon dioxide. It's high time we look seriously at replacing phosphorus in Winnipeg's water supply with a better, greener and more cost-effective alternative. In the long run, it will pay to make the

switch not only environmentally but financially since every bit of phosphorus added to the water supply has to be removed later during wastewater treatment, by switching to alternatives we can save on treatment costs. But, more importantly, it's simply the right thing to do now and for future generations of Manitobans.

ORDERS OF THE DAY
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS
ADJOURNED DEBATE
(Eighth Day of Debate)

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

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

We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, thank Your Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this Fifth Session of the Thirty-Eighth Legislature of Manitoba, and the debate remains open.

The last speaker was on the government side, so it would be the opposition's turn.

Mr. David Faurchou (Portage la Prairie): Well, I do appreciate the opportunity to participate in debate regarding the Throne Speech that we heard addressed in the House by the Lieutenant-Governor a few short days ago.

It is a concern of mine that this government is really missing the point in so many areas here in the province of Manitoba. Over the years, we've seen our infrastructure decay, our agricultural sector be so challenged, our lakes, rivers, and streams throughout the province of Manitoba, communities all over the province of Manitoba under boiled-water orders, many of our young people leaving the province because the future that they see here in the province of Manitoba is not one that they share. So many, many reasons that this government needs to act, and has failed to do so. Looking to the future of our province, we truly need to address the issues in all of these areas.

I will begin by stating that the infrastructure here in the province of Manitoba is definitely in decay. Coming from Portage la Prairie, we have the most important traffic way here in the province closed because of a potential catastrophic failure of an

overpass over the Canadian National Railway main line just east of Portage la Prairie.

Now, I know that this did not occur overnight, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not going to say that it did. The structure is nearing 40 years old, but the failure to recognize that the age of our infrastructure in the province of Manitoba requires significant more investment than we've seen to date.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

While this government states that the federal government has not been coming to the table, and, indeed, the past Liberal administration in Ottawa did not come to the table. But that is now being addressed by a change in the government in Ottawa that occurred this year, and a lot more dollars will be flowing into this sector to the hands of the municipal officials and provincial areas of responsibility, as well.

But we have to put more money into the area of infrastructure. It was disclosed a year ago, during the course of committee of Estimates, that the Department of Transportation and Government Services personnel stated that we needed to invest in excess of \$340 million each and every year—each and every year, Mr. Deputy Speaker—just to keep up with the wear and tear that occurs on an annual basis here in the province of Manitoba on the more than 17,000 kilometres of provincial responsibility of roadways.

* (14:40)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a far, far cry from the declared \$269 million that this government has stated that they will be spending on an annual basis. While I do recognize, and want to recognize, the Deputy Premier (Ms. Wowchuk) has stated that more money is slated to flow to the Department of Infrastructure and Transportation in this area. The announcement only comes close, only comes close, to the needed expenditures just to break even with the wear and tear that occurs annually in the province. There's going to be no progress whatsoever of replacement, of renewal, of redevelopment that is so critically needed to address the decay that we've seen over the decades here in the province of Manitoba.

Now, while priorities are necessary within government, I believe, though, that government needs to re-evaluate its priorities and to truly address the issue of infrastructure. Even though the government may want to state how much money they have spent in capitalizing the needed services

for health care and education here in the province, those new facilities must be serviced by good roadways, they must be serviced by quality water, they must be serviced by other utilities that this government has, well, ignored.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, more attention needs to be paid to our infrastructure here in the province of Manitoba before there is a catastrophic event, and, fortunately, the closure of the overpass of the CN Railway was averted by the observations and inspection. I do want to compliment the government employees within the Transportation Department for their due diligence and their attention to detail that averted any possibility of that catastrophic event and was able to close the highway and detour. I do want to state at this time the incredible co-operation that has taken place between municipal officials and the Department of Transportation officials, and indeed the attention of the Transportation Minister that has made the transition to detour as best out of a bad situation as possible.

But coming back to this government's failure of reinvesting in infrastructure is also a concern regarding the lapsed monies that occur each and every year with the Department of Transportation. It's incumbent upon this government to change the way they account for monies budgeted to the Department of Transportation. They've got to understand that year over year the accumulated lapsed monies has been so significant. My understanding, through my own mathematical calculations, is that more than \$60 million has been lapsed over the course of the last seven years, and that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is something that all Manitobans are concerned about and as it pertains to our roadways and the needed repairs that we can all observe each and every day as we commute to and from this Legislative Assembly.

I want to also state that the way this department has tried to put so much verbiage out in their press releases, crowing about the number of different projects that they are undertaking, is so contrary to the best interests of Manitoba taxpayers. We all know that there is a cost-effective size of project that must be undertaken in order to get the best value for expended, hard-earned taxpayers' dollars, and when you make projects so small, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gets to a point where the economy of scale makes it so costly for anyone to tender on such a small project that it ends up that we are really truly spending taxpayers' money in a very, very reckless way, and the taxpayers deserve better of this government and

all of us here in the Chamber. I encourage this government to ask industry, to consult industry, to work with industry, to come out with tendering projects on a scale that gives value for dollar, recognizes the economy of scale in a paving project, in a reconstruction project, in a new roadway construction project, so that we truly get value for dollar here as custodians of taxpayers' money.

Also, we have to have a long-range plan. The contractors here in the province of Manitoba have to gear up. They have to make certain that they have the equipment in order to address the upcoming tenders, and to acquire this equipment, it doesn't take overnight. It doesn't occur overnight, and we want to make certain that they prepare and are able to tender and give value for dollar. The only way they can do that is that a long-range plan is there and they can gear up for it. That is why I encourage this government not to just look one year ahead, two years ahead, we need to look to five years and farther on into the future. So I encourage the government to undertake that.

Now, in regard to earlier today in attendance to the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, I want to say a very, very well-attended conference at the Convention Centre. But, once again, we hear time and time again of this government and the inability to co-operate with municipalities on vital projects within their jurisdiction. It is also very notable that the one third, one third, one third splitting of infrastructure dollars to date is indeed very, very burdensome on the local land-based property tax that municipalities are left with in order to provide for that one third that is currently demanded of them. This formula must change as well.

Also, they want to have a better working relationship with this government, one that is much more approachable and, again, at this opportunity I encourage the government to work towards that.

Now, I want to talk about the education side of things, something that brought me to this House after a very spirited discussion with the former Education Minister, the Honourable Clayton Manness, who encouraged me to come to this Chamber. I was, at that time, the chairman of the Portage la Prairie school board, and we discussed issues that we differed on. To this day I truly believe that education is the foundation of all that we are and all that we can be. That is why we must pay more attention to the needs of our young people here in the province of

Manitoba so they can truly take up their positions as proud Manitobans in the future and to build the province that we all know is possible. We are not doing that to the best of our ability at the present time.

We need to look to our public schools and offer to our students opportunities where they will be able to build a future. I am stating very specifically that our options within our high school today must be bundled, so that those students can work towards specific career choices and to have the courses in sequential offerings to them, so that they can, at the graduation ceremonies, have the skills to go for the opportunities here in the province of Manitoba rather than elsewhere.

* (14:50)

It is incumbent upon this government to work within the high schools in order to complement the post-secondary educational opportunities that we already have in the province as they are now bursting at the seams because of this government's inability to recognize the importance of providing a greater amount of resources to these institutions. They are today really, really feeling the pinch insofar as maintaining the infrastructure that they have, let alone trying to build more infrastructure to address the future needs of all innovation and technology that we see going ahead in leaps and bounds here.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do appreciate the opportunity to continue to participate in debate. I know that Portage la Prairie has been an area where there has been some investment, and I want to be very appreciative of the recognized needs in Portage la Prairie, the work that I have been able to provide to my constituency over the course of nine years that I have had the honour of representing Portage la Prairie.

I look at the landscape in and about Portage la Prairie in the nine years that I've represented the constituency, the support that the former administration provided to the new arts and cultural centre known in Portage la Prairie as the William Glesby Centre that the former Minister of Culture was able to support, the Honourable Rosemary Vodrey. I remember her attendance to Portage la Prairie and what a warm reception she received with her announcement and the cheque that she brought along with her.

I also want to compliment the former Minister of Industry and Trade, the Honourable James Downey,

who came to Portage la Prairie and was able to provide support for the new student accommodations building that now is a centrepiece of the aerospace training that is offered at Southport. It is an integral part of the landscape, as well as one that it had encouraged, the new 20-year pilot training program that the Department of National Defence made with Allied Wings west and Southport Aerospace Centre, Incorporated.

I also want to make notable mention of the former Justice Minister, the Honourable Victor Toews, who, indeed, came to Portage la Prairie recognizing the increased violence in the history of the young men who came to be residents of the Agassiz Youth Centre, and noticing that the centre was aged and required a facility that would provide a high level of security for those individuals with a violent background and also, too, to protect the civil servants in their capacity as instructors and counsellors at the Agassiz Youth Centre, the Lakewood cottage was constructed, a high-security facility that plays an integral part in the rehabilitation process of young men who have come in conflict with the law.

