



First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, June 30, 1995

The House met at 10 a.m.

*PRAYERS***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS****PRESENTING PETITIONS****Canada Post—Unsolicited Mail**

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Sheila Page, Shaun Lucash, J.C. Van Buren and others requesting the federal minister responsible for Canada Post to consider bringing in legislation requiring all unsolicited mail and flyers to use recycled materials.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**Funding Model for Quality Public Education**

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). It complies with the principles and the practices of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS funding for public schools by the provincial government has been cut twice in the past three years; and

WHEREAS provincial funding for the School District of Mystery Lake has dropped by nearly \$2 million over the same period, more than 10 percent; and

WHEREAS funding for private schools has increased by over 110 percent under the same provincial government; and

WHEREAS Thompson was faced with a 48 percent increase in the Education Support Levy tax as a result of reassessment in 1993 resulting in \$500,000 leaving our community; and

WHEREAS the Thompson School District is also now faced with a massive \$1.8-million deficit the equivalent to a 48 percent increase in local school taxes; and

WHEREAS unless the minister reviews this funding the Thompson School District will be forced to consider both a \$500,000 tax increase and severe program cuts totalling over \$1.3 million.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly request the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. McIntosh) to reconsider the funding model to ensure that Thompson and other communities in this province are able to maintain quality public education.

* (1005)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Madam Speaker: I am pleased to table the 25th Annual Report of the Provincial Ombudsman for the period January 1, 1994, to December 31, 1994.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table two reports, the first one being the Quarterly Report for March 31, 1995, for the Manitoba Telephone System, and the second one being the Report of Amounts Paid to Members of the Assembly for the year ended March 31, 1995.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the 1994 Annual Report of the Teachers' Retirement Allowances Fund.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the loge to my left where we have with us this morning

the Honourable Howard Pawley who was the member for Selkirk from 1969 to 1988 and the Premier of Manitoba from 1981 to 1988.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this morning.

Additionally, seated in the public gallery we have 15 visitors from the Global Connections Training Program under the direction of Mr. Sam Koshy.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this morning.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Gasoline Pricing Information Release

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the First Minister.

Madam Speaker, Manitobans over the last number of years have been very concerned about the prices of gasoline in the province. People in rural and northern Manitoba are even more concerned about the prices because often there is a large differential between the prices that people in our urban centres pay, which is considered to be often too high by those people, but even much greater and dramatic increases and price payments required by people living in communities outside of the southern areas of this province.

Madam Speaker, with this in mind, we asked the government to release information about price differentials, and the Ombudsman has stated that he feels that information should be released—and I will table the letter today—yet the government has chosen not to release that.

Would the Premier (Mr. Filmon) now, today, release the data and the information and make public the information that is required and stop the secrecy on gasoline pricing here in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, the opposition and ourselves as the government are quite concerned

about the question of large increases in gasoline prices, not only in southern and northern Manitoba or rural and urban Manitoba but right across the country.

This is not an unique problem to Manitoba. It is a significant problem right across Canada. When you look at large markets like Toronto and Montreal where gasoline prices are significantly lower than they are in western Canada, or Atlantic Canada for that matter, we have significant concerns.

I wrote four or five different letters to the federal Minister responsible for Consumer Affairs in an attempt to get a national meeting on this issue with all of my colleagues from across Canada. Consumer ministers from right across the West certainly, and from Atlantic Canada, have supported that move, but unfortunately the federal minister refuses to deal with that issue. He will not call a meeting. He indicated last fall he would call it this spring. So far nothing has happened. We have written to him again looking for further support of that.

So we have significant concerns about those issues, and we hope to resolve that very soon.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, the minister was not even close to the question I asked him and he knows that. I asked the government, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), to release the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs from the secrecy in that the Ombudsman has stated that he sees no reason—[interjection] If you want to answer the question, have the intestinal fortitude to stand up and answer it. Do not sit there in your seat.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Leader of the official opposition, to pose a question.

* (1010)

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, can the Premier respond to the fact that in 1990 Ed Connery said that he stopped an inquiry into gas prices here in the province of Manitoba and now his own Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is refusing to release information on the difference of gas prices here in Manitoba after the Ombudsman ordered that that information be released to the people of Manitoba?

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, the gas price on any given day is publicly advertised everywhere across the province in rather large significant numbers. What happens over time with the collection of that data—today it is current and public; tomorrow and the day after and the day after, it changes. So what happens is we have a system in place for collection of that data which is, in itself, confidential, not the number on the specific day but the collection of that data over time.

We have 70 or 80 people we deal with right across the province on a confidential basis, and it is on that basis that they provide us the information, rather than have us send out an inspector to check every price that is on that sign at that particular day. Those dealers that have over time come to understand and say that this issue is not going to be released, they understand that and they are doing it on a confidential basis.

Should it be released—the collective information, Madam Speaker—they are reluctant then to provide us any information at all, and we will either have no information or have a significant cost associated with trying to assemble that information over that period of time. So it is on that basis that the information was declined to be released.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, people in northern and rural Manitoba want to know why there is a massive differential between the prices of gas that people pay in southern communities in this country and northern and rural communities in this province. They want to know. The government has the information. The provincial Ombudsman identified that the cabinet is informed of this information. The provincial Ombudsman stated that this is not confidential; it is not commercial confidential, it is not cabinet confidentiality required and has ordered the government to release the information.

Will the Premier now stop the secrecy and have this information released to the public, as requested and cited by the provincial Ombudsman in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I do not understand what secrecy the Leader of the Opposition is speaking about. The numbers, the prices,

are posted publicly every day in letters this high at every service station in Manitoba. Where is the secrecy? It is absolutely ridiculous. Madam Speaker, you know, it is kind of interesting and appropriate that the questions are being asked today in this House with the former premier, his former leader in attendance, because in the 1986 election campaign, that premier announced that he was going to bring down the prices of gasoline, that he was going to, in fact, ensure that this differential was eliminated—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (1015

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, on a point of order, Beauchesne's Citation 417 is very clear: "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate."

I would suggest in the case of the Premier, that also includes not getting into the kinds of cheap shots we are seeing once again from this Premier. I would ask you, if he is going to engage in those kinds of comments, at least that he answer the questions under our rules and stop the kind of low-road behaviour we are becoming quite used to from this Premier in this House.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order, I would remind all ministers that, indeed, answers to questions should be brief and should not provoke debate.

I would also like to caution the honourable member for Thompson that points of order should be explicit to the rules, and I would suggest that he exercise caution in the choice of his words when reflecting on another member.

Brandon General Hospital Breast Screening Unit

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I have a question for the Minister of Health, Madam Speaker.

A week before the last provincial election there was a formal ribbon-cutting, official opening of a new breast-screening unit for cancer detection at the Brandon General Hospital, which provided a great photo opportunity for the Minister of Health. After the opening, it was discovered that the unit was not functional, but then assurances were given that it would be operational by June. Now we are at the end of June, Madam Speaker, and have learned that the unit is empty and that no staff have been hired.

My question to the minister is, will the minister confirm that the unit is not operational and will not be for some time to come, and does he plan another official opening when it is ready to go?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, at the time of the event referred to by the honourable member, I note that he was also on the invitation list and responded to that invitation in the same way that I did, in the same way that the mayor of the city of Brandon did and the others who were there.

The Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation is in charge of the setting up of this program, which we are very pleased is coming. I share the honourable member's concerns sometimes about when, but I am advised that on July 17 the service will be available to Manitoba women, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Speaker, will the minister confirm that the equipment brought in for the official opening and demonstrated to the public was not the correct equipment and that the new mammography unit and the new film processing unit to be used in this program have still not yet been obtained by the hospital?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Madam Speaker, I will confirm that.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Can the minister tell this House, Madam Speaker, how much money has been wasted by a premature official opening with premature construction of this breast-screening unit for the official opening, then tearing it down and having to rebuild it again? How much money was wasted to help re-elect the Filmon government?

