



Fifth Session- Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert	Steinbach	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
EVANS, Cliff	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
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, Hon.	Riel	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank, Hon.	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley, Hon.	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, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.
<i>Vacant</i>	St. Boniface	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 15, 1999

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Environment): I am pleased to table the 11th Annual Report, the '97-98 report of the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have this afternoon fifty-two Grade 5 students from Woodlawn School under the direction of Mrs. Anne Peters. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger).

Also, fifty Grade 11 students from Technical Vocational High School under the direction of Mr. Mike Gartner. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Jules Benson Conflict of Interest

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

Madam Speaker, during the testimony at the Monnin inquiry, in dealing with questions of the alleged conflict of interest with Mr. Benson, who was a senior civil servant and also involved in the Tory election campaigns, the Premier stated that he had not reviewed this potential conflict but certainly that is something I am prepared to do.

Did the Premier send this matter to the Civil Service Commission, and can the Premier report back on their findings in terms of the conflict of interest, as the Premier undertook on November 5?

* (1335)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, subsequent to the testimony that I gave before the inquiry, further information came out about Mr. Benson's involvement and he subsequently retired from the public service of Manitoba.

Mr. Doer: That was over a month later, Madam Speaker, so obviously the undertaking he made was not a very sincere one. I would note that when Mr. Filmon took the matter of Seech Gajadharsingh under notice in this House he reported back with a report from the Civil Service Commission. In fact, the Civil Service Commission report was released to the media the same day that one Jules Benson was hired by the Premier from his post of being the Tory treasurer to being the secretary of the Treasury Board.

Given the fact that Mr. Benson stated: I did not see any conflict in my roles of dealing with the Conservative Party and dealing with being the senior civil servant, did the Premier, when Mr. Benson was hired—given the controversy at the time about his hiring of that individual and the questions that were raised publicly—explain the law requiring senior civil servants and people paid by the public to keep their voluntary political work away from their role as a civil servant?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, the laws of our province, as were originally passed by the Schreyer government, allowed for public servants to participate fully in the electoral process. I believe it was the Lyon administration that amended that, because of the considerable involvement of deputy ministers, to provide for deputy ministers being excluded from that

matter. Those laws have been on the books, and those people who are hired in the public service are knowledgeable and aware of their requirements under the law.

**Public Servants
Conflict of Interest**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, obviously the Premier did not brief his newly appointed secretary of Treasury Board. The Premier had not sent this matter to the Civil Service Commission for over a month before Mr. Benson retired from the public service.

Given the fact on page 57 former Justice Monnin states that Mr. Benson's involvement was improper, and there was a lack of a distinction between the roles of a public employee and a volunteer in the Conservative Party, what action has the Premier taken with people paid for by the taxpayers to make sure that this kind of action does not take place in the future?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, as I have pointed out, Mr. Benson paid for his actions by retiring from his position. I can say that those actions, where people do the honourable thing and retire or resign from their positions, as has been done in the case of some, is in marked contrast to the actions, for instance, of the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) or his Leader in not responding in any way to the Monnin report that refers to the fact that the member for Crescentwood is the only member of this Chamber who was found to have done wrong in this inquiry, the only member. No apology. No, in any way, response to this. We have here the member for Crescentwood admitting that he counselled people to subvert the law, counselled people to subvert the law, sits there immune to any action from his Leader who does not have the courage to deal with it. That is the kind of lack of integrity that people are concerned about.

**Political Advertising
Conflict of Interest**

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

Manitobans are asking if the Conservatives have learned anything from the Monnin inquiry. They know that three chiropractors have sent out letters to their patients asking for support for Conservative candidates. We know that follow-up phone calls have been organized and have been made to those patients. We know that Mr. Ted Murphy, the candidate, is a close friend of the Premier and has been on many boards, and we know that Mr. Frank Clark, the nomination chairman for Mr. Ted Murphy, is an employee of Sport Manitoba and lists his phone number on the letter advocating support for Mr. Murphy, his work number at Sport Manitoba listed on the letter that is sent out to the patients of chiropractors.

I am asking the Premier: have you learned anything from the Monnin inquiry?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, when this matter was raised in the House on Monday of this week, I took a number of actions. I not only phoned directly to Dr. Daien, the chiropractor who was referenced on Monday, and found out that he was not a member of our party but was acting in support of a person that he wanted to see become the nominee in Springfield, I asked Dr. Daien to cease and desist. I also phoned Mr. Murphy, the candidate in question. Mr. Murphy at that time indicated to me that, to his knowledge, letters of support had been sent out by three chiropractors, and I asked him to contact each one of them and ask them to cease and desist. I also wrote to Elections Manitoba, and the Minister of Health (Mr. Stefanson) contacted the Ombudsman in writing and asked them all to cease and desist.

* (1340)

When I found out subsequently that there was a letter that had the telephone number of Mr. Clark at Sport Manitoba, I had the Clerk of the Executive Council speak to the CEO, and I spoke to the candidate, Mr. Murphy, and indicated that those were unacceptable actions.