I also want to recognize the former Minister of Natural Resources, the Honourable Glen Cummings, who came to Portage and recognized the importance of improved drainage and then assisted with his department in engineering the new drainway that protects the Simplot plant that was constructed in Portage la Prairie recently and makes certain that the spring runoff waters do not encumber that facility and personally instructed the staff and the engineering department in Natural Resources to make this project go ahead. The culvert with the capacity of 150 cfs, indeed, does that quite adequately, although I will take this opportunity to say that a greater amount of drainage has taken place in our neighbouring municipality, and this structure is now woefully undersized. I look to this government to recognize the need to upgrade this facility so that residents of Macdonald and Westbourne are not ill-affected by the additional runoff waters.

I did just previously mention the Simplot plant in Portage la Prairie, which provides employment and value-added processing, which is the cornerstone of the Agriculture Minister's platform. I want to compliment the former Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Harry Enns, who met with and began discussions with Simplot officials, J.R. Simplot

officials, in regard to the possibility of seeing a processing plant in Manitoba.

Along with the honourable former Minister of Agriculture, I did expound the value of Portage la Prairie and that location and the potential for potato production, and it was through the co-operation with those discussions that the site in Portage la Prairie was selected. While I will say that an interruption within the Conservative administration did take place prior to construction, it did give the First Minister the opportunity to come out to Portage la Prairie to make the announcement, and, later, the Deputy Premier to come out and cut the ribbon on the new J.R. Simplot potato processing facility in Portage la Prairie.

At its time, it was the most advanced technologically as far as processing of potato and potato products in the world. The production out of that plant is recognized as premium product, and by way of the contracts with McDonalds and restaurants and Wendy restaurants, which, indeed, are just a couple of examples of the end use as far as retail sales go of the highest quality of potato products.

It is something that, I will say, is a destination of the now, I believe, 96-year-young J.R. Simplot himself came to visit not so long ago. It is so good to see a gentleman of that age remaining active and interested in something that has been a passion of his for more than half a century.

I also want to state that it was also recognized by the former administration, although it was, now, the Minister of Infrastructure, I believe, the honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that did make the announcement, that came out to Portage la Prairie on the occasion to open the new water treatment plant in Portage la Prairie, though it was the former Minister of Rural Development that did get the process going for rural waterfification.

But I am appreciative of having the opportunity to work with two administrations to the benefit of Portage la Prairie. That new state-of-the-art water treatment facility is now providing water, not only to the residents of the city of Portage la Prairie and industries, such as Simplot and McCain, but now has been extended throughout the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie to the farm residents there, fresh, clean, potable water emanating from this facility.

* (15:00)

I might just provide honourable members an update that the new water line has been put in place from Portage la Prairie through to MacGregor and on

to Austin, and has gone now up the right of way of Highway 34 to the proud community of Gladstone, more affectionately known perhaps to others as Happy Rock. The residents there now will have the opportunity to receive the quality water that all Portage la Prairie residents are so very proud—*[interjection]* I've just been informed that perhaps—and it is true because the fact remains that all of the constituencies that lie upon the water course of the Assiniboine are all represented by Conservatives.

We're just going to have to keep that water course going a little further across the province and making certain that does take place. We'll have to wait to another election to see whether or not the waters of the Assiniboine continue to spread further afield.

Also, I would like to say the changes in educational opportunities in Portage la Prairie have been very, very significant. In regard to the Red River Community College, upon my election in 1997, it was slated for closure. It was a satellite campus that at that juncture in time was not being well used, but it basically came down to the facilities that they were operating out of that were not attractive or suitable to providing of courses. I was able to negotiate the change in venue for that facility now down at Southport Aerospace incorporated. That Red River College satellite campus has flourished. Last year more than 800 individuals had the opportunity to take courses in various career opportunities there at Southport.

I also want to say that the co-ordinated effort of the universities here in the province of Manitoba to bring under one roof their business education programs known as Campus Manitoba, I was able to play a part in expanding the number of areas where Campus Manitoba operated. It was through the co-operation of Southport Aerospace incorporated, the support of the Portage la Prairie School Division as well as the R.M. and City of Portage la Prairie in making Campus Manitoba a successful, post-secondary educational institution in Portage la Prairie whereby, I believe, approximately 130-some students are enrolled this year taking various courses working toward their degree programs.

Added to that, I do want to also compliment the former Minister of Health and the former Minister of Education, the Honourable Darren Praznik and the Honourable Linda McIntosh, that I was able to encourage both those departments to expand upon the concept that I brought to their offices. That was

the licensed practical nursing program that was available through the Assiniboine Community College in Brandon where it existed and that only persons that attended to the Brandon campus were able to receive instruction in the licensed practical nursing discipline. I've asked that the government consider a rotating, a multi-destinational instruction of the licensed practical nursing program throughout Manitoba. It was with the program from Minister McIntosh's shop and the funding from Minister Praznik's shop that provided this program to start out and be offered in two different rural locales, each and every year, and to this day is operating and providing for a new generation of licensed practical nurses of which I am absolutely assured is vitally needed here in the province of Manitoba, as I understand in the Central Region, up to 40 percent of our licensed practical nurses can retire in the next five years.

But I do want to state to this government, they have been very supportive in a number of areas and I will say approachable on behalf of the residents of Portage la Prairie in just leaving the value-added facility that the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) did invest in. All agricultural producers here in the province of Manitoba are very, very pleased to have as an asset where they can consider looking to add value to their farm-based products with the \$15 million addition to the—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member, order, please.

Before I call on the Member for Flin Flon, may I remind all members again that when they refer to members of the House, they don't use their given names; they use their constituency positions: Member for Ste. Rose, for example.

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): It's a pleasure indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to put a few words on the record regarding the Throne Speech, this Throne Speech for the Fifth Session of the Thirty-Eighth Manitoba Legislature.

I want to welcome you back, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as well as the Speaker himself, the new pages and the table officers. I also want to wish well to all those members of the Legislature contemplating retirement, voluntarily or involuntarily, as the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) said. I wish them all well.

When I look at the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask myself, what's in it for Manitobans,

first of all, and, secondly, and for me more importantly, I guess, is what's in it for northern Manitobans, and there is a lot there.

So I want to talk a little bit this afternoon about the Throne Speech but viewing it through a lens of the north, what is relevant to northerners, because I represent the northern riding of Flin Flon. I am proud to represent that northern riding, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

First of all, regarding energy, this is legacy, a vision material, and as energy was key to the Schreyer administration, the Schreyer government, so energy is also key I think to our government. Therefore we are very much involved not only with Wuskwatim, the 200 megawatt dam, but also with officially announcing Conawapa which is a 1,250 megawatt dam, a huge dam.

I might point out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in Wuskwatim we are involved with Aboriginal people. We do not ignore Aboriginal people. They become partners in these ventures in northern development. We see Aboriginal people as partners. We are a government that does not ignore Aboriginal people and we do not ignore the north.

Further talking about energy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are committed to expanding wind power. We already have 100 megawatts of wind power at St. Leon, but we are committed to at least 300 megawatts in the near future and possibly, and I say possibly, even as much as 1,000 megawatts in the further future. As well, we are looking at ethanol production and biodiesel. We are looking for futuristic solutions for future problems.

But, above all, I am very proud of Manitoba Hydro. We want to enhance Manitoba Hydro. We don't sell our Crown corporations. We support them; we enhance them.

Secondly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to talk a little bit about transportation. Our government has committed to \$4 billion for highways over the next 10 years. That's an unprecedented amount of funding for highways. I can't help but think that, when I'm outside of the Perimeter and I see these new snowploughs on the road followed by the new ambulances that this government provided and the new Handi-Transit van that they are providing, it's very interesting symbolism. I think it could be very much a symbol for our government; we are on the move.

I am very happy that this government still continues its commitment to increased funding for winter roads and for airports which are absolutely essential for northern isolated communities. I am particularly happy that they also allowed \$100,000 one-time-only funding for the transit system in Flin Flon. That is a very welcome amount of money for Flin Flon.

*(15:10)

I'm also happy that our government supported the Sherridon line. We don't abandon railway lines. Together with the federal government we made sure that four northern bands can own and operate that Sherridon line.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very happy to see that we are expanding access on the east side of the lake with the Rice River road. That is very much welcome news for those people on that side of the lake. As well, I'm happy to note that we continue our support for the Port of Churchill, our only inland northern port in Canada. As well, I'm very happy to see the minister responsible for highways and transportation talking about the possible news of Rocky Mountain Doubles, which are these big semis on the road which can carry more goods and thus, hopefully, will reduce the price of food and other material that goes to northern Manitoba.