Mr. McCrae: I do not think I can accept that any money was wasted, Madam Speaker. Dr. Schacter, the director of the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, explained on the day the honourable member refers to that it is important for the foundation to make Manitoba women aware of the new service which will be available for all women between the ages of 50 and 70 years of age to allow for an expanded capacity for us to engage in mammo-graphy screening, so I do not think any money has been wasted. I can pass the question along to the foundation and attempt to find out for the honourable member.

The ceremony that was held I believe was necessary, and Dr. Schacter gave that answer that day for the general public. We want the people to know the service is there because we believe we can save as many as 50 lives a year, Madam Speaker.

* (1020)

Bell of Batoche Theft

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): My question is to the Minister of Justice.

Yesterday the Minister of Justice told the House that the recovery of the bell of Batoche and legal process relating to the matter was not her responsibility or the responsibility of her department but was Ontario's problem. Strangely, we understand that on or about June 13, the Crown attorney's department at Peterborough faxed or corresponded with the minister's department, seeking the issuance of search warrants by Manitoba.

My question to the minister is, would she explain why she has now chosen to have a policy that no legal action will be taken by her department, by Manitoba, for goods in this province, in Manitoba, obtained by crime? Does this mean that Manitoba is now to be a sanctuary for stolen vehicles or for bells and medals from Ontario or Timbuktu?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, how incredibly ridiculous—how incredibly ridiculous.

Madam Speaker, the information that I gave in this House yesterday is that the issue has been turned over to the Attorney General of Ontario's department to look at. I understand that they are looking at it in co-operation with the Solicitor General of Ontario, and the case is proceeding, the investigation is proceeding.

No, I will not confirm any details of the investigation in this House.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister then explain to Manitobans how she can justify sending a matter outside of this province relating to evidence about stolen goods or goods obtained by a crime in Manitoba? Is this the haven for stolen vehicles, Madam Speaker?

Mrs. Vodrey: I still am always amazed at the member for St. Johns and the issues that he tries to create, the kinds of information that he tries to bring forward.

Madam Speaker, he knows full well how cases are conducted, where the alleged incident actually took place, what in fact happens with any evidence which is here and how it is subsumed within the case which is now being conducted, the investigation which is being conducted within the province of Ontario.

Madam Speaker, I will not confirm any further details. I have made that clear.

Mr. Mackintosh: I ask the Minister of Justice, following on a question posed to her on Wednesday and which was not answered yesterday, whether she has received and reviewed a letter dated May 21, 1992, signed by the former president of the Manitoba Metis Federation and addressed to a Professor Bradford Morse and whether she is aware of any inquiry or investigation following that. In particular, on behalf of the people of Manitoba, is she prepared to formally ask the former president of the MMF to make a full and complete explanation to Manitobans as to what he knew or continues to know regarding the Ontario break-and-enter and the whereabouts of the bell of Batoche?

I will table that correspondence for the House, Madam Speaker.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, I am pleased the member will table it. He often references documents or statistics or information which he fails to table in this House. However—[interjection] It is true.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): A point of order, Madam Speaker, and I will not read Citation 417 again, because I am sure members will recall I read it earlier in Question Period, but the minister has no business in her answer questioning the information brought to this House by the member for St. Johns, particularly when the member just tabled the letter he is referring to.

The minister should withdraw that comment and should answer the question, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson does not have a point of order.

* * *

* (1025)

Madam Speaker: The honourable minister, to quickly complete a response.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, I said, I am glad he did table it this time.

As I have said, all information, all details of the case, all matters relating to this issue have all been forwarded to the Attorney General of Ontario who is currently investigating the matter. I will not discuss any details of the case.

The member for St. Johns always wants to bring forward—before any charges have ever been laid in any matter, he would like to bring it forward. Well, Madam Speaker, many people are, in fact, innocent.

There is an investigation. I have managed to confirm that. I will not give any further details regarding that, in the interest of fairness.

Bell of Batoche Theft

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs.

Yesterday the minister refused to answer questions posed to him regarding the bell of Batoche. Today, I ask him once again, would he tell Manitobans where and at what function and when did he see the bell that he spoke to reporters and myself about on Wednesday?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Northern Affairs): Madam Speaker, the Attorney General has answered the question with respect to investigation, and I leave it in the hands of proper authorities.

Mr. Mackintosh: Madam Speaker, once again, I ask the minister to tell Manitobans who are the proper authorities in Manitoba to receive information about the conduct of this government and this minister, where, at what function and when did he see the bell he told reporters and myself about on Wednesday?

Point of Order

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): In the interests of information, Madam Speaker, and in the interests of the reasonable functioning of this House and in Question Period, I have not raised this issue previously, but under Citation 409.(10): "A question ought not to refer to a statement made outside the House by a Minister."

Madam Speaker, his questions are clearly out of order. They have been out of order, and I ask you to rule them out of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, I believe if the government House leader were to listen to the questions that were posed yesterday and today as well, the question is most definitely in order.

It asks the minister in regards to where he saw the bell, what function and what date, and whether or not the minister has made comments outside of this House

to that effect is not relevant to the question of whether the question itself is in order.

The question, I would suggest, Madam Speaker, is most definitely in order, and we would appreciate an answer from the minister on that very important question.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The point of order by the honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is indeed cited in Beauchesne 409.(10), and indeed I will determine that he did have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Mackintosh: Let me rephrase my question. I ask the minister if he would now tell Manitobans where, at what function and when did he see the bell that, in his view, may or may not have been the bell of Batoche.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, as the Attorney General has indicated, there is an investigation underway, and I will certainly abide by any process and co-operate with any official who approaches me for that information. I have never been approached for that.

Mr. Mackintosh: Madam Speaker, I ask the minister, in light of the investigation that is ongoing by the people of Manitoba, and asking that he follow the democratic process, I ask again, where did he see the bell? Was it at Grand Marais? When was it? Was it in June of '94? What was the function? Would he tell Manitobans now?

* (1030)

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, as I have said before, there is a process underway and I will deal with any official who approaches me for information, as, I have indicated to the member, I have done on other occasions on other matters. I do take the law very seriously and I have, on occasion, as I have said, where information has come to my attention, where I believed it to be necessary for a criminal investigation, gone to the RCMP and made a statement. So certainly I take my responsibility seriously.

North Winnipeg YM-YWCA Funding

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Speaker, today is a sad day for seniors, youth, children and adults and all users of the North Y community centre, since this is the last day that the health, fitness and recreation programs will be operating. I think that if our three levels of government put \$111 million into a new arena and allow this facility to close permanently, then our priorities are badly mixed up.

On May 25 I asked the Premier if he would see if there was something that the provincial government could do to provide funding to keep the facility open.

I would like to ask the Premier, what has he done since May 25 to see if his government or government departments can be helpful in reopening this very valuable community facility?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I would make the point that the maintenance of NHL hockey in Manitoba results in \$6 million of taxation revenue each and every year to the provincial Treasury that allows us to be able to invest in education, in health, in family services and all sorts of community activities. That is something his party is trying to cut out, which would be unfortunate for Manitobans to lose that \$6 million of tax revenue that allows us to pay for health, education and family services and so many issues.

Since May 25, I believe the date was that the question was asked, I have ensured that a representative of our government has attended the various meetings that have taken place. I have had communication with the YM-YWCA who have asked that we not act, shall we say, in an individual sense with respect to the north Winnipeg Y but look at global issues.

The conclusion of the most recent community meeting, I believe, was that a facilities review and a program review be done and that three levels of government be asked to participate in the cost of that study to see just exactly what it is that is required for long-term viability and maintenance of the YM-YWCA in north Winnipeg. I believe it has been indicated

informally, because it has not yet been in a formal proposal to government, that we would be willing to participate in such an effort and share in some of the costs.

It remains as that. We are continuing to participate with the meetings and to see whether or not there is a role for us to play and a responsibility for us to undertake in maintaining the operations of the YM-YWCA.

Mr. Martindale: I would like to thank the Premier for that answer.

Will the Premier and his government designate the North Y facility as a priority for the provincial government for federal infrastructure renewal funding, since federal member of Parliament Mr. Pagtakhan tells me that the city and the province must designate their priorities to receive federal infrastructure renewal funding?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I find this a curious question because all of the money under the Infrastructure Program has been allocated, and this is for quite some time. The application deadline has expired quite some time ago.