I ask, though, the members opposite whether or not they have done anything about their candidate in Gimli, Fran Frederickson, who has put out a brochure with a smiling picture of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and has

listed as the contact her e-mail address at the school board where she is the chair of the school board. I am told that this is not legitimate, to use a publicly funded office and publicly funded e-mail address as the source of taking her messages and her information on her brochure as the NDP candidate for Gimli. I would table this and ask the Leader of the Opposition what he intends to do and whether or not he apologizes for the use of public staff and public expense on behalf of his NDP candidate in Gimli.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, I am wondering if the Premier, whose staff and the people around him, Friends of Filmon, FOF, who have been found to be, to quote Monnin, a bunch of liars, if the Premier—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would caution the honourable member to exercise caution in the choice of his words. You have been recognized for a supplementary question. Would you please pose the question now.

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, Madam Speaker, just in response to your advice, I am just looking for your direction. I believe the Monnin report that was tabled by the minister, the government House leader, did indicate that those people were in fact liars. I am only quoting the Monnin report that was tabled by the government, but I will address your issue with respect to the question.

I am wondering if the Premier, who apologized to individuals, talked to the hundreds of Conservatives who have been placed in government positions around the province in various government roles and responsibilities like Mr. Frank Clark, and has the Premier talked to all of them and spoken with all of them and told them that it is unacceptable for them to be campaigning using government phone numbers on government time with government pay for a Conservative candidate?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I would say to the member opposite that many of their candidates are public servants and working for public organizations and campaigning on public time, and we will start to catalogue them chapter and verse and indicate to them. As I told the member opposite, when it came to our attention

that a phone number at an organization that is not a government organization, that is arm's length from government—that even then I phoned the CEO of that organization and suggested that it was not a good idea.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (1345)

Mr. Chomiak: My final supplementary is to the Minister responsible for Sport Manitoba. Will the minister undertake to launch an investigation into Sport Manitoba, which gets over \$15 million in grants, which is one of the lead funding bodies for the Pan Am Games, to ensure that this practice of running nomination campaigns out of Sport Manitoba is not widespread, is not a major problem, is not being part of an overall campaign? Will he undertake today to investigate that and report back to this House?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister responsible for Sport): Madam Speaker, I assure the member opposite and all members it is not widespread. It was the action of one individual. Steps were taken immediately upon the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and others being made aware of this. The CEO of the organization was informed about it to cease and desist. That has all been done. Those were appropriate actions. When we are aware of inappropriate things happening, we take action, unlike what appears to be the case across the way when it comes to the inappropriate action of the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) or the inappropriate action of a candidate in the Gimli constituency.

Cervical Cancer Screening Program Registry

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health. Successive ministers of Health have claimed a sincere commitment to women's health issues, yet the Manitoba cervical cancer registry, promised first in 1994 in the throne speech, promised again in 1995, 1997 and 1998, has simply vanished from this year's throne speech. So I would like to ask the minister if the registry is: (a) only another broken Tory

promise, (b) a planned reannouncement for a pre-election or an election period, or a planned reannouncement which will later become a broken promise?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, well, it is none of the assumptions that the member has jumped to, and I would suggest that she just be patient and there will be further information provided on that issue shortly.

Ms. McGifford: Madam Speaker, that is a shameful answer.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member, to pose her question.

Ms. McGifford: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the minister, who knows that each year more than 20 women die from undetected cervical cancer which could be detected with a registry, when he is going to initiate this program and show some respect for the lives of Manitoba women.

Mr. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, there will be a further outline of issues related to services for women related to cervical cancer, but again I remind the member opposite she had the opportunity to be at an event just this week at the HSC Women's Hospital where again an initiative was put in place for families and in particular women giving birth to children, to babies, with the whole renovations for a new LDRP, labour, delivery, recovery, postpartum redevelopment. That is something that is well supported by women right across Manitoba.

I can remind her of the significant expansion in the whole issue of mammograms right across Manitoba and a number of issues, a number of steps that this government takes to deal with health care issues that are very important to women.

Ms. McGifford: Madam Speaker, child birth and cervical cancer are quite different.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. This is—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (1350)

Ms. McGifford: Does the minister not know that?

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. McGifford: He should talk to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the minister—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member for Osborne that supplementary questions require no preamble. Would you please pose your question now.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Ms. McGifford: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am just waiting for the Minister of Environment (Mrs. McIntosh) to—would you please call the minister to order?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. McGifford: I would like to once again ask this minister if he would give us dates, times, places and also assure us that when the registry is instituted, it will cover urban, rural and northern women in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, as I indicated to the member opposite, we will be providing further details on that very shortly.

She also in her preamble in her question referred to health services for women in Manitoba, and that is why I gave her just a couple of examples of expansions and improvements in services in the whole area of health care for women. Obviously, we take that issue very seriously, as we do all health care issues, and we have taken a number of steps to continue to improve the quality of health services to all women in the province of Manitoba.