As well, with regard to health care, I point out again we don't fire nurses, we don't attempt to privatize the health care system or home care, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We do not cut back on physician training spaces, and I want to point out to the members opposite, who are becoming experts at whining, that since 1999 we've quadrupled the nursing grads. We've quadrupled them. There are 1,300 more nurses practising in Manitoba right now than there were in 1999 when the honourable opposition members were in power. There are 190 more technologists, 40 percent more doctors graduating.

I should point out with regard to the north we've been very happy that this government has removed the \$50 user fee for northern patient transportation. That was an irritant that really bothered northerners. I should point out that in the Throne Speech there was mention finally of Thompson getting an acquired brain injury unit which was much needed. And I should point out that, with regard to health care, if you look at Flin Flon alone, you will notice in the region new ambulances; you'll notice a new personal care addition in the Snow Lake hospital;

you'll notice a new primary health care building in Flin Flon; you'll notice a renovated hospital with a new elevator; you'll notice a doubling of size of the dialysis unit; and on and on and on. So when members opposite say nothing's happened, that's certainly not true for Flin Flon. Everything's changed, and for the positive, I might add.

I could also add, we do listen to the opposition. They have called for a review of the regional health authorities after 10 years. I think that was an excellent idea. I always thought it was an excellent idea. We're carrying it out. We are going to review the regional health authorities. I think it's an appropriate time to do so after 10 years.

If I can switch to education, Mr. Deputy Speaker. University College of the North is very important to northerners, and I'm really disappointed that the former leader of the Tories did not support the University College of the North. In fact, support for the University College of the North, that side seems to be quite lukewarm, but we certainly support it. It's a 2,600 student system. It provides 40 programs for northerners. There will be new capital construction, and even more than that. It gives us, how would I say it, it's symbolic of the north independence. We don't want to be treated like we're just another aspect of a colonial system, and sometimes Winnipeg is sort of the lord and master, and northerners feel like second-class citizens. That has changed when we have our own educational institution. It's very much needed. Just on a symbolic level it's very important. But it's much more than symbolism, of course. I am also very happy to note that this government, this Throne Speech is talking about a 60 percent tax rebate on student tuition. That will keep, I'm sure, some of our grads in the province. We want to keep our young people here. They have a future in Manitoba. Manitoba is definitely a growing province.

Some other highlights from the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that are relevant to the north, I'd like to point out—obviously mining. It is of critical importance to large sections of northern Manitoba, and I'm very happy that we've developed support of strategies for the mining sector. I'm referring here to the MEAP program, the Mineral Exploration Assistance Program, the Mineral Exploration Tax Credit, the Prospectors' Assistance Program, and others. Lately, we have committed \$70 million for mine clean-up. We know there are 149 such sites called orphaned or abandoned mines. In the past sometimes mining was operating under, how would I

say, pioneering conditions. People just dug up the ore and didn't worry too much about what they left behind. Some of the things that were left behind were not pretty, and we have to clear them up, we have to clean them up.

In fact, we've committed some \$4 million right now to be working in Sherridon/Cold Lake, Snow Lake, Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake to clean up those mine sites, but there are many others that we have to clean up as well. We have certainly allocated a large amount of money for the clean-up at the Lynn Lake site.

But to get back to Sherridon/Cold Lake site for just a minute because the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) has a newfound interest in Sherridon, it appears, and is very critical of our government's working with that particular mine site. I point out to him that we are putting a fair bit of money into that mine site. We are going to rehabilitate it. We are cleaning up the water quality. We are providing water and sewage lines and we're putting a lot of effort and energy into Sherridon/Cold Lake, not because the member opposite who likes to take credit for this is doing the lobbying or the influencing, although that doesn't hurt, we would have done this anyway. This is the right thing to do.

But, when the member gets critical about what we do in Sherridon/Cold Lake in terms of cleaning up the mess that was left in the early '50s, I point out then, and I have pointed out before, before he gets too critical that in the early 1950s when that mess was left, guess which party was in power, federally and provincially? The Liberal Party. The Liberal Party was in power in Ottawa; the Liberal Party was in power in Manitoba. *[interjection]* As the member opposite said, they're a messy bunch. They didn't clean up the mess. They blame the Tories who did something. They blame us who did a heck of a lot and now are doing even more, but they never seem to blame themselves who basically walked away from them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to say a few words about "Spirited Energy." "Spirited Energy," which is a rebranding of the province, is not received warmly in all quarters, but I think it is generally a positive thing, because the private sector is involved, the Chambers of Commerce are involved. Yes, we have a "Friendly Manitoba," but I think we could use a more updated branding of the province.

When the members opposite criticize "Spirited Energy," they're usually criticizing it about it costs

too much money, too much of the taxpayers' money. They feel they're not getting enough bang for the buck. I don't believe that's true. They certainly didn't worry about money when they invested in SmartHealth a few years ago. What did they lose there? What was it, \$100 million? I'm not sure about the exact amount. *[interjection]* In 1992, 1993, they ran a deficit of between \$700 and \$800 million.

The Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) points out, what about Connie Curran? You hire an American lady for \$7 million Canadian to tell us to cut nurses. I mean, was that the answer? Was that the solution?

So, when we're talking about wise use of money, I don't think we need lectures from the members opposite who have a horrible record in this regard. Even more than that, the biggest catastrophe of all, of course, was the selling of MTS. The members opposite don't want to be reminded of this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'll just point out from a northern view that, in 1999, when I looked at my subscription rate, my monthly subscription rate, in Cranberry Portage, Manitoba, for MTS service, it was \$12.83, I believe. That same service right now, I think, is costing me \$55, so a rate shock certainly took place. But the Tories want to ignore that.

They solved their fiscal problems by selling off Crowns. We do not sell off Crowns. We support our Crowns because they're absolutely strategic investments for the people of Manitoba. I mean, it's analogous to selling your car to pay for your house. You all know that. It doesn't make sense. So we still have a fair bit of rancour for the members opposite when they did the unprecedented and sold a Crown corporation which, incidentally, was first implemented, it was first put into practice by a Tory, by Sir Rodmond Roblin. He did it for the right reasons and, of course, the members opposite sold it for the wrong reasons.

By the way, they sold it at bargain basement prices. What was it, \$13 a share? Those shares are now \$44. So when that hollow argument is: Well, buy it back, they realize they can't do that under NAFTA. Secondly, you want to buy it back at 3.5 times the price. That's ridiculous. You should have never sold it, but that's water under the bridge.

However, that particular MTS debacle, along with vote-rigging scandals at the highest levels of the Tory party, certainly ensured their demise in 1999. I am suggesting that members opposite, when they point fingers at us, they'd better take a look at their

own record, a record that's certainly well known in northern Manitoba, if not maybe as well known in the very southern reaches of Manitoba.

*(15:20)

Talking about MTS one more time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take a look at my communities, just one of my communities, Pukatawagan, with 3,000 people. I take a look at the latest phone book that I have, and it may be dated by a couple of years, and I count the number of actual people in Pukatawagan, Pukatawagan people. I discovered that it's something like 90 people in Pukatawagan that have a phone, a community of 3,000. I ask any of the members opposite, the Tory members, if they have a 3,000 person community that has only 90 phones. I doubt that very much.

The question that I have: Why is it that people up north can't afford phones? The reason is because of the price. We can't work mechanisms, we can't cross-subsidize in order to make phones available for these people at a really cheap rate, where they're probably needed much more than they are in southern Manitoba because very often in the north, in the isolated reaches of the north, a phone can be a life-and-death kind of instrument. If you don't have it, things could happen. Yet our people cannot afford it. Ninety phones in Pukatawagan is not acceptable, and I tie that directly to the sale of MTS, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It does not allow us to intervene to make sure that Manitobans have decent phone service at decent prices.

Some other things I'd like to talk about Mr. Deputy Speaker, just very briefly, because I want to give other members a chance to speak as well. We do listen to good ideas. I do not believe that anybody has a monopoly on a good idea. So, when members opposite were pushing for grandparents' rights they were correct, that was the direction we had to work. We did implement, and we are implementing that bill. I would like to thank Marlene Carriere from Cranberry Portage. Marlene Carriere pushed on the grandparents' rights issue very heavily, in fact, with the walk from Cranberry Portage to Winnipeg, which is a distance of 700-and-some kilometres, to highlight grandparents' right. So I'm very proud of Marlene Carriere.

I'm very happy that we are expanding the Neighbourhoods Alive! program to also include towns or cities such as Selkirk, Flin Flon, The Pas and others. I'm hoping that we get some money to

rejuvenate, to revamp some of the housing in downtown Flin Flon. That's certainly my hope.

We've increased the Lighthouses project to five more lighthouses. That's an excellent way to keep kids out of trouble and gives them something positive to do. That's an initiative we should all support, and we should all support expanding that initiative.