Under all of these circumstances, if the federal government were to put additional money on the table and extend the Infrastructure Agreement with new money, then Mr. Pagtakhan could make that kind of commitment, but he cannot go making commitments on behalf of money that has already been allocated.

Mr. Martindale: Will the Premier or the Minister of Urban Affairs assure the House that the three government departments that currently fund programs in the North Y will work together to ensure that their funding continues and that the rental money that they provide to the facility will be increased to realistic levels?

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Urban Affairs): Madam Speaker, I can assure the member for Burrows that if any type of proposal comes forth, that it will warrant consideration of the magnitude and its implications.

Hecla Island Resort Future Status

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister responsible for Natural Resources.

We are fortunate in Manitoba in the sense that we have first-class resort facilities, one, of course, being the Hecla Island resort. In a recent report from the Crown Corporations Council, and I quote directly from it, Madam Speaker, the council recommended that the resort be sold. If a buyer cannot be found, consideration should be given to the closing of the resort or converting it to an alternative use.

I am wondering if the minister can indicate what course the province plans to pursue with this particular resort.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, I think all members are aware of the ongoing bleeding that is taking place at the resort in terms of having to subsidize the operation out there. We have been looking at various options in terms of seeing whether we can cut the losses and still provide the jobs and the privileges of the resort out there.

This is an ongoing process, and, ultimately, I think we are reviewing, and if we come up with something that is going to allow us to operate the facility without the losses that have been occurring for many, many years, then we would do that.

Management

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the minister can indicate, does the government believe that there is a problem with the management of this particular resort, given that there are other private resorts that are in fact quite successful?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, we have a board that basically is responsible for the decisions and for the management out there. I think they are a very capable

group that are looking at it, and I cannot pass judgment on the management. I think there are other things that enter into the picture, but certainly I am not going to start second-guessing the board that is operating it right now.

Advertising

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, would the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) consider advertising the resort more aggressively, both inside and outside the province, by concentrating some of the existing advertising expenditures on the resort?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, I do not know if the member for Inkster has been watching the television or some of the commercials that have been going on. There has been quite an extensive commercialization or advertising taking place related to Hecla resort. I encourage members to go out there and enjoy it.

Winnipeg Arena Design

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Yesterday the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) confirmed that the government had received a briefing this week from the Dominion Hunt and Spirit of Manitoba consortium in regard to the proposed arena.

I wonder if the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) would be prepared to confirm that as of today they will be signing off the design of the new arena prior to any public review of the planned construction, the various facilities in the arena and so forth, and while very serious users of the current arena have asked very important questions about the inadequacies of this design and have received to date no answers whatsoever. Will it be signed off today as this construction timetable calls for by this government?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): No, Madam Speaker, I will not confirm that.

In terms of the other aspects of the member's question when he calls into question the nature of the

kind of facility that might be built here in Winnipeg, while the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) refers to Scott Taylor, I think that has been part of the unfortunate dealing of this whole issue is that again instead of listening to answers that are provided to them here in this House, they take all of their information from editorial comments in various newspapers.

The kind of facility that would be built here in Manitoba, if one is going to be built, Madam Speaker, would be a state-of-the-art facility. It would meet all of the concerns that have been raised by the individual referred to by the member for Crescentwood and some of the issues that he has raised during the Estimates process.

* (1040)

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, can the minister tell Manitobans just who is going to sign off this agreement, given that there is no legal entity as yet in place to own the new arena and the construction time line tells us that it must be signed off very shortly? Just who is going to put their name on the document that says this is an adequate building on behalf of this government? When is that going to happen?

Mr. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, I have indicated on many occasions in this House that if and when a facility is entered into, it will be a facility that is jointly owned by the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba. We would be entering into an agreement with the Spirit of Manitoba in terms of the building of that facility. One component of that will potentially be entering into an agreement with Dominion Hunt to be the lead contractor on the building of that facility. Those are the natures of the agreements that might be entered into.

Winnipeg Jets Operating Losses

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, can the Minister of Finance confirm for this House today that the Corporate, Finance and Comptrollers Division of the City of Winnipeg now believes that the losses for the Winnipeg Jets for the next two seasons will

approximate \$28 million for each of the two seasons, more than the endowment fund will provide before the new arena is even open? Will he confirm that the estimates are now \$28 million a year for each of the next two years?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Once again, Madam Speaker, no, I will not confirm that. As the member for Crescentwood and the members opposite know, if agreements are concluded no later than August 15, the operations of the Winnipeg Jets Hockey Club will become the responsibility of the private sector. Governments will be responsible for the building of the facility and leasing that back to the Spirit of Manitoba, but the responsibility for funding any future losses effective at the closing of the transaction would in fact become the responsibility of the private sector and not the responsibility of the Province of Manitoba or the City of Winnipeg.

Health Sciences Centre Budget Reduction

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, we are very concerned on this side of the House about the comments made by the officials from the Health Sciences Centre concerning the cuts that have been forced upon the Health Sciences Centre and the fact that the Health Sciences Centre is telling departments that they no longer have to provide the same level or quality of service any longer as a result of the cuts.

I wonder if the minister might comment, given that this government has directed the hospitals to cut substantial sums of money from their budgets, what effect this cut, after tens of millions of dollars of cuts previously to the hospitals, will have on the quality of care that has deteriorated seriously in the last several years as a result of government cuts.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, the honourable member is incorrect in suggesting that this government has given directions respecting the budgets of Manitoba hospitals for 1996-97. We are just completing the process for 1995-96 and getting budgets set for the various hospitals. The question the honourable member asks relates to questions he asked yesterday which I answered

yesterday. The Health Sciences Centre is working from an unknown revenue for 1996-97.

As the honourable member and I and the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) discussed during the process of the Estimates, there is no question but that the federal government's contributions to health care, education and social services generally are declining and declining, unfortunately, more than we would like to see happen.

However, that is happening. The Health Sciences Centre knows it. I cannot be responsible for certain unfortunate comments made yesterday by a representative of the Health Sciences Centre. I disagree with some of those comments, and the quality of care for patients remains the priority of the government of Manitoba.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, is the minister saying that they are not responsible for advising the Health Sciences Centre to make major cuts in their budget for '96-97 and that they are not responsible for the highest waiting list for cardiac surgery in the country, they are not responsible for the deteriorating quality of care?

Is the minister saying that it is not his responsibility that all of this is happening in our health care sector and that they are going to go on with business as usual, and we are going to let our hospital services deteriorate even more, Madam Speaker? Is that what the minister is saying?

Mr. McCrae: I am not saying that at all, Madam Speaker, quite the reverse. I am saying that I and my colleagues are responsible for spending in health care at the highest level anywhere in this country, and we are pleased to be able to say that, but that does not mean to say that challenges do not remain, thanks to the lethargic reaction of federal governments to the problems they have faced for a number of years and only now are deciding to do something about it.

It creates a very, very significant challenge for us as a government and for hospitals throughout this country. I read today in the newspaper, for example, that the only children's hospital in Newfoundland is closing, as well as two other hospitals. That is just added to the

growing list of what is going on in other areas of this country.

By starting when we did on health care renewal in Manitoba and by making very, very careful decisions and by moving early on in the process, Health Sciences Centre is attempting to do that. We are trying to keep patient care the No. 1 priority and make the disruptions in the health care system—keep them to the barest minimum.

Mr. Chomiak: My final supplementary to the minister: Is the minister saying, therefore, that the Health Sciences Centre officials who made this comment are going off on their own and are doing their own thing and are cutting the quality of care, and it has not been under the direction of this government? Is the minister saying that they are doing this on their own without any direction or recognition from this government? Is that what the minister is saying today?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, the Health Sciences Centre, like other institutions across this country and in Manitoba—we are not exempt from this—are looking at the difficult challenges that are being placed upon us by the federal Liberal government in Ottawa. That is what is happening. We have not directed anything for 1996-97.