Education System Funding

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Speaker, this government has been remarkable in its

ability to deny accountability and to blame others.

I would like to ask this fifth Minister of Education to take a fresh, new approach. I would like him to look at three copies—and I am tabling three so the minister may have immediate access to them—of the FRAME reports, the audited accounts of this government for grants to public schools. I am going to table three copies of the 1992 report, three copies of the 1998 report. I think when the minister sees them, he will see that in 1992 Manitoba schools received \$732 million from this government, that in 1998 they received \$709 million. I wonder if the minister could confirm my suspicion that indeed this is a decrease in the funding to schools.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Education and Training): I would refer the honourable member to the comments made yesterday in the Throne Speech Debate by the honourable member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) to get a greater understanding of the position of the honourable party opposite with respect to quality education for our children. No matter how the New Democrats can fudge issues and attempt to create a smoke screen, they cannot deny, and it bothers them a lot, that their commitment to education dropped between 1981 and 1987 from 21 percent of total spending to 17.7 percent of total spending. They cannot run away from that. Neither can they run away from the fact that, during the period from 1987 to 1998, spending on education as a percentage of total budget under the present administration rose from 17.7 percent to 19.3 percent. The honourable member cannot run away from that one.

* (1355)

Ms. Friesen: Madam Speaker, would the minister, who I think has given us a wonderful example of his ability to deny accountability and to blame others, answer, and I anticipated his response.

I want to table another set of documents which show graphically what I tried to explain to him in the previous question. I am tabling three copies of a graph which shows in fact how these cuts took place. In fact, in 1996-97 they sank to

as low as \$692 million. I would like the minister again to confirm that on his government's watch Manitoba schools have seen an actual decrease in dollars from this government.

Mr. McCrae: No matter how the honourable member might want to be creative in her approach to education funding, Madam Speaker, she cannot run from the fact that thanks to her and her colleagues, especially the one sitting to her left, we are faced, as a government in our province, with debt charges this past fiscal year ranging between \$510 million to \$515 million. That is the legacy of the New Democrats. I would like very much to have had a good share of that, at least the Education department's share, about 19 percent. Even if I had that, the honourable member would not be able to come forward with the types of creative accounting that she brings forward. She forgets entirely that during the last decade, we experienced the second worst recession in the history of this country. She forgets entirely that in terms of health spending and post-secondary education spending, the federal share dropped significantly in those years.

What the honourable member fails to do, every time she gets up to talk about education, she gets up to talk about money. Her own Leader and her own party have accepted the concept of living within our means. I would like to know which member on that side of the House I am supposed to believe.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Speaker, the minister who seems to think that the audited accounts of his department are creative numbers, would the same minister tell me whether in fact he sees any connection between these clear cuts to school funds and the observations of parent group after parent group that they are facing classrooms which are underresourced and underfunded?

Mr. McCrae: Quite the contrary, Madam Speaker. In my contacts with something like 600 parents in the past couple of months, their interests are making sure their children learn when they go to school. That is what they are interested in. They are interested in seeing that there are standards in our schools. They are interested in seeing that those children are tested to those standards and that they achieve those

standards. We can quibble all day long, and we do it every year. Every year a budget comes out, there is discussion about the level of funding, and that is perfectly appropriate to do, but when, when, when will the honourable member opposite start talking about what our children are learning? That would be a more focused and a more constructive discussion, I suggest.

Centra Gas Purchase Government Role

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, my question is for the First Minister. We in the Liberal Party find that it is incredibly difficult to believe that government can spend over a half billion dollars and not say anything about it in the throne speech, be so vague in terms of the rationale that was being used in order to make the purchase of Centra Gas.

My question to the Premier, Madam Speaker, is to seek some clarification from the government. Yesterday the Minister responsible for Hydro stated: "government does not intervene in good business decisions for that corporation," referring to Manitoba Hydro, when posed the question with reference to diversification of infrastructure in rural Manitoba.

Can the First Minister indicate to this House: is this government's policy one of hands off in terms of a directive in giving guidance to Manitoba Hydro?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, the ultimate decisions and the financing for the purchase of Centra Gas by Manitoba Hydro were within the hands and the capability of Manitoba Hydro. On the other hand, Manitoba Hydro sought the permission of government as to whether or not we had objections to them pursuing the discussions. We said that we did not have any objections based on the business case framework that they presented to us. Ultimately we asked that a number of objective reviews be done, and one was done, I believe, by KPMG and perhaps another one by Nesbitt Burns. Based on those analyses of value and the business case that was ultimately developed by Manitoba Hydro, they were able to achieve an agreement. We

essentially gave them permission to pursue the agreement, and they are bringing it to a finalization through all of the final processes, legal and financial processes, in which they are engaged right now with Centra Gas and the owners of Centra Gas, Westcoast Energy.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, yesterday the former Deputy Premier—and I am asking for the Premier to comment on what the former Deputy Premier said yesterday inside the Chamber, and I quote: "It will provide opportunities for gasification of communities that have been denied it for years and years."