I'm very happy that we're continuing to support the Northern Food project, because food prices are extremely high in northern Manitoba, particularly in isolated communities. But, when members opposite say, you know, you are not doing anything, nothing's changed, I'd like to point out to them, if they were to drive into some of my communities—and I'll just take the biggest one for starters, Flin Flon—you wouldn't recognize it from 1999. Why wouldn't you recognize it? You wouldn't recognize it because you're driving on an improved 10A, also No. 10 highway in and around Flin Flon, the perimeter, that's been completely revamped. I thank the Transportation Minister for putting that as a high priority because it was absolutely necessary. The Tories simply ignored northern Manitoba roads. So that's important.

I look at the hospital, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I see a renovated hospital. I see a new elevator, like I pointed out before. I see new dialysis units, doubled. I see a new primary health care facility. I see all those kinds of things that weren't there before. I see a new Flintoba Shopping Mall, a huge mall that wasn't there before. So, when members opposite say, nothing's changed, everything's changed. The skyline's changed. If the member opposite still thinks this is not happening, maybe he should take a good look at downtown Winnipeg, where the skyline is also changing. I'll tell you, it didn't change under the 11 mean years of Tory rule. It changed since 1999.

I could also talk, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the water and sewage projects in Brochet that we're working on right now. It has run into a snag, but, hopefully, that will work out very well. Talking about the new air terminal in Lac Brochet, I could talk about the new water and sewage system in South Indian Lake. That goes along with the new road that we built. The Tories talked about it; they never built that road to South Indian Lake. We built the road. Yes, they'll remember they just couldn't put the puck in the net.

In regard to other little towns, let's take a look at Snow Lake. Snow Lake has highway lights. It wasn't there under the Tories. We put in those highway

lights. We expanded their personal care home, their hospital, numerous things, fixed roads and bridges for Snow Lake. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that wasn't happening under the old government. That's happening under this government, this new government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that there are many other members that want to speak, and I'll keep this very short. I just want to tell the members opposite, particularly, that they should be, perhaps, a little bit more positive. I could, of course, if I wanted to, read some excerpts from Vic Grant at CJOB. I don't happen to have that handy, but I do know that Mr. Grant is certainly not a socialist. At least, I don't think so. I know that the radio station is not noted for left-wing views because I have listened in the past to Charles Adler and Peter Warren. I don't want to quote all of what Vic Grant, the CJOB news director, says, but here is what he says, partially, just a few words. He says: Manitoba is leading the way, and currently provides the quickest response time in the nation. He is talking about waiting lists.

I have lived here long enough to recall the huge negative reaction when the NDP government of the time declared that auto insurance would become public, and that had auto insurance agents fainting dead away, predicting that our rates would skyrocket and public insurance would never do as much as private would do. I was one of those naysayers. Over the years, I have had to keep reminding myself how wrong I was. The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation has not only kept our rates amongst the lowest in the land, but, also, became a major corporate citizen sponsoring an impressive array of community ventures. It has far exceeded anything the private insurance moguls would have returned to this province.

So Mr. Vic Grant at least has the wisdom, the humility to say: I was wrong. Members opposite don't seem to want to say that. They still are against anything. They are still saying the sky is falling; this government does nothing. Well, I suggest, at least in the north, northerners know which side their bread is buttered on. They know what this Throne Speech means, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they endorse it wholeheartedly. Thank you very much.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I understand that I have a maximum of 30 minutes to reply to the Throne Speech. In the spirit of bipartisanship, I wonder if I could give a minimum of 10 minutes to the independent Member for Inkster (Mr.

Lamoureux), and then I would assume the remaining time of the 30 minutes, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: This is unusual, so we have to ask leave of the House.

Is there leave to give 10 minutes to the honourable Member for Inkster? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Speaker, first of all, I would like to just comment in terms that it is indeed a privilege to be standing inside this Legislature. I always appreciate the fact that the constituents of Inkster saw fit to support me to the degree in which I am the one that happened to come out on top. I truly do consider being their representative as a privilege. One of the things I will never do is take it for granted, the support, and will continue to work the best I can in ensuring that my constituents are well represented in the many different issues facing the province of Manitoba.

I also wanted to acknowledge the efforts, and I have said in the past, of my No. 1 supporter, that being my wife, Cathy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Next to Cathy is someone whom I classify as part of my family; often I will say my brother Henry and sister Linda. They know who it is that I am referring to. They have actually been wonderful people for both me and my wife, in fact, my family, by incorporating or allowing us to be a part of their family.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also want to, just very briefly, give compliments to the number of volunteers that it takes in order to be effective both during an election, or between elections. Those volunteers have really had a wonderful impact for me, personally, in terms of being able to help shape me to the person that I am today. Whether it is individuals through friendships, through church, or wherever it might be, I appreciate the constant feedback and advice that is provided me.

* (15:30)

I've also had the privilege of being able to work with the Leader of the Liberal Party here in Manitoba. I must say, in terms of the leaders I've had in the past, this leader is second to no one. The work ethic that he has is totally amazing, and, you know, the latitude that he has provided me has been very much appreciated. Even, at times, I've been known to make some mistakes, and he somewhat takes that into consideration and allows me to have that independence and be a strong voice for the

constituents which I represent. I truly do appreciate that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you know, we don't necessarily have as many resources as everyone else, but we do have a hard, dedicated working group of people downstairs, and I want to just give a compliment to them in the efforts that they put in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, further, it seems I am in the mood of giving compliments and so forth, it would be wrong for me not to make reference to the Clerk and the staff of the Speaker's office, to the Clerk's office, *Hansard* staff, all the individuals that make this Chamber work, for many of them and the work that they do even between the House sittings.

I believe I have covered my bases, at least in most part. I wanted to be able to spend the next six minutes and 20 seconds, tops, speaking on what I believe is a Throne Speech that can, in fact, be improved. I like to think that, as a member of the opposition, we are always in a position to be able to provide a viable, strong alternative to the current administration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I do believe that there is so much more that could be done, that could have been done. One has to start thinking, well, I believe that we're past the point at which a government is now making policy; more it's a government that's making a policy announcement or a platform.

Having now been passed for three and a half years, we look forward to the next provincial election, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We hear that it's going to be sometime in the next spring, and when I look at the legislative agenda, I think that Manitobans would be pleased to see just the number of private members' bills that are there because there are so many ideas that are starting to be released. As we get closer to the election, I think Manitobans are going to see that this is, in fact, a tired government. You can already start to sense that there is a mood for change, and who can blame that mood?

When you start looking at some of the problems, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I am referring, I like to think that I am referring to about 55 constituencies, but what I am really talking about is the need for change of government. That need for change is starting to surface, and we've seen that more and more, when I'm talking with the average Manitoban, that they are open to change. Who can blame them when you look at issues like the Crocus fiasco? You know, 33,000-plus Manitobans have lost tens of

millions of dollars because this government was negligent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether it's issues of that nature or it's the frustration in health care, they talk about the billion-plus more that they're spending in health care, but when you ask the question, is health care better today than it was in 1999, a majority of people, I believe, will say, no, it's not. Really and truly, when you look at the major platform issue for this Premier (Mr. Doer) when he was Leader of the Opposition in 1999, it was to get rid of hallway medicine. Hallway medicine is still there today. They've had seven years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there're so many issues. Immigration, you know, yes, they have moved forward, in part, on immigration, but we need to recognize that the Provincial Nominee Program, which has turned into a gold mine for this province, is an agreement that was brought in with Jean Chrétien and the Premier, Gary Filmon, at the time. So they had the tool to try to capitalize on a wonderful program, and it's encouraging to see that we're going to hit that 10,000, but there have been some problems. There is an issue of not recognizing, whether its health care workers such as nurses or doctors or pharmacists, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those professionals who are not allowed to even put in an application in the same fashion as a computer technician would. They first have to get it recognized, their skill, or they have to get a job offer that is acknowledged by the Province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we should be treating them all equally. We should be encouraging brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, nephews and nieces to be reunited in the province of Manitoba. We could be doing so much more. So we have to deal with the discriminatory policy that this government seems to want to stick to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to deal with the backlog. Do you know that today in the Provincial Nominee Program, because of not providing adequate resources, it takes longer to get a certificate in many cases than it does to process them in a foreign embassy?

An Honourable Member: You're wrong.

Mr. Lamoureux: No, I'm right. The Member for Minto (Mr. Swan) is wrong.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, those are the types of issues that we need to be able to deal with, and there's just not enough time because the government

doesn't recognize the need for us to be sitting more inside this Legislature.