But, as I say, for this fiscal year, our Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) in November of last year, the earliest date that this has ever been done, advised the hospitals of what they could expect by way of budget allocations for hospitals. That gave the hospitals more time to utilize the staff in the hospitals, to seek advice and opinion from the people who work in the hospitals. It is exactly what Health Sciences Centre is doing. The honourable member, I am sure, would agree with that approach, although he seems to want to make some other point here in Question Period today.

The fact is the staff of the hospital are a good source of information. They are the people who are providing, day in, day out, patient care. [interjection]

Madam Speaker, the honourable member for Kildonan says they have no choice. Well, the honourable member, is he suggesting that at 34 percent

of budget here in Manitoba, the highest level anywhere in the country, a far greater percentage of budget than anything his colleagues in the NDP ever provided for health care in Manitoba, is he saying that is not sufficient?

**Freshwater Institute
Downsizing**

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Madam Speaker, the federal government has downsized and reduced employment opportunities in this province in many areas.

It has come to our attention that the Freshwater Institute at the University of Manitoba is going to be downsized very dramatically. There are some, I believe, 56 employees working there now. My information leads me to believe that they are going to be downsized to about 16 employees.

I wonder whether the Minister of Natural Resources can tell us of any actions or meetings that he is contemplating with the federal government in order to try and convince them that this institute be retained in Manitoba not only as a service to Manitobans and Canadians but recognized worldwide as being an essential part of ensuring our fresh-water and ecosystems be maintained.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Yes, unfortunately I have to confirm the fact that this is what is going to be happening at the Freshwater Institute. I also have to confirm that within my Department of Natural Resources, virtually every element of cost-sharing that we had with the federal government has been totally deleted—more bad messages to come, I believe.

We have raised some concerns, realizing that priorities have to be set. My colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) indicated the concerns we have in that area. But certainly I think that there should have been some dialogue with us in terms of seeing whether we could take and prioritize some of these issues that are going to be very important instead of taking the steps backward.

I will continue to press for that kind of dialogue to take place with my counterparts at the federal level to see whether we can take and get some prioritized good projects still to keep on operating.

* (1050)

**Workforce 2000
Canada Safeway**

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): My question is for the Minister of Education.

Under the Workforce 2000 payroll tax refund for last year, the largest number of employees trained was at Canada Safeway where over 4,000 employees were trained for training costs of \$155,000, yet employee representatives are unaware of any new training this past year on that scale.

I want to ask the Minister of Education, is it possible under Workforce 2000 guidelines that a company could use public monies for their existing and regular training programs?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Speaker, under Workforce 2000, as I believe the member knows, the way the program works is the proposals are submitted and proposals are examined for appropriateness, for maximum effectiveness, for retraining, for the ability to teach new skills, new technologies and to better improve the employees' opportunities to receive generic transferable skills or to advance in the workplace. Those proposals are all gone through with very strict criteria by the—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Education, to complete her response.

Mrs. McIntosh: I was fortunate earlier this week to attend one Workforce 2000 graduation at Boeing Canada, a marvellous event in which the people who were being retrained or upgraded spoke in glowing terms of the opportunities that have now been made available to them. Those kinds of opportunities are the kinds of criteria that are approved for people in the workplace.

Post-Secondary Education Funding

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): While I am on my feet, two questions were taken as notice. May I provide the responses for those?

There was a question asked earlier this week on our position regarding post-secondary education vis-à-vis comparisons with other places in Canada.

I would just like to indicate to the House that in terms of per capita education expenditures in Canada, Manitoba ranks fifth—these are the most recent Statistics Canada things—education expenditures per capita of the labour force, Manitoba ranked fourth; education expenditures as a percentage of the gross domestic product, Manitoba ranked fifth; education expenditures as a percentage of personal income, Manitoba ranked fourth.

As well, Madam Speaker, most significant if you take the per pupil expenditures which indicates how much we actually provide for students, Manitoba spends the third highest amount per student or \$11,854 per pupil compared to \$10,000 for the rest of Canada.

Madam Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call second readings on Bills 27, 34 and 36.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 27—The Cattle Producers Association Amendment Act

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), that Bill 27, The Cattle Producers Association Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Association des éleveurs de bétail), be now

read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Enns: Madam Speaker, this is the same measure that was introduced to this Chamber prior to the dissolution of the House. It has to do with relatively two very straightforward matters. One is the changes to the actual method by which cattle producers in Manitoba can continue to claim their refund, because as it has been in the past years of its operation, it is a voluntary contribution to the Canadian Cattle Producers Association by those cattle producers who wish to do so.

The situation that prevailed in the current legislation, however, was, in my opinion, too loose. It was brought to my attention that, in fact, in some instances, vendors were actually encouraging cattle producers to opt out of the provision simply to save themselves some bookkeeping.

As is in many of these instances, the industry, whether it is grain companies in a similar situation, a similar measure under The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Act that I introduced earlier, they are asking for a straightforward and simple, all-inclusive kind of method and leave the requests for refunds to be dealt with at another agency. If it is automatic, it is figured into their billing processes.

In some instances, they are fairly sophisticated billing processes that are computer-driven, and then it is not an issue at the elevator door or at the cattle vendors' auction mart feed doors of whether or not a producer is a supporter or not of this particular organization.

I maintain, Madam Speaker, that this in no way detracts from the fact that the individual cattle producer has every occasion—and the bill will spell it out. The details, regulations, I think provide for twice-annual remissions of any levies paid, if the cattle producer, in a conscientious decision, simply does not wish to support that organization. I call that voluntary.

The other issue dealing with the bill has to do with providing and allowing the Manitoba Cattle Producers

organization itself to add greater stability and security by providing additional vendor insurance in the instances where, regrettably, a business or a cattle operation buyer goes into bankruptcy or whatever, and individual stockmen find themselves holding the bill. Fortunately, this does not happen too often. Perhaps it has been about two years ago since the last serious situation arose.

I should point out to all members, Madam Speaker, that the government and the current regulations now provide a bonding requirement on the part of all livestock dealers. That is in place and it does, by and large, the job that it is meant to do.

It, first of all, requires those who deal with cattle to provide this bond at their own cost, which they do. That bonding level is graduated, determining the numbers and size and scale of cattle purchases made by any particular dealer. It could be argued, I suppose, and perhaps the member for the opposition would take this argument, if that is not sufficient why not increase the bonding level to a higher level? It is our opinion that would end, in the opinion of the cattle producers that would place in some instances unnecessary restriction or burden on particularly the smaller dealers of which we have many in the province.

We do not wish to impose that and the cattle producers themselves are not recommending it. What they are recommending through the venue of this bill is that they be allowed to use part of that checkoff money to buy, if you like, an insurance policy that would go on top of the bonding provisions now in place.

They feel that would provide the kind of ultimate security that there would not be instances where primary producers who have in good faith dealt with the dealer, shipped their cattle, and then sometimes find themselves out of pocket because of a failure of the dealer, a failure of the business, and present bonding limitations not being sufficient.

* (1100)

So, Madam Speaker, these are the two relatively modest amendments that are being presented in this bill. I would ask honourable members to take the

occasion of the summer break to discuss with their own producers the merits of these amendments, and it would be my hope that the Legislature approve these when we return in fall.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 34—The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), that Bill 34, The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités et apportant des modifications corrélatives), be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Speaker, the purpose of the changes being proposed in this bill is to increase accountability of colleges and universities regarding how they manage their properties. The changes being recommended in this bill deal with the issue of grants in lieu of taxes as they are applied to the universities and colleges and public reserve lands.

In the case of colleges and universities, the current practice is for the province to pay grants in lieu of taxes equivalent to the real property taxes on behalf of these institutions. While the province has been responsible for the property taxes of these institutions through payment of grants in lieu of taxes, it has not had any input into property acquisitions and/or developments undertaken by colleges and universities.

Madam Speaker, sound management practices would normally require that those making decisions on their property portfolio should also be accountable for the payment of ongoing costs associated with those decisions. The bill then proposes to make colleges and universities directly responsible for payment of grants

in lieu of taxes on properties they own or occupy and thereby accountable for any future decisions they make with regard to those properties.