Does the government have any ideas on how Manitoba Hydro is going to be instructed, possibly by this government, in terms of rural diversification? Is that the intentions of this government, to tell Manitoba Hydro where it wants the pipes to go?

Mr. Filmon: Any of those decisions will have to be a matter of Manitoba Hydro/Centra Gas's process. I can say to you unequivocally that the business case requirements for the extension of natural gas have not changed as a result of the ownership change. It will still have to go to the Public Utilities Board, and it will still be subject to the Public Utilities Board's approval as to the allocation of costs, the justification of any decision as to expansion. That has not changed as a result of the change of ownership.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

* (1400)

Rural Areas

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Speaker, can the Premier indicate to this House very clearly: does the government have any plans of expansion of the infrastructure into rural communities? If so, what communities and at what cost?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): You know, I think it was at least five years ago that the government, in throne speech, indicated that it favoured the expansion of natural gas on a sound business case basis into as many areas of rural

Manitoba as were feasible. Money was put from our federal-provincial infrastructure program, into this expansion. As a result of that, there has been expansion in areas of the southwest and areas around Boissevain and Killarney and all of that area. There has been expansion down in the area around the Steinbach, Hanover area. There is expansion taking place in the Interlake, Gladstone, many areas. There is, I believe, a very real possibility that the expansion will take place in Swan River.

All of these are on a business case analysis based on the ability for the Public Utilities Board to justify that expansion and to ensure that it can be done within the economics of providing a service to the people of the province in the various areas of the province, but certainly we believe that it improves the opportunities to attract investment, to attract growth into rural Manitoba, and we are supportive of that happening, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Fishing Industry—Grand Rapids Mediation

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think I bring any new news to the Legislature. I think everybody is quite familiar with what is going on in Grand Rapids right now with the Grand Rapids fishers, supported by the mayor and council and the chief and council of that community, and the blockade that has gone up to the generating station at Grand Rapids.

Simply my question is—and there are two sides to this story. There are very valid arguments on either side. I would like to ask the Premier, in the absence of the Minister responsible for Hydro this afternoon, whether or not he will step in to appoint an independent mediator to resolve this issue as quickly as possible.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank my honourable friend for phrasing the question as he did, that there are always two sides or even more to every issue. I know that we in the early 1990s believed that, despite the fact that no action was taken in 15 of 19 years in the '70s and '80s when the New Democrats were in office on this particular issue,

and despite the fact that there was a final legal settlement made in the '60s with respect to damage as a result of the development of Grand Rapids and the effects of the flooding in the forebay and so on, we entered into an agreement on an ex parte basis that did provide over \$5 million to the First Nation in Grand Rapids. Further, it appears as though none of that money went to the fishers for whom the principal claim obviously was put forward. Now that is a question that has to be addressed obviously as to why the First Nation would not have put the money towards those who they perceived to have been adversely affected by the development of that hydroelectric plant. That is a very, very valid question that should be looked at.

My understanding is that the fishers, with proper legal representation, have started an action against the Manitoba Hydro for damages, and that matter is before the courts. Now this action is taking place despite the fact that the matter has yet to have any legal review through a proper process.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

It seems to me, Madam Speaker, that this is a matter that should be left to proper process. If we believe that there are valid rights and responsibilities under the law on the part of any number of different people, whether that is the government of Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro, the fishers or the local community who received a very substantial settlement, any of those things have to be sorted out by proper legal process. We do not believe that it is the sort of thing that can or should be resolved by this kind of action that is currently underway, the blockade.

Mr. Robinson: I just have one final question for the Premier. The situation is such that it could potentially lead to some violence, and certainly I would think that we want to prevent that at all costs for all Manitobans.

Simply my question was, and I will revert back to it—the Premier clearly laid out what the problem has been up until this time. I think that the province does have a responsibility here. He, as the head of this government, should probably consider the appointment of a

mediator. I want him to seriously address that question, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I would hope that the member opposite is not supportive of or advocating violent action as a means here.

Madam Speaker, the difficulty is that the representatives of the Grand Rapids fishers have already initiated a legal action. That action is in process, and I am informed that Manitoba Hydro and the government are co-operating in moving that action along. So why would you intervene with a mediation process when they have already decided that they want to pursue a process under their rights under the law? The fact of the matter is that it is there. It is underway, and I believe we ought to ensure that it happens as quickly as possible. That would get the matter dealt with and resolved much more quickly, and then I think probably to the better satisfaction of those who perceive that their rights have in some way not been properly addressed.