So whether its issues of great substance like that or its the smaller issues like our licence plates, I like "Friendly Manitoba." I don't want "Spirited Energy" branded on it. In fact, I don't like their buffalo. The NDP buffalo looks like a bull on steroids or something. Their buffalo doesn't even look like a buffalo. Why are they spending hundreds of thousands of tax dollars in order to change that? Leave our licence plates saying "Friendly Manitoba." If you want to replace it with something, just don't replace it with "Spirited Energy." If they consult, as I believe they have, they'll find the majority of their constituents are in agreement with that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is so much that one could speak about in regard to this Throne Speech. I appreciate the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) who's been a gentleman by allowing me to say a few words on the record, and I thank him for that.

With those few words, I appreciate the opportunity, as in the past whenever I'm provided the opportunity, to be able to speak on behalf of my constituents. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Deputy Speaker, just so that people don't think that I've grown soft in my old age in allowing the Liberals to speak—[interjection] Well, it might be the baby. It does change a man. You don't sleep as much and your thinking might not be as clear and as lucid.

But I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that really what motivated me is that I have a degree of sympathy for the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) who is off to Montréal in a few short hours to participate in a leadership race from which I know he's going to come home sadly disappointed and dejected simply because there's no way he couldn't. I mean, when you look at the candidates who are running, even if his candidate wins, I can't imagine how he could be happy with that because there's such a dearth of leadership within that particular federal party. But I wanted to send him off with some good spirits and some happy thoughts as he goes forward and watches his federal party select the next long-term Leader of the Official Opposition for the federal government.

I do want to say, though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a pleasure to be here today to speak on the Throne Speech, and certainly I echo the comments that many of my colleagues on both sides of the

House have put on the record regarding the pages. We want to welcome the new pages here to the Legislature. It's a short session but you've already demonstrated you can do your job ably; also the table clerks and the Speaker who have assisted me in my duties as House Leader as I learn some of the nuances of this House and its rules.

I also want to commend all the members, those who have decided not to run, in particular the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) in his long-term service to the province of Manitoba. He's been a stalwart not only in our party but I think throughout Manitoba, and he's been a gentleman in doing so.

Also, the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), a neighbouring riding of mine, I've had the good opportunity to deal with the Member for Emerson on a number of different issues, and I can tell you in living in close proximity to his riding that he has a great deal of respect among his constituents right across that vast constituency.

*(15:40)

The Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Sale) I know also is not seeking re-election. While I haven't always agreed on every policy or principle or matter that the Member for Fort Rouge has had to undertake, I did always recognize that he had a difficult job as Minister of Health. I would acknowledge that it is a challenge, that particular portfolio, and I do commend him on the work that he tried to do within that area as well.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on those notes, I want to speak a little bit about the Throne Speech and what is missing, from my perspective, on the Throne Speech and what clearly Manitobans will be disappointed in. Even though we know it's Christmas time, or almost Christmas time, we're accustomed to seeing gifts being kind of spread out across the province; we see it again here with this government indiscriminately spending money in different directions without any real long-term plan in a desperate attempt to hold on to government. We've seen this played out before.

Perhaps the current Premier (Mr. Doer) was sent the blueprint from the former Prime Minister, one Mr. Martin, who, at this time last year, was sending out gifts across the country and promising to spend billions of dollars in different areas and making commitments that he knew he probably would never be able to or couldn't keep. That's very much where this Throne Speech has gone, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A

lot of indiscriminate promises here and there trying to appease different areas of the province to try to shore up their failing polling numbers.

I say that not only is it a failed plan, it's one that's disrespectful to all Manitobans, and Manitobans know what the challenges are in the province. They know that this government has had seven years to deal with those areas and haven't been able to do it. I think specifically, of course, of my own constituency of Steinbach in the south, and I would remind the members that south is toward the back of the Legislature. I know for many members going into the south there of the province is walking around the fountain and that's what they consider going south, when they take a stroll—

An Honourable Member: La Verendrye.

Mr. Goertzen: Well, there is, I understand temporarily, one Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Lemieux). We're not sure what his long-term future holds. I have personal respect for the Member for La Verendrye. We've had some good conversations, I would say. But, you know, when you're looking within his own department, I heard again on the radio just a couple of days ago that no major road work is being planned in the area of the Steinbach constituency again for the fifth or sixth year in a row.

You know, an area that has been recognized as the economic engine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the southeast and perhaps even Manitoba, one of the few areas that's growing, and they get left off. They end up going to the door of the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Lemieux) with hat in hand saying, just one bucket of pavement, Minister; can we get one bucket of pavement for this area which is growing? The only way that we get any road work done in the area is because we have private industry. Oh, you know, we hate to talk about private industry when it comes to the NDP, but if it wasn't for Superstore coming into the area, there wouldn't even be any road work on the particular stretch of highway which was promised over and over and over again. Private dollars paying for road work.

I think that's shameful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it has to come to that in a community as vibrant and a community that's growing like Steinbach and other areas of Hanover and in Niverville. They deserve to be treated well by a government that looks after the interests of all Manitobans, not one that simply has a Perimeter vision. *[interjection]* Well, and the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) shakes his head. He doesn't believe. He doesn't believe that

members of my constituency should have access to these programs, that they should have fairness and equality in things like road work, and I say shame on the member.

I'm proud to belong to a party that believes in all of Manitoba, in the north, in the south, in urban and in rural, Mr. Deputy Speaker. *[interjection]* Well, you know, the Minister for Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick) asks: Have I been to northern Manitoba? I was actually pleased, pleased just a few months ago.

An Honourable Member: Where?

Mr. Goertzen: Well, in fact, I had the opportunity to go to The Pas. We went to Dauphin—*[interjection]* Now the Member for Flin Flon doesn't believe that The Pas is northern Manitoba. I almost want him to go and speak to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs (Mr. Lathlin), who, I would say, was a gracious host actually, and I commend the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. When I met him in his riding, he was a very gracious host, and I commend him for doing that. In fact, then perhaps some of these other ministers should take their nod from him in terms of hosting individuals.

There is the odd time that we see a New Democratic minister in the constituency of Steinbach. It's usually when they're getting money from the private sector. They hate to use that word. They hate to acknowledge that there's money coming from the private sector. I think the most recent time was when they were there to accept private money into a new cancer treatment facility within the constituency. Can you imagine private money in a health care facility? What kind of a government would allow private money in a health—oh, the NDP government would allow private money in a health care facility. But, of course, they don't talk about that. They don't want to acknowledge the fact that many of these projects are done only because of that private money that comes forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have seen a failing in so many key and critical areas within the government. I have the opportunity from time to time to speak to Manitobans about the area of justice and where it is that this government has failed in that particular sector. I know that Manitobans are concerned. I have had the opportunity recently to speak to residents in the Burrows constituency about crime and justice, and their concerns about justice within that particular area. *[interjection]* Well, I hear the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) sort of dismissing that. You know, it's sort of like he says there weren't

enough people at a particular meeting. I don't believe it is a concern and we will write off the concerns of those few individuals.

I would say to the Member for Burrows that all of those individuals who came out are his constituents, and he shouldn't dismiss them. He shouldn't say that it is not important, but that is the attitude of this arrogant government, of this arrogant government as they go on. They're as willing to dismiss 34,000 Manitobans who were fleeced on the Crocus fiasco, as they are to dismiss 20 people who want to come out and talk about crime.

I say to the Member for Burrows, if you are not willing to fight for those constituents, whether they're a small number or a large number, then they will come and tell you in the next election that they are disappointed with that attitude.

An Honourable Member: We'll find them.

Mr. Goertzen: Well, you know, in fact, we will find out. We'll see, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Premier (Mr. Doer) actually wants to call the election. He still lives in this world where he believes that all the power should be contained within the Premier's office. We've said that we should follow other jurisdictions, and, instead of being the last province, in Manitoba, to go to set election dates—[interjection] Well, we would have liked to have been the first, but that goal is already gone. Now, we are trying to be the fourth.

An Honourable Member: Number six or seven.

Mr. Goertzen: Now, maybe we can be No. 6, racing towards mediocrity. There we go with the Premier who wants to follow, instead of lead.

I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even though it is sort of late within the government's term, it is not too late. It is not too late to see this as a democratic idea, one whose time has come. Then all the power doesn't need to rest within the Premier's office. You know, in fact, he is very good at sort of deflecting, and deflecting where the responsibility comes from. He has heard that today. We've heard that today in Question Period regarding Crocus, where they don't want to take any responsibility. The government closes its eyes, and says: Well, we don't want to talk about Crocus. We don't answer any of the answers.

Then, later on, when reporters are asking about this blip of a session, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this short session where we are going to be asked to move legislation in five days, with five days of debate. The

Premier says: I don't have anything to do with this; I would have liked to have a set agreement. Yet it was his House leader—you know, we went begging to the Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) saying: Would you please meet with us so we can talk about a set session?