Under block funding arrangements to colleges and universities, funding would be included to those institutions to recognize these new arrangements where they would pay property taxes directly. In a somewhat similar context respecting public reserve lands, the intent of the statute was not for the provincial government to pay grants in lieu of taxes on properties that are really under the control and jurisdiction of municipalities in which they are located. Accordingly, the intent of this amendment is to formally exempt them from payment of grants in lieu of taxes by the province.

Madam Speaker, we believe that the changes recommended in this bill enhance the level of accountability, decision making and management as it relates to these properties. Thank you.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 36—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 36, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Speaker, this bill relates specifically to the collection of school taxes on licensed premises operated by community organizations, service clubs, rinks, recreation centres and other public bodies. The statute currently provides exemptions for facilities owned by a municipality, a community association, a service club or other public body or group that serves

the local community and is not occupied, used or operated for profit.

The statute provides a similar exemption to legions accepting the licensed portion of their facility. The intent of this exclusion was to ensure there was a level playing field with other groups or businesses which operated these same kinds of licensed facilities for profit.

A number of groups have successfully challenged the City Assessor in the courts and have been granted an exemption for their entire facility under subsection 23(1), the provision applying to public bodies that serve the local community. The court, however, did not exclude the licensed lounge portion as it currently applies to legions. This has created an inequity between legions and these other facilities.

In presenting this bill, Madam Speaker, it is recommended that the school tax exemption be limited to only the nonlicensed premises of all these organizations and clubs. The implications of this amendment are twofold: first, the tax advantage now being enjoyed by these community facilities over licensed legion facilities will be removed; second, these facilities which have a licensed area would now be required to pay school taxes to the province and to the school divisions.

Madam Speaker, by recommending the amendment that this subsection of The Municipal Act be tightened, we are restoring a level playing field intended by the original provisions which ensured the same tax treatment for all licensed premises regardless of their ownership. Thank you.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call for third reading Bills 24 and 35.

THIRD READINGS**Bill 24—The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger), that Bill 24, The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac, be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, as we have indicated in previous debate on this measure, we have supported the efforts of the government in this respect.

But I want to put on record the point, the fact, that we on this side do look upon this as another infringement on the freedom of Canadians, on the freedom of the people of Manitoba to move in and out of the province freely. It is another restriction that we are putting on people and, in a sense, it offends my own spirit of liberty, I think a spirit of liberty that should prevail and we like to brag about especially on Canada Day celebrations.

Of course, it does interfere with the free flow of goods. We all give lip service to freedom of trade in this country, but it is not only freedom of trade, it is freedom that people should have the ultimate freedom to move around this country in and out of provinces without having given the reason to authorities to stop them to see whether they are carrying certain merchandise or not.

I realize this is a special case. As I have indicated, we have supported the government, and I believe the minister himself realizes it is a bit of conundrum. I know he supports freedom of trade, but it is just not freedom of trade.

It is the fact that we have given authorities another reason to stop people who may be suspected of carrying certain merchandise with them between provinces—not into Canada from the United States, but we are talking between provinces. [interjection]

Well, we have taken a stand on gun control too, Madam Speaker. The federal NDP and our Leader have made statements on that matter as well.

* (1110)

This bill, as I understand it, not only pertains to possible importation of tobacco products by road, but it is by any means. Therefore, it also includes airlines and airports. This means, of course, that there could be under the bill—I do know of all the implications—restrictive measures put in at airports with people.

Now I understand the department is only planning to post notices to remind people that they have an obligation to report if they have in excess of one carton of cigarettes or some equivalent tobacco in tobacco products, but it could go beyond that and other measures could be taken. I would shudder to think of RCMP or provincial officials having to search through baggage of people coming into Manitoba, let us say, from Ontario to see whether they have gone beyond their limit in terms of tobacco products and have not reported them. It is another move in infringing on the liberty of Canadians and of people to move in and out of Manitoba.

I just wanted to take the opportunity to again make that particular point. As I said, having said that, we are prepared to see this pass third reading.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 24, The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 35—The Elections Amendment,
Local Authorities Election Amendment
and Consequential Amendments Act**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), that Bill 35, The Elections Amendment,

Local Authorities Election Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi électorale, la Loi sur l'élection des autorités locales et apportant des modifications corrélatives), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, we are pleased to obviously see this bill at the third reading stage in the Chamber today. As you know, and as this House knows, we have been calling on the amendments that have been cited in the Chief Electoral Officer's report five years ago and again a couple of years ago.

Obviously this bill is important for election lists in the municipal elections, but it was equally important for the provincial election, and we should take seriously the recommendations made by the Chief Electoral Officer. This person has an independent and sovereign status to this Legislative Assembly, and it is important for us to take the advice from that individual in terms of how best to conduct elections here in Manitoba.

We say it is good that the bill is being passed today. We say it is unfortunate that we had to deal with this bill in an expedited and last-minute fashion this last week. We would prefer a lot more anticipation from the government, and we would prefer to see the government take seriously the recommendations, not just this recommendation, but other recommendations from the Chief Electoral Officer of this province. Let us start dealing with this stuff early, and let us deal with it in a long-term, substantive way rather than in the last minutes of a legislative session.

We will therefore pass the improvements in this process that we have proposed in Question Period and that we have proposed in private members' bills in the past. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 35, The Elections Amendment, Local Authorities Election Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi électorale, la Loi sur l'élection des autorités locales et apportant des

modifications corrélatives. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I just want to pass along, on a matter of House business, my thanks to the members of the opposition for expeditiously dealing with these issues. It is much appreciated.

Would you call for the adjourned debate on Bill 29, Madam Speaker.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 29—The Loan Act, 1995

Madam Speaker: To resume debate on second reading on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), Bill 29, The Loan Act, 1995; Loi d'emprunt de 1995.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, yesterday we were asking questions about schedule A regarding capital supply being authorized for various initiatives, for various programs, for various agencies.

Continuing in that vein, I have a question specifically about the special operating agencies financing authority. This is a relatively new concept, these operating authorities, and they are apparently given—this is something that is coming in vogue in other jurisdictions as well. I believe the federal government has been moving on this. I remember listening to the Auditor General of Canada talking about this a couple of years ago at a meeting of Public Accounts committee chairmen, so the concept is one to provide more flexibility.

The question I have is—I can see the Fleet Vehicles Agency. That is straightforward funding for vehicles that have to be purchased to maintain government

operations. I assume that those monies for the purchase of vehicles will no longer be within the Department of Highways whatsoever, that all that money will be moved into this operating agency. That is one concern.

The other concern I have is regarding the Vital Statistics Agency. Just why does Vital Statistics need \$1.3 million of capital supply?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to answer the question of the honourable member for Brandon East.

The Vital Statistics Agency has historically been basically a paper-based operation. There are books in there from the 1800s of old paper-based, handwritten records. It has only been in the last six or seven years that information has started to be now stored on an electronic basis because those records, quite frankly, as they are searched, become damaged. They are brittle. The paper is brittle and old and as people use the information—and that is why it is there so, obviously, you cannot not let them use the information. The intent is to convert all of that to an electronic base. It will certainly allow individuals who seek out information, it will allow staff to retrieve it quicker, but it requires a considerable amount of capital in the initial phase in order to set up a program to store that information and software and hardware associated with that and whatever consulting fees are required to create the electronic base.

We are not certain that \$1.3 million is ultimately necessary, but it will depend in a large part on the capability of a scanning technology as to whether you will be able to scan the information in or whether you are going to have to sit down and input it as you would normally input it into a computerized system. So at the outside, about \$1.3 million would be required, significantly less if it is not a scan-based kind of technology.

Currently, we are in the process of preparing an RFP, and we hope to have that out within the next couple of months and then proceed following that to select a system and implement it.

* (1120)

Mr. Leonard Evans: I stand to be corrected, but I thought the Vital Statistics Agency was one of the agencies that was going to be moved out of Winnipeg to a rural location. Whether that decision was carried out, I am not sure, but maybe the minister could elaborate.