Political Advertising Conflict of Interest

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, the Premier raised a number of questions, and I know that the opposition cannot take matters as notice, but I just want to report back to the House as a preamble to a question that the individual and the material tabled by the Premier, the phone number is paid for and located in Stonewall at the candidate's mother's house. The e-mail is paid for by the candidate. There is no membership solicitation going on and fundraising going on at that location. No lists are used, public lists, unlike the patients' lists that are used by the chiropractors, but the location of the e-mail I will discuss with the candidate, because any—[interjection] Well, it is being paid for by her. If there is anything wrong, I will report back, because we would not want that. Thank you.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, in response to that, it is obvious that the member opposite is saying that it is quite acceptable to have an e-mail that says government of Manitoba, Canada, which is located in an office that is publicly funded, that is publicly staffed, and that is paid for by

taxpayers. If he says that is his bottom line for ethics, he can say that, and we will have an opportunity to address it.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind both Leaders that this is not a time for debate. This is Question Period.

The honourable Leader of the official opposition, to pose a question.

* (1410)

Mr. Doer: Yes, thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I pointed out there was no solicitation. The phone is paid for her and the e-mail is paid for her, but I have not had a chance to discuss the location of the e-mail address with the candidate. Would the Premier allow me a couple of hours to ask the candidate, because it is unacceptable for us to have an e-mail location in a government office, and it is more unacceptable to have public employees soliciting memberships with patients' lists as the Premier has stated?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I will be happy to give him a couple of hours. I have given him four weeks to respond to the page and a half of matters that lay out the actions of the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale), and he has not had the courage to stand up and tell his member for Crescentwood that he ought not to counsel people to break the law. He does not have the courage to do that and say that.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Point of Order

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I know the Premier is still smarting from page 16 of the Monnin report, and I know the Premier is still smarting from not taking responsibility for four years, but to suggest that any member in this Chamber counsels any member to break the law is against our rules; secondly, we are more than willing to let the independent prosecutor identify how many Tories broke the law and should be

prosecuted and anybody else that is listed in the report. We are not going to have any difficulty. The Premier should withdraw his comments immediately.

Madam Speaker: The honourable First Minister, on the same point of order.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, on the same point of order, I refer him to page 58 in which it is quoted: Sale, by his own admission, told Sorokowski: It is my understanding that if you don't want to meet with the investigators you don't have to. Justice Monnin goes on to point out that that is directly contrary to our laws in this province, laws that we passed in 1998. That is indeed the position: he was counselling someone to break the law.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Time for Question Period had expired before I recognized the official Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

On the point of order raised by the Leader of the official opposition, the member did not have a point of order.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I challenge your ruling.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged on a ruling on a point of order. All those in favour of sustaining the ruling of the Chair, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Doer: On division, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: On division.

Speaker's Rulings

Madam Speaker: I have three rulings for the House.

For clarification, I indicated to the House I had three rulings to deliver today. I mistakenly forgot that two of the rulings concerned an individual and that I am unable to present all three rulings today.

On April 6 the honourable First Minister rose on a matter of privilege respecting statements he had made to the House in June 1998 and apologized for supplying incorrect information to the House.

The long-standing Manitoba practice is that a member raising a matter of privilege concludes by moving a substantive motion. This is confirmed by rulings of Speaker Forbes in 1965, Speaker Graham in 1980, Speaker Walding in 1982, Speaker Phillips in 1986 and 1987, and Speaker Rocan in 1990 and 1991.

Because the honourable First Minister failed to bring forward a substantive motion, I have to rule the matter of privilege as raised as being out of order.

* (1420)

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Manitoba Museum of the Titanic

Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie): Madam Speaker, all honoured and distinguished members of this Legislature, men and women. That statement could not have been made in the year of which I speak, that being the year 1912. Sir Rodmond Roblin, having just adjourned the Second Session of the 13th Legislature, the 41 members had been adjourned for their summer recess, and Manitoba had 461,394 souls. This year was 87 years ago today, and April 15 was also known for the anniversary of that fateful sinking of the Titanic.

Manitoba has very strong ties to the Titanic, having lost six Winnipeggers on that fateful evening, also Charles Hays, president of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railroad, having recently

commissioned the Hotel Fort Garry, which we all today still appreciate.

I stand here today, in authentic dress of 87 years ago, in honour of the opening today of the Manitoba Museum of the Titanic in Portage la Prairie.

Ms. Vera Hermanns, sponsor, and Mr. Steve Santini, curator, are well known across the nation as Canada's foremost Titanic authorities. In fact, this couple is recognized by the Canadian-born director and producer of the recent big budget film, *Titanic*, as being Canada's authority on the Titanic. This couple is now responsible for a museum which offers excellent presentations of artifacts exhibited in educational and historic fashion. The museum features chronological structure of story; a number of interactive displays are also available; and set props are also available detailing the 1912 style.

The museum has drawn distinguished international attention from the *National Post* and *USA Today*. I invite all members to take a moment to attend to the museum proudly located in Portage la Prairie. Thank you.

Rossbrook House

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Speaker, last night at the annual general meeting of Rossbrook House several awards were given out. First to Carl Ridd, a former Olympian and community activist who won the Kateri Award for his work with Rossbrook House over many years, especially with the basketball teams. And, secondly, two young people who make Rossbrook House one of their special places, Terrance Olson and Brian Mink for their energy and involvement with the programming and activities of Rossbrook House.