I have got the letter. I can bring the letter for the Premier, if he wants to see it. He says: Well, we are going to think about that. I will get back to you. That was six months ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, six months ago. The Premier's words don't match the actions of this government. They refuse to have these sorts of democratic principles. I think that Manitobans are paying attention. I suspect that the government thinks that these are minor issues that don't get a lot of attention in different areas. But I can tell you that over time people start to see a pattern of a government that isn't responsible or responsive, not only to their own individual needs, but in a broader context within the legislative framework that we deal with here in Manitoba.

You know, it is a good example, actually. I know the independent Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) raised this issue about the number of hours on Estimates. There have been comments. I know the Premier has made comments about the usage of Estimates time and whether or not, in his view, Estimates time was used appropriately. But I want the Premier and other members of his government to know that—and this goes back to June now—we had an Estimates session with the Minister of Justice, and we asked him 30-odd questions which the Minister of Justice took as notice, and he said: I am going to get back to you on that.

* (15:50)

Well, that was six months ago. Six months ago and we still haven't got any of the answers. Then the Premier has the audacity to go to the hallway and say, well, we need to respect the Estimates process, when his own ministers don't respect that process. What's the point of asking questions and having them take it as notice, when they refuse to answer them? You know, we could have a thousand hours of Estimates on every department, but, if they refuse to answer those questions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where is it? Where is the accountability if we can't actually have those questions answered?

I'm glad, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Premier (Mr. Doer) raises the issue of crime and police officers. I'm glad, because I look at the Statistics Canada report that came out last week that said when

it comes to the growth of police officers over the last 10 years, Manitoba ranks almost—they're lucky this time—almost dead last. Only New Brunswick was lower in growth, and other areas have caught onto this.

Yesterday the Edmonton Police Service was in Winnipeg recruiting for police officers. You know, when they were handing out brochures and saying come and make a difference in Edmonton, they know that here in Manitoba we lack this provincial strategy. You know, the Premier could stand up today or tomorrow and announce 10,000 police officers for Manitoba because he knows he's never going to have to ever come through on that because he has no strategy to recruit or retain those officers. They're empty, unfilled positions. They're phantom officers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He knows that and I challenge him on that.

Certainly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's look at other areas regarding justice. You know, auto theft is a great example of how this government deals with certain issues. In 2000, there was a press release that came out from the Minister of Justice, and that press release said that they were going to crack down on auto theft. Now, remember this is at a time when auto theft was half as much as it is in the province today. Then in the fall of 2000, they said: Well, it's working; our auto theft strategy is working.

In the spring of 2001, another news release came out and it said that we're going to crack down on auto theft. In 2001 in the fall, it says, it's working, and it went on and on. Why is that? As most Manitobans realize, auto theft goes up in the spring and it's going down in the fall. We see this repeated political process that goes on with the Minister of Justice, both Ministers of Justice and, now today, we have 13,500 vehicles stolen.

You know, I was fortunate to meet with justice officials in Minneapolis and in Chicago over the last year. We were talking about a number of different issues, but the issue of auto theft came up. They were stunned to hear that in a city the size of Winnipeg, there were 13,500 vehicles stolen. In fact, when I left the department of justice in Minneapolis, I walked out with a couple of the officials, and they looked at me and said, what's that thing on your car? I said, well, that's a club, and they said, well, do you beat somebody with it? I said, no, it's supposed to protect your vehicle. They were foreign to the concept, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They said, I can't believe it. I said,

well, you should come to Winnipeg. There are clubs all over the place in all these vehicles.

What do we have today? What's the strategy of the government to deal with auto theft. It's to go to the victims and tell them to put something in their vehicles so that they can't be stolen. That's their strategy. When you look at British Columbia, there's a strategy to actually go after the people who steal the cars. *[interjection]*

Well, you know, it's funny because the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Sale) says, do you lock your door at night? I met with a senior, actually, not far from his own riding who said to me: You know what? I go into my house and I put the deadbolts on them, I put the chain on, I look through the window, I see the criminals running free, and I ask myself, who's in prison? That's a very good question, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

You look at the victims who are now told to put something on their vehicle, where in British Columbia, they put in a program to reduce auto theft by 30 percent with a very unique approach. The unique approach was they actually went after the criminals. What a revelation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Saskatchewan, you know, and not far from the Premier's heart, I suspect, in Saskatchewan, they reduced auto theft by 40 percent, another unique program. They decided, hey, go after the people who were stealing cars. But, not in Manitoba, no. We'd never want to go after those who are committing the crime. Let's go after the victims. Let's go to the victims and say: You're going to have to take responsibility for your action. What kind of a message is that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I wonder how that's going to sell as we go door to door in the months ahead.

I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we ask these victims and, you know, I actually have a friend who is involved with the Edmonton Police Service. When I was talking to him, he said, you know, the problem within Manitoba is you could put an immobilizer in every car, and what do you think would happen? I said, well, I am assuming that there'd be some reduction in auto theft. He said, well, there might be, but what happens is crimes in other areas go up, because when somebody goes out with a criminal intention, when they leave their home with a criminal intention to commit a crime, if they're frustrated in the one criminal intention, they simply transfer that intention to another crime. So they smash the window. They commit acts of vandalism.

Whatever that criminal intention gets transferred to, something else happens.

So what benefit is the government having? Are they simply going to transfer crime from one area to another? That's the problem when you go after the victims and you don't go after the criminal intention of those who are out there to commit crime, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's the failed strategy. It's the failed strategy of this government and I think Manitobans will recognize that.

I would challenge this Premier (Mr. Doer), and I would debate him or his Minister of Justice (Mr. Chomiak) in any forum in Manitoba. Let's talk about this to Manitobans and say, do you believe, in fact, that it should be you as a victim of crime who has to take all of the precautions? Do you believe that it should fall to you, the onus of crime should fall to you, or do you believe that it's actually those who are committing the crimes that we should be focussing on? I would challenge—[*interjection*] I'd go to Flin Flon to have this discussion in the member's area. We can have a public forum and we can bring members in there and we'll ask those individuals. We'll ask those individuals whether or not they believe that it should be all the victims who pay for crime in this community.

We'll have that opportunity. If not in Flin Flon, we'll have it door to door in Seine River and Fort Garry and St. Norbert and in La Verendrye. We'll have those discussions. I would challenge this Premier to have that debate because I believe that, when it comes to Manitobans, honest, hardworking Manitobans, law-abiding Manitobans, they should have support. They should not be treated like they're the criminals, Mr. Premier.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): We would welcome the member to go to Flin Flon. [*interjection*] Yes, just go out this front door and you just keep on going and then you turn left. After a short distance, you'll come to one of the most beautiful parts of anywhere in Canada, Flin Flon, Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

I know the Conservative Party tips their wings over northern Manitoba, and that's one of the reasons why we are really pleased to bring this Speech from the Throne in here today and, hopefully, proceed with the mandate to implement the recommendations.

We will, Mr. Speaker, note in the former speaker's comments that some of the issues that they

purported to be in favour of when the federal government was in opposition—in fact, I think the member opposite worked for the now Justice minister. He's definitely plugged into the Minister of Justice, a person whom we all know, and I await the days that the Young Offenders Act, which we opposed when it was brought in by the former government—I think many changes should be made in the Young Offenders Act. We'll see what happens with that piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it's always instructive that when a Speech from the Throne is bold, when it's energetic, when it's full of new ideas, what do we see from the opposition? Old speak. They're like Pavlov's dog. They came out of the Speech from the Throne with all of this energy and ideas and new proposals, they came out and they used their old opposition rhetoric: There's no new ideas here; there's no ideas here; it's just old ideas.

* (16:00)

They then went on to ridicule the Hydro announcement. The first statement made by the prematurely arrogant member that is across the way today, temporarily, I might add, because we see what Tories do to their leaders. They're endangered species the moment they get elected. We're going to put him on the list. I think that's about the sixth one I've had to deal with, although I was surprised today to see 10 recycled questions. I thought anybody that was huffing and puffing and, oh, let us get back in. Oh, we've got all this new material.

What did the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) ask back on May 10 of 2005? I mean, good grief, you're lucky the media changed because if any media had been here for two years, they would know you've asked all the same questions you asked today two years ago. My God, I—now I shouldn't underestimate, you know, always—as Shakespeare said: He who fears every ambush falls into none.

An Honourable Member: He knew Don Orchard.

Mr. Doer: He knew Don Orchard, yes. I knew Don Orchard and I knew him well.

This is what we're talking about, the old rhetoric, recycled questions. I mean we all believe in recycling over here but recycling questions. Somebody asked—I mean, you know, they're asking them louder. I said, yeah, if you turn on your television set and make it louder, it doesn't necessarily mean you have a better program. It still

might be a rerun. A rerun is a rerun is a rerun. That's all we had today.

Mr. Speaker, so the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen), his great, bold first Speech from the Throne response was: Well, you know, old rhetoric and, you know, how can they mention Conawapa, because Ontario in its most recent document does not even mention Conawapa once.