Where will this equipment be therefore? Is it going to be in Winnipeg, or is it in some decentralized location?

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, the Vital Statistics Agency was originally within the Department of Family Services. The SOA currently resides under the jurisdiction of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. They are located in the Heaps Building on Portage Avenue and continue to be located there and will continue to be located there. It is not planned to move.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Madam Speaker, I would just comment. The Vital Statistics Agency does play a very critical role. It is very fundamental to our society to keep records. It may sound very mundane, but it is very essential to keep records of births and deaths and marriages and so on. It is amazing how much information comes out of that agency and is used for analysis by policymakers for both economic and social programs.

In terms of the Fleet Vehicles Agency, I was asking, does this mean that there is no money whatsoever per se in the Department of Highways or the Department of Government Services for Fleet Vehicle purchases? All that money that we see here, is that all the monies being requested for this year? There is no additional money located in another department such as Government Services for vehicle purchases?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, yes, that is correct that the Fleet Agency is responsible for the management of approximately 2,200 motor vehicles which are leased to the provincial organizations and with the various departments on a full cost-recovery basis.

The majority of the Loan Authority goes towards the capital requirements which are basically vehicle replacement. There are some small other amounts, some upgrading of a garage and a body shop and some other facility improvements, but the vast majority of the money goes directly to vehicle replacement.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I know the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) wants to ask a couple of questions. I will just follow up with one more question in this area, and, that is, I notice in Schedule B there is Special Operating Agencies Financing Authority - Fleet Vehicles Agency, \$5.2 million. So this is in addition to that money. There are monies that have not yet been expended, and this bill approves the carrying on of another \$5.2 million. So are we expanding the amount of monies available in this category by adding another 2.8 to 5.2 that has not yet been spent?

Mr. Stefanson: The member is correct that the existing authority is 5.2 and this Loan Act is providing an additional 2.8, and really what that reflects is a portion of a carry-over on some vehicles. The vehicle replacement includes a carry-over of the '94-95 purchase of approximately \$4.2 million for 238 vehicles. The replacement program for 1995-96 will consist of just over \$6 million to purchase 348 new vehicles.

What this requirement does is it will maintain the age of the fleet at its present level of 3.9 years and continue the cycle of replacing vehicles at their historical average of six years which is consistent with the approach that is being utilized by the special operating agency.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, my questions are to the government, and they relate to the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. We know this government spent over two years trying to sell the corporation. According to the annual report of the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation, they spent over \$257,000 last year trying to sell the corporation.

My question is, what are the current plans of the government over the future of the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Speaker, the current plans are that we are seeking private-sector investment to pursue any additional development on the site. While I cannot report detail, I believe that we have some optimistic responses to RFP, request for proposals, and we will be dealing with them in the very near future.

Mr. Dewar: My next question is, how much money has the government committed this year in attempting to find a private-sector partner?

Mr. Cummings: Actually, the answer would be none in the sense that we are not setting aside dollars for investment. The corporation is making money on day-to-day operations; I believe it is recorded to be making about a quarter of a million dollars and is projected to do about the same, plus or minus, during the current year on day-to-day operations.

Obviously, the question has some validity, because the corporation cannot generate sufficient funds to cover off its responsibility to pay the interest on its development costs back to the province. That is going to have to be dealt with one way or the other, because as you will recall we have spent about four years travelling across the province looking for a community that would—during the heydays of environmentalism, it was a very difficult problem to have a community even consider the possibility of having a company or a plant operating in its jurisdiction that would be treating hazardous waste.

Mr. Dewar: Madam Speaker, my final question to the minister on this subject today is, will he assure the House and myself that the corporation will be brought forward to a committee of the House in the upcoming session so that members can have a chance to further scrutinize the operations of this corporation?

Mr. Cummings: That is a decision the House leaders will make. It has always been my approach that the more informed people are about the actions that we are undertaking, the better.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): My questions are for the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh). There are sections of this bill which deal with the student loans

assistance loan, and that is what I am asking questions under here.

I wanted to ask the minister a question which I had raised with her earlier, and that was dealing with the question of whether all financial institutions in Manitoba, credit unions and all banks, are able to deal equally with students on student loans. Earlier in the year there were certainly some students who believed that unless they went to CIBC, they were getting service that was at a much slower level. They were citing delays of two to three weeks compared to students who were going to CIBC.

Has the minister had her staff look into this, and is there any justification for this belief? Is it indeed true?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): If the member would be kind enough to give me a few moments to obtain that response for her, I will do so and provide it the minute I have got it.

* (1130)

Ms. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I wanted to ask about community college students and loans assistance. Does the minister have a breakdown that could be provided on the number of students at community colleges, or the proportion of students having access to student loans who are at community colleges as opposed to universities? What I am concerned about here, obviously, is that fees are increasing at universities and colleges but the colleges have always been more accessible in terms of fees.

I am wondering if there is an indication in the numbers and statistics that the minister might have of whether that is still the case, whether the college fees in fact are still accessible to students and that they are finding less need of a loan in going to college. So that is the purpose. I am not sure how you would collect them for that purpose.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, I thank the member for giving me the opportunity to just acquire that information and return it to her, which I will do posthaste.

Ms. Friesen: My last question deals with the issue of long-predicted fee increases at universities as a result of the federal withdrawal of funds.

There are studies, and the minister and I have talked about them before, the Informetrica studies, the one with which I am most familiar, but the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, both last year and this year I believe, have completed studies on the impact on university funding of the withdrawal of federal funding for post-secondary education.

Using a variety of variables, one of them, of course, is the passing through of the entire federal post-secondary portion to students. This clearly has very serious impacts on fees. The arguments that they have made in the past two years have been about the increase of fees by a third, possibly by a half over the next three or four years.

I know that these are still hypothetical issues. What I am interested in is how it will affect this particular line. Does the minister have a sense of or are there any studies being conducted within the department on how this particular proposal or prospect affects the student loans assistance program Manitoba?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, just to be sure I am interpreting the question correctly, the member is asking how the federal cuts might eventually impact down on student fees, and if student fees have to rise because of it, will loan circumstances change.

I thank the member for that question. While it is technically hypothetical, and indeed it is reality, of course, that we are going to see those federal cuts coming down through the system and ultimately into the system, we have done a couple of things. As the member knows, last year we have capped student fee increases to 5 percent as well as the preceding year. As well, we have the tax credit coming in for those paying the tuition fee.

As the amount transferred through becomes less, the other thing that will simultaneously be happening of course will be the setting up of the council on post-secondary education in Manitoba.

As Roblin has indicated in his report, it is important the universities start to do things differently. As we do things differently, using his direct quote, we will be looking at this huge entity of university and college articulation indeed even maybe some high school articulation into that.

Also in terms of systemic change to simply say, well, we are getting a big cut and the way we are going to address it is to just chop a certain percentage off everything that is happening there is not working. That will not work. That is the death-by-a-thousand-cuts syndrome that is counterproductive. We need to look at a systemic change, reorganization, looking at overlapping, duplicating things in the system.

How much of that reorganization will result in more effective use of monies, greater cost efficiency and so on, is unknown at this point, but it will have an impact on containing costs.

Our goal will always be to try to not be put off our agenda by anything the federal government is doing. We have continued to say health, education, family services. That is 72 percent of our program expenditures in the provincial budget; those are our highest priorities and will continue to be our highest priorities.

More money will continue going into the colleges. Universities we are asking to respond to the challenge. We have received some responses. We are looking for a more creative systemic change. We are hoping the post-secondary council for Manitoba will be a significant catalyst in achieving that necessary reorganization.

That is a partial answer not a complete answer, I realize, but that is the direction we are moving in as opposed to saying, let us just increase costs of students, because we feel that is counterproductive. So we will look for savings in other ways.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Speaker, I want to ask the minister about the tax credit for post-secondary education fees, whether it will apply to college fees as well as university fees? Will it apply also to private vocational schools at the post-secondary level? Could

the minister give us some idea of when the details and information will be available for the general public?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, details of that should be forthcoming in the very near future. It is something that we are working on quickly.