I would like to acknowledge the work that has been undertaken for over 20 years by all the people who have been involved with Rossbrook House, particularly Sisters Lesley Sacouman, Margaret Hughes and Bernadette O'Riley, the many volunteers, and the literally thousands of young people who have made Rossbrook House the safe haven it has been for over 20 years, and

for thousands of kids who have gained a sense of identity, cultural identity and empowerment.

I know all honourable members will join in congratulating all those who have made Rossbrook House a beacon of hope for the thousands of young people for over 20 years. Thank you.

Sustainable Development Awards

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I am pleased to stand in the House today and speak about the seventh annual Sustainable Development Awards of Excellence dinner that I, along with several of my colleagues, had the pleasure of attending last night. The awards honoured those who have made significant contributions to sustainable development in Manitoba. They are all fine examples which other individuals and companies should strive to follow.

Madam Speaker, I would like to name the recipients of those important awards, so they will be entered into the public record. They are ISIS Canada for their research and development into the use of new composite materials, the Town of Roblin for their creation of an environmentally sustainable wastewater treatment system, the Marquis Project for establishing an educational organization which supplies information about global issues and draws links between life in the North and in the South, Isobord Enterprises for their innovative strawboard production plant, Western Profiles Ltd. for the development of a product manufactured from recycled polyvinyl chloride, the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources for developing an educational program for aboriginal youth, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association for the development of an environmental program and the adoption of the Manitoba government's Principles and Guidelines for Sustainable Development, Sarah Bector for the establishment of the Pritchard Park Literacy and Youth Drop-In Centre, Kelsey Porter for the development of the composting log book.

As well, Premier Filmon presented Alice Chambers the lifetime achievement award. Ms. Chambers has been involved with numerous organizations that work to protect our forested

areas and our endangered species. Her efforts to these causes have been tremendous.

I would like to congratulate all the award recipients for their commitment to maintaining our environment. Their accomplishments in the area of sustainable development enrich the health and well-being of all Manitobans. Thank you.

Cervical Cancer Screening Program

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): Madam Speaker, the 1994 throne speech pledged a Cervical Cancer Screening Program. Various ministers have reiterated this promise in '95, '97 and '98. On April 8, 1998, a year ago and after the tragic and premature death of a Manitoba woman, I asked the then Minister of Health, to establish the registry immediately. After much baffle-gab he made a commitment, but a year has passed and there is no registry. Once again, this government which claims to value women's lives has broken its word.

I repeat again that cervical cancer is among the most treatable of cancers, but treatment of the cancer depends on sound screening and diagnosis. Sadly, these programs are still not in place and approximately 20 Manitoba women die each year of cervical cancer, an eminently diagnosable and treatable cancer. These women are not merely numbers but real people with real families whose lives are shattered by these unnecessary deaths.

Today, I ask the Minister of Health to honour the government's five-years-ago commitment to Manitoba women and institute a central registry for cervical cancer. I ask him to give us dates and locations. He has had five years to plan, and if there is no clear plan yet, then I ask the minister to show some courage, admit the whole sorry mess and start over, for as I remind the minister, women's lives are more important than Tory ego.

* (1430)

Electoral Boundaries Revision

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, just very briefly we want to re-emphasize a point that we started at the beginning of the session with respect to the

boundary redistribution. There has been a great deal of concern. The party has believed that that issue should have been dealt with prior to the debate on the throne speech. There are some fundamentals in democracy, we believe, as cornerstones.

There has been disappointment in terms of the lack of sitting time inside this Chamber which, in our opinion, is an assault of democracy. Another assault is the challenge and the high disregard towards the need to see these new boundaries put in place in case there is an election. We look for the government not to call an election until those boundaries are in fact put in place. Failing the government's willingness to give that commitment, we look to the official opposition to stop playing politics as they are doing. They are playing just as much politics as the government on this particular issue, and we ask that the official opposition do the responsible thing and allow for the leave to take place so that Manitobans will indeed see the new boundaries, so we will not see the type of inequities such as a 30,000 population in one riding versus a 17,000 in other, amongst many other inequities that are there.

So we give a plea, in particular, to the New Democratic Party today in accepting the government's will to pass the necessary legislation in order to implement those new boundaries. We hope to see—[interjection] You have too, we all have—that those boundaries are in fact passed before the budget. Thank you.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Electoral Boundaries Revision

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I would rise on a matter of privilege because in Beauchesne's it is very clear that, in fact, when you stand on a matter of privilege you should do it at the first opportunity in which you have it. In making my member's statement, I appealed both to the Conservatives and the New Democrats to come to their senses and get the boundary redistribution issue passed.