Well, Mr. Speaker, did it mention—it didn't mention Manitoba once. Did it mention Manitoba once?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Doer: Did it mention Manitoba twice?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Doer: Did it mention Manitoba three times?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Doer: Did it mention Manitoba four times?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Doer: Did it mention Manitoba five times?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Doer: Did it mention Manitoba six times?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Doer: Did it mention Manitoba seven times?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Doer: Did it mention Manitoba eight single times in the report?

An Honourable Member: Eight more years. Missed it by that much.

Mr. Doer: Can you answer the question with a yes or no, I'm in moot court at Robson Hall here, Mr. Speaker. We still haven't got an apology from the first day debacle of a tired, a premature tired, arrogant opposition party who have sized up the drapes, have looked at the ministerial offices.

You know, last time they made that arrogant speech that this would be a one-term government, and now they're making these arrogant predictions that we're going to be a two-term government. I have never heard such old, tired opposition rhetoric from the missing species between the Homo sapiens and the Cro-Magnon men, the knuckle-draggers across the way. I have never seen such old, tired opposition rhetoric in all my years in this Chamber.

Now, of course—[*interjection*] Well, the member, the new centre of the Conservative universe, Steinbach, Manitoba, they aim to control the whole province. They've got the Minister of Justice and now their looking at the next, probably, the next Leader of the Opposition. You know, he is very good at putting his hand on the horn, Mr. Speaker. I know he wasn't part of the mean team that got rid of the last Leader of the Opposition. Oh, we support you, we support you. They always stood, remember they always stand; et tu, Brute.

You know, the mean team, they had secret little committees and little cabals over here and there and everything else and who is the leadership? Who is the transition opposition team? Who is this new group of Conservative Young Turks that are running the Conservative opposition party in Manitoba? I give you, drum roll, please; Don Orchard and Jim Downey. Jim Downey, the last time he ran for election, he ran to be an elected representative of the Canadian Wheat Board. He wanted to get rid of the single desk. The farmers got rid of him, Mr. Speaker, and that's what they're going to do to the Conservative farmers over the way that are standing up with Alberta, not with the people and farmers here in Manitoba. [*interjection*]

We'll get to the moratorium because you have—[*interjection*]—you have two cheeks of your face, and you have two cheeks of every position in the Manitoba Legislature, and I will point them out to you. [*interjection*] No, no. It's face. Face.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the opposition dinosaurs, they're a one-trick pony when it comes to Crown corporations: Sell it. You know, they actually have two tricks. I'm sorry. I apologize. They have two tricks. Their first trick is: We're not going to sell that Crown corporation during an election. Then their second trick is to go around and break their promise and sell the Crown corporation.

Now, in the interests of transparency, why is the current Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen), why did he brag to the Conservative delegates in his Web site that he was the absolute genius behind the Cabinet, the guru, selling—

An Honourable Member: The architect.

Mr. Doer: The architect. That's exactly right, selling, preparing the share offering for the sale of the Manitoba Telephone System after the election in 1995. Why did he take that off his Web site? Would he be trying to hide something? Does he not want us

to know that he sold the telephone system when he was in the former government?

Mr. Speaker, we know that rural Manitobans especially, and I don't know how any agricultural rural representative can sit in a caucus that betrayed Manitobans and sold the telephone system. I don't know how you can do it. I also don't know how you can sit in a caucus that refused to equalize hydro rates like we did and refused to equalize hydro rates for rural residents.

You know why the former Premier couldn't do that, the Conservatives couldn't do it? Because it would admit that the Manitoba Hydro could equalize hydro rates in Manitoba for rural Manitobans after they had sold Manitoba Telephone where the rates went up 68 percent. And who got the money? Who got the money? You know the Wellington West conglomerate and all the brokers in Manitoba were going out buying Jaguars while rural farm families got shafted by the Conservative Party of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

That's why, after the members opposite stubbed their toe for a couple of days on Hydro, they went off and recycled their questions in Question Period. Old rhetoric, old questions, old thinking. We don't trust you, and the people of Manitoba will not trust you, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this week, this last 10 days, did the Conservative Party in opposition, does the Conservative Party in opposition ask any questions about MPI reducing the rates for automobile drivers in Manitoba by, what is it, 2.5 percent? Remember those days: Oh, the sky is falling, the sky is falling. Then they tried to create the Burns committee to sell MPI. Hydro and MPI are the next two on their hit list.

You know, the rates have gone down. In fact I think the rates have gone down 2 percent. Seven out of eight years, they've gone down. Well, is that ever good management, or what, in terms of Manitoba?

But it's also an example of public ownership. Not only have the rates gone down, not only are the head office jobs in Manitoba, but all the investment account stays in Manitoba investing in schools, hospitals and public enterprise, Mr. Speaker. This is something we should all be very proud of, but members opposite want to sell away any Crown asset to the highest bidder.

Mr. Speaker, why did the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) take away his Web site

where it referred to the fact that he was an adviser to the Harris government on the deregulation of Hydro? Oh, is that ever a brilliant policy. Is that ever a brilliant policy. He took it out of the Web site because we know the real—[interjection]

* (16:10)

Well, when the member opposite stops dragging his knuckles on the ground, he can maybe listen to a reply because he can't handle the truth. He can't handle the fact that the Leader of the Opposition gave Mike Harris advice of how to deregulate and sell the Manitoba Hydro system, and if you don't think we're going to tell every Manitoban before the next election, you've got another think coming. Get your helmet on.

Now, I mentioned your great adviser, Mr. Jim Downey, the auctioneer. He was one of the auctioneers. Hey, how much are you going to give me for that telephone system? Is it \$13 here? Sold. Sold. Sold to the lowest bidder, helped by the Leader of the Opposition, worked for Mike Harris. He even worked for the British Tories. Well, my God, I mean, they sold the waterworks system. I mean, how low can you go? How low do you go? Well, you know, we can't believe the gifts you give us. Can you look at the Canadian Wheat Board? You know, you are the gift that keeps on giving, I'll tell you. You are the absolute gift that keeps on giving. I think we're going to give you an award, Man of the Year, at the next NDP convention because, you know, you are right out of central casting: arrogant, no knowledge, and flip-flopping on every position possible. You know, we love you.

Look at the position you took on the Canadian Wheat Board. Mr. Speaker, the positions taken by the member opposite are flying off the shelf any day. One day he supports the vote for the Canadian Wheat Board, the next day he doesn't support the single desk, then he says we shouldn't interfere in a federal jurisdiction. Oh, the Prime Minister is not federal. Oh, what a brilliant position to take. Well, don't interfere in a federal matter. It's a provincial legislature, but I'll just write a letter to the non-federal Prime Minister of Canada. [interjection]

I've already commented that you have no ideas. You're a tired old knuckle-dragging opposition party, Mr. Speaker, with no positions. [interjection]

Well, there's the arrogant member opposite. We just love all your arrogant comments. Just keep it up.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we know what our position is on the Canadian Wheat Board. We don't sit on a picket fence, and then go from a picket fence to a position of absolute surrogate status to the province of Alberta. You know, Chuck Strahl doesn't need another executive assistant. He's got an executive assistant sitting as head of the Conservative Party in Manitoba. We support the single desk; we support a vote for all the producers. We don't want just a vote for the barley producers. We want a vote for all the producers of Manitoba, and we're going to make sure they have it. The members opposite vote against it.

Mr. Speaker, the agricultural economy as noted by the recent article in the *National Post* magazine—did they ask any questions on "Spirited Energy" yesterday?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Doer: Okay.

An Honourable Member: Communists?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Doer: Okay.

So the new nutraceutical operation at the University of Manitoba, the potato diversification and many other proposals, again, in the Speech from the Throne, continue to develop Manitoba's knowledge economy, agricultural economy and medical economy together. When you cut the medical economy, the education economy and the research and development economy, you have nothing. When you build all three of those forward-looking visions of Manitoba, that's why we're leading Canada in more nutraceutical companies and biomedical companies in the whole country in terms of growth. You know, we used to get our brains kicked in by the University of Saskatchewan in functional foods and nutraceuticals because members opposite didn't believe in universities. They didn't invest in university. They didn't believe in research and development. They didn't get the connection between biofoods and agriculture. They didn't get the connection between medicine and anything. It's still not a priority for the Conservatives, Mr. Speaker. We have a strong, forward-looking economy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you know, here we come out with a great, new innovative plan to have, not only one of the most affordable tuitions in Canada and not only one of the most accessible university policies in Canada and one of the most inclusive strategies in

Canada, that we've come forward with a tax strategy of postgraduate.

Now, members opposite are against the University College of the North. They're against 16 Aboriginal communities that are connected to the University College of the North. They don't believe in providing dignity and individuality and opportunity for our people in northern Manitoba. They are absolutely opposed to it. They campaigned against it. Mr. Speaker, we have got a mandate to proceed with the University College of the North because we received it in the last election campaign.