The attention and announcement for post-secondary education is of prime concern to university students, but would also have some applicability to college students. University students, of course, have in many cases higher costs that will make it more significant and important to them.

Therefore, it was to the university students that we were addressing our main concern, but certainly college students also incur costs, so it is my belief and understanding that they would not be precluded from access to this tax credit, although our prime concern, as I say, was to the university student with the costs that they incur.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 29. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, Madam Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Bill 29, The Loan Act, 1995 (Loi d'emprunt de 1995); and Bill 30, The Appropriation Act, 1995 (Loi de 1995 portant affectation de crédits).

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report Bills 29 and 30, with the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair.

* (1140)

OF THE WHOLE**The Loan Act, 1995**

Marcel Laurendeau: The House will come to order to consider the Loan Act, 1995, and Bill 30, The Appropriation Act, 1995.

The members that the 240 hours of the session of Supply and the Ways and Means and for the consideration of the Whole of Supply bills has expired on April 1. These bills are not debatable.

Resolved to consider Bill 29 clause-by-

clause of the committee that we proceed in clause-by-clause? [agreed]

Clauses 1 through 13 inclusive—pass; Schedule B—pass; Preamble—pass; Title—pass. Bill reported.

Bill 30—The Appropriation Act, 1995

Mr. Chairperson: We shall now proceed to consider Bill 30 clause-by-clause.

Is it the wish of the committee that we proceed in clause-by-clause blocks of clauses? [agreed]

Clauses 1 to 14 inclusive—pass; Schedule A—pass; Preamble—pass; Title—pass. Bill be reported.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION**Committee Report**

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of Committees): Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 29, The Loan Act, 1995, and The Appropriation Act, 1995, has directed me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe), that the report of the Committee of the Whole be received.

Motion agreed to.

REPORT STAGE**Bill 29—The Loan Act, 1995**

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 29, The Loan Act, 1995; Loi d'emprunt de 1995, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

THIRD READINGS**Bill 29—The Loan Act, 1995**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), by leave, that Bill 29, The Loan Act, 1995; Loi d'emprunt de 1995, be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

REPORT STAGE**Bill 30—The Appropriation Act, 1995**

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ernst), that Bill 30, The Appropriation Act, 1995; Loi de 1995 portant affectation de crédits, reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

THIRD READINGS**Bill 30—The Appropriation Act, 1995**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that Bill 30, The

Appropriation Act, 1995; Loi de 1995 portant affectations de crédits, be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I have a few words to say on this closing motion, Madam Speaker. I want to point out to the members of the government side that the opposition has done its utmost to be cooperative in terms of expediting the Estimates process this summer, because we do realize that with an election having taken place in late April, the government did not have the spending authority to pay various bills and to carry on the business of government and would have been in a very difficult position if we carried on for a lengthy period of time.

I believe that my colleagues have done their very best to thoroughly examine the expenditures. We agreed to go into three committees to expedite matters, but, nevertheless, all members on our side I know were very well prepared in asking very searching questions to make the government accountable, as it should be, and in fulfilling our mandate in the opposition.

It is not sometimes as satisfying to be a member of the opposition as it is to be on the government side. I have had the opportunity to be on both sides of this House for many years, and I know that in many ways it is more satisfying to be on the government side because there you make the decisions and there you have the authority to guide the province as you see fit to enable it to go along the road of economic and social progress. However, in our British parliamentary system that we have inherited, we have a very critical role to play on this side of the House as well.

Our job is to keep the government honest, to keep the government on its toes. I know it is awfully annoying at times—and I have sat on that side so I know what it feels like—to have sometimes these useless questions being asked in Question Period, you may think, or these questions that are so embarrassing or these questions that are so antagonistic.

We have a role to play. We have a responsibility to our individual constituents. We have a responsibility

to the people of Manitoba to be as searching as possible in the asking of questions. Even though it may be annoying and may be aggravating to members on the government side, nevertheless, these questions have to be asked. That is part of the system. This is how our democratic system operates. We do not necessarily always get the answers to the questions that we pose, but we have to remember in this Legislature that we are in the public arena. It is open to public scrutiny. The media are here, especially during Question Period, and we are indeed being monitored. We are being watched, maybe not by everybody in Manitoba, but by a sufficient number I would submit, Madam Speaker, who are aware of the issues that have been raised in the House.

* (1150)

There are many new issues that are percolating and it is interesting how this varies from year to year, what comes up, what department gets to be in the forefront. I suppose in this past session we see the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in particular being called accountable for the matters pertaining to the Jets financing and pertaining to the arena. I can say this, I do not know about other rural members, I do not know about other members on either side of the House whether they are urban or rural, but I can tell you that I have had more phone calls on the Jets issue, the arena-Jets issue, than almost any other issue I can think of in many, many a year.

I guess the last was Meech Lake when this House was looking at whether or not to pass the Meech Lake motion. That was a big issue and—[interjection] Well, Madam Speaker, I put an ad in the Brandon Sun and simply asked my constituents where they stood on Meech Lake. I can tell you like 99.99 percent were against us approving the Meech Lake Accord, and I acted accordingly. I acted according to my conscience and I did not support the Meech Lake Accord throughout. I never changed my mind. I did not flip-flop on the issue like certain people did. I maintained my opposition. [interjection]

Charlottetown, I was against Charlottetown as well, but that did not come to this House. That was a little different. Meech Lake came to the House. We had to

make a decision, and all of our colleagues here had to stand up ultimately to be counted on this.

I also recall, and the members should be reminded, that this was a very hotly debated issue. I think most of the time there were 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, maybe 5,000 people milling around this building during the process indicating, primarily, their opposition to the Legislature approving Meech Lake.

You had an assortment of people from various parts of rural Manitoba, friends of mine. We had native people here. We had various people, a real cross-section of Manitoba society, who were very adamantly opposed to this Legislature approving Meech Lake, and as we know this was not approved by the Legislature. The time ran out. Manitoba played a critical role, I believe, in killing Meech Lake, which I agreed with that we should not have allowed it to pass because I saw it as undermining the Canadian nation-state.

I will not go into all the arguments because this is not appropriate, but I simply say that this last session saw the issues that we saw, primarily the arena-Jets issue, but I am sure come next session, come the fall when we reconvene, there will be some other matters that will be forthcoming that will be highlighted.

I do not want to unnecessarily delay the proceedings of this House, Madam Speaker, but I will say in conclusion that even though it is a little chilly today I think it is going to warm up tomorrow for Canada Day. Many of us will be involved in Canada Day celebrations. I do wish everyone a great Canada Day and certainly I hope and trust that everyone will have a restful, peaceful and enjoyable summer. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is—

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, not on a point of order this time.

I want to put a number of comments on the record, first of all, in terms of the process we are following. I think it is no secret in this House that for a number of

years we have talked on and off about rules reform and changing the way we operate in this Legislature, and one of the areas that we have often discussed has been changing the calendar of our sittings.

I want to note that this is the first time that we have essentially had a split session where the basis of the split has been dealing with budgets and Estimates in the first part, and then primarily in the fall we will be dealing with bills and also Private Members' Business.

I want to note that I think it has been a very interesting process that we have had for the past number of weeks because I think the initial experience has been a fairly positive one. I believe there are good reasons in terms of public policy that should lead us to consider doing this in the future, whether it be through formal changes to the rules, Madam Speaker, or through the kind of agreement that took place here, because we now have had the opportunity to focus pretty well entirely on the financial side of what government does with the budgetary side and particularly in terms of Estimates. In the fall, the focus will shift again to the legislative side.

I would note, in terms of looking ahead to the fall, that we also have the new process in place here of having many of the bills that we are going to be dealing with in the fall having been brought in for second reading. They are now up for public consideration over the summer. In fact, I think this itself is a very positive process. The members of the public now will have two and a half months to look at the bills before we debate those bills.