Well, upon sitting down in my chair, a member from the official opposition indicated that in fact it has been worked out, that there is

indeed something in place to take that into account. The reason why I would argue that it is a matter of privilege, that Elections Manitoba responds to this Chamber. Each one of the 57 MLAs should be involved in any discussions that are taking place, any discussions that are taking place on this critical issue.

I believe, given the comments that I have just heard, that there are indeed negotiations taking place between the official opposition and the government in regard to boundary redistribution. In listening to comments from at least one member of the official opposition, I believe now that there is in fact some sort of an agreement. I, along with the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), do, I would argue, have a right to know if in fact the official opposition has agreed to pass these boundaries prior to the budget. I have been led to believe through heckles that, in fact, the NDP are prepared to do that.

Now, unfortunately, this is a very spontaneous matter of privilege, so I do not know if in fact I can just leave my comments on the record as I have just put without a motion, because my colleague from The Maples is not here to second the nomination; otherwise, I am sure he, too, would be as deeply offended as I if, in fact, there have been negotiations that have come to a conclusion that would see the boundaries put into place prior to the Budget Debate.

So I look both to the government, Madam Speaker, and to the official opposition to indicate to me and my colleague for The Maples as to what is the current status, the current status with negotiations on the passage of the boundaries prior to the next provincial election.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I recognize fully the comments from the member for Inkster, and as he admits, he will not have the requisite motion for a matter of privilege. Perhaps, we could just deal with this matter for an agreement as a matter of House business. The member was looking for a vehicle in which to raise the matter.

As House leader, I can tell him that the opposition House leader and I have had

discussions. I did have discussions last week with both the member for Inkster and the member for The Maples. If I recall correctly, they had indicated to me that they would not be willing to grant unanimous consent to any changes unless they were satisfied that the boundary bill and the bills related to The Elections Finances Act and The Elections Act were passed, actually not just dealt with but dealt with into passage of law in a timely fashion, and that their comments to me as government House leader that they would facilitate an early passage of those two particular pieces of legislation.

With that in mind, we have had discussions between our party leaders, between the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer) and House leaders around House business. The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), although I know I am not within the rules to speak about absence, I do not think anyone would criticize me for mentioning today that he was not able to be here today because of a blizzard in the North that kept him in his constituency. He and I have had discussions about how we could manage this. There are some concepts around that we are trying to ensure that will work. In which case, I will be more than prepared to share that and update my colleagues. I would have done that yesterday, but I was away on government business at a meeting in Ottawa.

So if the member—I will certainly endeavour to speak with him now and bring him up to date on where we are. I appreciate his concern, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I might as well deal with it immediately. We just had a ruling identically the same earlier on today. It is not deemed to be a matter of privilege because the honourable member did not move a motion. Therefore, the matter of privilege is out of order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (Seventh Day of Debate)

Madam Speaker: To resume adjourned debate, on the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) and

the proposed amendment thereto by the honourable Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer), standing in the name of the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) with 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I will just take a few minutes to conclude my remarks.

The throne speech outlined our goals for the future of this province, and I know that when the people of Manitoba look toward the future one of their goals is to have safer communities and a stronger justice system. This is a goal that is shared by this government, and we have also backed the efforts of Manitobans to work together to reduce crime within their neighbourhoods. This year, through the Citizens on Patrol program our government has provided some \$76,000 to start up funding to groups like the Village of Dunnottar Watch, and these volunteers work in co-operation with police and act as additional eyes and ears to spot and prevent crime in the community. These community watch programs have worked very well, and I am really pleased that we can support these programs.

Also, while we work to reduce crime, our government has certainly made a firm commitment to supporting crime victims. Interlake women whose lives are affected by domestic violence benefited from an additional \$49,800 in funding for the Evergreen and Lakeshore Women's Resource Centres, and the proclamation of The Victims' Rights Act in January ushered in a system that offers a more compassionate approach to victims of crime in Manitoba and gives them greater resources to ensure their needs are met.

So, Madam Speaker, the progress our government has made in partnership with Manitobans has helped us to shape Manitoba into a province that we are proud to showcase to visitors from other parts of Canada and the world. The town of Teulon and the city of Selkirk had the opportunity to do just that when they hosted part of the World Junior Hockey Championships last December and January. These games turned out to be the most successful in the history of the championship

and helped both Teulon and Selkirk in its profile as recreation centres.

My constituents are all also looking forward to being part of the Pan-Am Games this summer. Stonewall will be hosting baseball, and Gimli is the site of the sailing venue. The Pan-Am Games will be the largest sporting and cultural event ever staged in Canada and will give our province and the host communities great international exposure and new opportunities to expand cultural and trade ties in North and South America.

In preparation for the Pan-Am Games, our province and the federal government are each contributing some \$600,000 each to the expansion and development of Gimli's south harbour. Madam Speaker, the changes to be made, including the construction of boat berths and the wooden walkway, will make Gimli one of the most significant inland harbours in the country and will have lasting benefits for the tourism and fishing industries in this area.