I am proud of the fact that we care about electing Aboriginal people. We care about involving Aboriginal people in every part of government, and we care about ensuring that young Aboriginal people, no matter where they live in Manitoba, will have an economic and educational opportunity under our new University College of the North policy here in Manitoba. *[interjection]*

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have a policy on tuition fees. The loud member opposite who's got his hand on his horn, as well as the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), they've got a duo now, duelling horn blowers. But, when he was the Filmon-appointed member on the University of Manitoba, Board of Governors, did the funding for universities go up or did it go down? Did the tuition fees go up or did they go down? Did the enrolment go down? Did the young people leave Manitoba? So this is what you don't get. This is what you don't get. That's pretty darned desperate. The enrolment in university went down when he was a member of the Board of Governors. The number of young people in universities and community colleges in Manitoba went down. Since we have been elected with the four-pronged strategy includes capital, bursaries, the tuition freeze policy and the whole issue of the new bursary program and the tax reduction.

Again, the members opposite, how many questions have they asked? The old, tired opposition parties, they asked nothing. But you know why, because they've got nothing on this, Mr. Speaker.

New, bold ideas for Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, infrastructure—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: The members opposite talk about infrastructure. We went back to Public Accounts, and

I challenge members opposite to take a look because they won't like the story. I know they don't tell people in the coffee shops, but the budget went—and the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) did point out the weaknesses on the drainage budget, and we're pleased to be moving forward with some of the proposals he has. I think the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Lemieux) is doing a good job across the province.

Mr. Speaker, the amount of money went from 167 to 177 in 11 years. That's the Public Accounts. Less than 4 percent in 11 years, and then they have the audacity—and they also raised gas taxes. They, actually, took more money out of gas tax than they spent on highways. They, basically, stole the money from the people of Manitoba. They basically stole it. Then they go around here and say, oh, we warned them. We warned them.

* (16:20)

You know, we warned them in 1999, highways. Well, Mr. Speaker, our highways capital and maintenance budget has gone from 177 to 247 before our new announcements, a 47 percent increase. Now, we're not perfect, but, members opposite, we have a tenfold increase in highway expenditure over their record, with no gasoline tax.

Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of youth retention, members opposite use Pavlov's dog comments about youth retention. The number of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 went down, on average, 2,000 a year. We have reversed that, we have reversed that. We have increased the number of young people staying in Manitoba every year we've been in office. There's a net increase. With our new knowledge economy growing, with our new renewable energy economy growing, I am confident, and with our new rebate, we will continue to see increased numbers of young people in Manitoba. I am absolutely confident of that. Tories, youth leave; NDP, youth gain, very simple.

Mr. Speaker, on health care, it's very simple. If you decrease the number of spots in medical school, and the mother of the cutback, the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), who reduced the number of doctors and reduced the nursing training programs, the mother of all those cutbacks is here today in the House. I want to acknowledge that, yes, we have had a hard time. Announcing six years ago our increased number of doctors in medical schools—I don't know whether she knows this or not, but it takes seven years to graduate a specialist. Hallelujah,

in our third term you're going to see all kinds of specialists that we enrolled in medical school. You're going to start seeing those crops come out of the ground.

I also want to talk about diagnostic equipment. How many CAT scans were there located outside of the city of Winnipeg under the mother of health care over there when they were in office? Zero, zilch. There's CAT scans in The Pas, Thompson, Steinbach, Selkirk, in Pilot Mound, Pembina Hills, all across the province. Ambulance fees, oh, they were concerned about ambulance fees in rural Manitoba. Oh, who had the knife that stabbed it in the back of rural Manitobans when they delegated the increase in ambulance fees to rural Manitoba? How many Cabinet ministers stood up and said, no, we're not going to have a two-tier health care system for rural Manitoba. They were too scared because the brokers run the Conservative Party now. It used to be the farmers. Now, it's the brokers. Nobody had the courage to stand up to the former government. No courage, Mr. Speaker. That's why we are proud of the fact that we have eliminated the fees for rural Manitobans. We have—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Doer: In terms of environment, Mr. Speaker, we have a \$109-million upgrade in water. We have more sewer and water to go. We have over a hundred communities that have received different investments in urban and rural Manitoba. We are absolutely delighted that we continue to develop water strategies for our environment, phase 1 dealing with municipalities, phase 2 dealing with preparation of phosphorus and higher standards for all municipalities in Manitoba. We are pleased that we have brought out the first phosphorus regulations in the history of Manitoba, the first nutrient plan in the history of Manitoba. We are proud of the fact we have higher standards. Yes, it's hard on everybody. Absolutely, and yes, there's going to be controversy every day from every user that has to deal with this, but we are proud of the fact that we are moving forward to protect our water. We didn't get here overnight and we're not going to get a solution overnight, but we are going to do it, and we are going to do it for the benefit of our children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about children, and the Liberals brought their candles to the desks in the spring session, you know, but they should have brought a lump of coal. Do you realize the Liberal

federal government in 1995-96 cut the child welfare assistant rates by some 24 percent for Aboriginal children in Manitoba? You know, they talk about this principle and that principle. What about the principle of investing in children? What about the principle of an ex-Cabinet minister who sat down and slashed investments to children in Manitoba? I say the hypocrisy of members in the Liberal Party on this issue is quite overwhelming.

Yes, we have a lot of work ahead of us. Yes, we have to invest more money. I am proud of the fact that we are going to have more foster families. I am proud of the fact that siblings will be able to be with their own family. I'm proud of the fact that, yes, there were mistakes identified, there's no such thing as perfection, but Mr. Speaker, after members opposite sat on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report, a royal commission that—not a royal commission but a commission that recommended the devolution of children to child welfare families and communities, I am proud of the fact, in light of 85 percent of our children in care in Manitoba, our Aboriginal children, I'm glad we had the courage to take the right action to make sure that Aboriginal children are returned to their families.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also very pleased that the child poverty clawback—how mean can you go? How low can you go when you claw back provisions for children? The member opposite, you know, was sitting in the centre of power, sitting in the centre of power cutting back money for children. I'm pleased that we have consistently reinstated that money, but, you know, we've got a long way to go. But I'm glad that the child poverty rate is going down every year there's a reporting out.

Mr. Speaker, we also have more police officers in Manitoba. We have more prevention programs in Manitoba. In terms of safety, we have more prosecutors in Manitoba. They cut the number of police officers in 1996. I hope the funding that we've approved in Manitoba is implemented by Stockwell Day and the Conservatives in Ottawa, get moving on training more RCMP officers here in Manitoba.

Members opposite talked about competitiveness. You know, the small business tax when they left office was 8 percent. What is it going to be on January 1, 2007? Three percent. It's gone down. You know, they have a big swagger on taxes. They had the second highest small business tax in Canada, and they had the highest corporate tax when they left office. It's shameful, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Doer: He doesn't have a point of order.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a point of order.

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On a point of order, honourable members in this House have an obligation to be consistent and accurate in terms of the information that they put on the record. In the 1999 election campaign, the Premier—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have to point out to honourable members that, when rising on a point of order, it is to point out to the Speaker a breach of a rule or a practice of our Manitoba procedures and not to be used for debate. The honourable member, do you have a point of order?

Mr. McFadyen: The Premier campaigned in 1999 that he wanted to keep everything the Filmon government had done, that he was going to end halfway medicine—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I'd just like to remind members that, when you're rising on a point of order, it's to point out to the Speaker a breach of a rule or a practice of Manitoba. We will have lots of opportunities for debate.

So, on the point of order raised by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, he does not have a point of order; it is a dispute over the facts.

* (16:30)

Mr. Doer: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The record is clear on this issue. We have a situation in Manitoba now where the people of this province have a growing economy, a knowledge economy, a fairer economy. The child poverty rate has gone down, the taxes have gone down, the population is going up, the buildings are going up, the opportunities are going up, and the noise from the Leader of the Opposition is going up.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting. Let's pay tribute to the World Women's Hockey Championships. It will follow the Aboriginal Peoples Choice Music Awards that will be held only because some government had the courage to build the MTS Centre in downtown Winnipeg. The negative nabobs didn't do it. We'll do it to keep youth—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hour being 4:30 p.m., pursuant to rule 45(5), I am interrupting the proceedings in order to put the question on the motion of the honourable Member for St. Norbert (Ms. Brick), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the motion read?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? Dispense? Dispense.

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

We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, thank Your Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this Fifth Session of the Thirty-Eighth Legislature of Manitoba.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

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 Yeas have it.

Formal Vote

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Yes, recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

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

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable Member for St. Norbert (Ms. Brick), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

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

Nays

Cullen, Cummings, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurschou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Hawranik, Lamoureux, Maguire, McFadyen, Mitchelson, Penner, Reimer, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 33, Nays 20.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I have leave of the House to call it five o'clock.

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

So, the hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 29, 2006

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