I believe that is something we should also consider in terms of future examination of the rules, because I believe we have one of the best processes in the country in terms of bills. We are the only province that has mandatory hearings on all bills. I do believe that in the past we have tended, because of the pressures of time, not to give that process its adequate due. I believe one thing that will follow from this process, Madam Speaker, is that we will now have I think ample opportunity for the public to look at the legislative agenda; and, when we do come back in the fall, we will be debating based on that public input. Then when we do go to committee, and I hope we will be able to

schedule committee hearings on an orderly basis, I believe then we will have probably some of the greatest opportunity that members of the public have had to participate on the important issues of the day in the legislative sense.

I want to note and suggest that there is a lot we have done in this period of time that has, I think, been rather productive. In fact, I look also to some of the new members because I think part of what we have to do when we are looking at our rules, Madam Speaker, is constantly get the new input that comes from new perspectives. There have been new members on both sides of the House.

Certainly, I know our new members have been very vocal, participated extensively both within our caucus and in the House. I look to the new members in particular because I think they can bring a fresh perspective in terms of what works in this House and what does not work, because I find that what tends to happen is over time it is easy to assume that things have always been that way so that is the way they should be in the future.

I really believe we have to change that. Our rules have not been substantially changed since the mid-1980s. The bottom line is that, quite frankly, Madam Speaker, I think our rules need a major redraft just in terms of some of the inconsistencies that are in the rules. I think also we need a whole new approach. I think we should be considering a number of items.

There has been discussion, for example, on the role of committees. I think our committees can go far beyond dealing with bills. I have mentioned this in the past. There are many issues we can deal with in that sense. I think we can bring some new perspectives by looking at some other rule reforms. For example, members' statements, I find we are restricted in this House because the focus is on either debate or questions. There are oftentimes when members of this House would, I am sure, like to make statements on public issues. I think that is fairly important.

I wanted to make those comments. I also want to make a number of other comments as well. I think this half of the session, because it will be exactly half of the

session, is an interesting reminder to each and every one of us—I think the maxim is that a week is a long time in politics.

In this particular case we are dealing with a situation where we are barely two months from the election, and I think we are already seeing some of the key issues that are going to be developing in this province over the next number of years.

The member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) referenced, obviously, the Winnipeg arena which is fundamentally a new issue. [interjection] I want to say to the government House leader I appreciate his feedback on the rules, and certainly he will not have to worry too much. I think we will be in agreement on it.

But what I want to do is, rather than just reflect on the provincial issues we are going to be dealing with, obviously, the Winnipeg arena was one of the significant issues that we have discussed. There has been other issues.

I just want to reflect on the fact that tomorrow is Canada Day, Madam Speaker, and I was tempted earlier to give a nonpolitical statement and table my tie as that statement. People may notice, it has various depictions of our flag.

I wanted to say that, but the reason I did not do that was because, quite frankly, I could not make a nonpolitical statement about Canada at this point in time because this will be the last opportunity in terms of Canada Day before the upcoming referendum that is going to take place in Quebec in terms of an issue that is very much going to determine the future of our country.

What I wanted to do, Madam Speaker, recognizing fully the democratic right of the people in Quebec to make that decision they are going to be making later this fall—and we will be sitting prior to that and this may in fact come up again—but I want to say as we go into tomorrow, July 1, that I personally am very proud of this country.

I am proud of every single one of the 10 provinces, and I cannot picture a Canada without Quebec.

* (1200)

My Canada, and I think everybody's Canada in this province, includes Quebec. I think in the true spirit of Canada Day tomorrow—which originally, of course, was Dominion Day and, quite frankly, I find that it is unfortunate that term has been lost because when you are talking about the original meaning of the term Dominion Day, I think very much it reflected the fact that Canada is from sea to sea to sea. I cannot see a Canada without Quebec. It is integral to what we stand for as a country.

What I wanted to say just in conclusion as we head into July 1, tomorrow, I hope that we will all take the opportunity tomorrow, all members of this Legislature as well as all Manitobans, to say in our own personal way just how proud we are of this country and express by doing that our hope that this will remain one great united country. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I wanted also to take this opportunity to make a few observations. First and foremost, we have seen I believe a lot of productivity out of this Chamber over the last 29 days. In fact, you will see that, at least to the best of my knowledge, this is one of the fastest we have ever gone through 240 hours, if not the fastest, of the Estimates process. I think that takes a great deal of effort from all members of the Legislature, whether you are in opposition or whether you are in government.

Madam Speaker, along with that, we have seen some fairly substantive bills passed through the Legislature, Bill 3 dealing with maintenance enforcement, something which all political parties support. We have indicated that we would like to see this government bring forward additional legislation regarding maintenance enforcement, not to have to wait the number of years we had to wait since the government had taken office.

There was important legislation also passed through for the City of Winnipeg with reference to the elections, something in which we again feel is very important, the whole issue of the tobacco tax issue, something again in which all individuals inside the Chamber at least tentatively applied their support and

with respect to The Elections Act that came out of the most recent election where the issue was really raised. But, as the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) mentioned earlier, it was in fact an issue that has been there for a number of years. So we did see four very important bills go through the third reading process and later will no doubt receive Royal Assent.

With respect to the Estimates and the way in which we handled the business of the Chamber over the last 29 days, in the future we do believe that it is important to have the two committees up and running, that the rules that we had agreed to were for this particular session, given the going-in time, in order to be able to expedite. Next year, we would anticipate that we would be back into the two committees.

Madam Speaker, I also would like to echo some of the words that the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has put forward with respect to rule changes. We believe that it is long overdue, that we do need to revisit the rules and take into consideration a number of the things that that informal rules committee had put together over the last few years. We all know that the longer you are in a Legislature, the more difficult it is to implement changes in the rules. So I would hope that this will be something in which the government will in fact want to act upon. Over the summer, there will no doubt be a great deal of discussion and debates. I know from within our party's perspective on the legislation that is before the House, there is going to be no doubt one very controversial bill. A lot of debate that we are anticipating in the fall is going to be on the balanced budget legislation, and we look forward and welcome a public input with respect to that.

Having said those very few words, Madam Speaker, we are prepared to pass this bill and we anxiously await September 18 when we are back into session to be able to continue on the business of the public.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 30, The Appropriation Act, 1995. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, while the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is seeking the audience of the Lieutenant-Governor, I would move, seconded by the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), that when this House adjourns today, it shall stand adjourned until a time fixed by Madam Speaker upon the request of the government.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Madam Speaker: I would like to take this opportunity to thank all honourable members for their patience, understanding and co-operation during this first six weeks, and I would like to extend my sincere best wishes for an enjoyable summer.

I am advised that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor is about to arrive to grant Royal Assent to the bills. I am, therefore, interrupting the proceedings of the House for Royal Assent.

ROYAL ASSENT

Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Dennis Gray): His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

His Honour Yves Dumont, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne, Madam Speaker addressed His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in the following words:

Madam Speaker: May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and faithful subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in session assembled, approach Your Honour with sentiments of unfeigned devotion and loyalty to Her Majesty's person and government, and beg for Your Honour the acceptance of these bills:

Bill 29—The Loan Act, 1995; Loi d'emprunt de 1995.

Bill 30—The Appropriation Act, 1995; Loi de 1995 portant affectation de crédits.

To these bills the Royal Assent was announced by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly in the following words.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor doth thank Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence and assents to these bills in Her Majesty's name.

* (1210)

Madam Speaker: May it please Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly, at its present session, passed four bills, which in the name of the Assembly I present to Your Honour and to which bills I respectfully request Your Honour's Assent:

Bill 3, The Maintenance Enforcement (Various Acts Amendment) Act; Loi sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires-modification de diverses lois

Bill 7, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg

Bill 24, The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac

Bill 35, The Elections Amendment, Local Authorities Election Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi électorale, la Loi sur l'élection des autorités locales et apportant des modifications corrélatives.

To these bills the Royal Assent was announced by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly as follows.

Mr. Clerk: In Her Majesty's name, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor doth assent to these bills.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

Madam Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it two o'clock? [agreed]

This House is adjourned and stands adjourned until the time set by the Speaker on the request of the government. Agreed? [agreed]

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, June 30, 1995

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