* (1440)

I would just like to take a moment to recognize the four members of our caucus who have chosen to retire from the Manitoba Legislature, the honourable members for Springfield (Mr. Findlay), Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), Steinbach (Mr. Driedger) and Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) and also the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) who will be leaving. They all have made very important contributions to their constituents and to this Legislature and to the province of Manitoba. Their efforts and dedication are greatly appreciated and will not soon be forgotten. I want to wish them the greatest success in their future endeavours.

Our government has put forth a bold agenda for the future in our province. We are committed to lower taxes, to civil service reform, to continuing trade and infrastructure development, to proceeding with important reform and improvement of our health care and education systems and to building safer communities in all parts of this province.

I fully support this government's throne speech and all of the initiatives within it. Our

present achievements are many, and we have much to be proud of as a province. However, to ensure our future growth and prosperity, we must continue to be innovative in our approaches. The throne speech has put forth the vision that we will, and must, follow to ensure Manitoba success and prosperity in the next millennium. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Speaker, it is good to be back in the Legislature after a prolonged absence of more than nine months. Nine months during which the Premier (Mr. Filmon) stalled on calling the Legislature back into session. Nine months in which we could not hold the government of Manitoba accountable during Question Period and debate for their policies. Nine months during which this government was hiding from the public and for good reason.

I would like to congratulate the new Sergeant-at-Arms on his appointment, also the new Lieutenant Governor and the new pages.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Hansard staff who toil away not only in the Chamber and in the committee rooms but in the basement of this building afternoons and evenings and way into the night. I think it must get rather tedious sometimes listening to us. So I hope that from time to time we are interesting and thoughtful and even have a sense of humour.

There is one person that we are missing during this session, and that is the former MLA for St. Boniface, Mr. Neil Gaudry. I would like to offer my condolences to his family.

I think that this will likely be a short session, unless the government's polling tells them that they cannot win an election; in which case, we will probably not have an election until the fall. I suspect that we will only deal with the throne speech, the boundaries bill, an election act bill and the budget. Whether or not we actually deal with more legislation has yet to be decided, I presume, by the Premier (Mr. Filmon), but we will know in due course how long we are going to be here.

I would like to talk about the boundaries bill since I may not get a chance to speak in the

debate on the boundaries bill. I think there are a couple of principles that need to be looked at. I have not actually examined whatever principles there are that the Independent Boundaries Commission is guided by. We certainly support an Independent Boundaries Commission, but one of the principles that I think they should look at is making boundaries contiguous with neighbourhoods and communities. [interjection] Communities of interest, as the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) points out.

In 1989, a major change was made in the boundaries of Burrows constituency whereby four polls south of CPR marshalling yards were added to Burrows. In the past, they had always been in a constituency north of the CPR tracks. While the socioeconomic characteristics are somewhat similar, there is really no community of interest because the tracks are quite a barrier, and it really did not make sense. However, in their wisdom, the Independent Boundaries Commission, with the new map, have taken those polls out of Burrows and given them to Wellington and also taken five polls or so, actually six polls, along McGregor Street out of Burrows and added them to Point Douglas.

I am very sorry to say that I am going to lose my best poll at Ivan Franko Manor. However, they did add a contiguous area west of McPhillips all the way to Keewatin Street and added 14 polls from Inkster to Burrows. It consists of three distinct areas: the Shaughnessy area, the Gilbert Park area, and two housing co-ops—Willow Park East Housing Co-op and Willow Park Housing Co-op. I had the pleasure of living in Willow Park East Housing Co-op for three years and was also on the board of directors and on a number of committees. It was a very good place to live, and I think it probably still is. There are also a number of institutions in the new boundaries of Burrows, including Fred Douglas Lodge, which was established by the United Church, also Sisler High School, the school that both of our children attended, and also the CPR Weston Shops.

The McPhillips Street Station, the gambling emporium, will now be in my constituency. I hear a lot of criticism about gambling in Manitoba and I think the problems are only going to get worse. Just last week I heard of a

very tragic situation where a young man committed suicide and his friends suspect that gambling may have been one of the contributing causes. I think that there is already evidence that there is a considerable social cost to gambling and that in future I think there may be evidence that the social costs are greater than the revenue to government.

Someone has said that all politics is local, so I would like to begin with some local issues. Probably one of the biggest issues in my constituency is crime. However, the constituents of Burrows are responding to this issue in a positive way. I have been involved with helping to organize and support two citizen patrols. The first one that began in Burrows constituency was called and is called the Old Exhibition Neighbourhood Patrol around the old Ex park. The second one is Night Owls Neighbourhood Patrol. I went out on patrol with the Night Owls Neighbourhood Patrol and also with Lord Selkirk area patrol on a foot patrol.

These are significant initiatives by citizens in Burrows and all around our province. They are a very good idea because it is citizens who are taking responsibility for their own community. Now, it is true that the primary responsibility for policing is with the police, but neighbourhood or citizen patrols become the eyes and ears of the police. They are prohibited from confronting individuals or engaging in any kind of police type action other than writing down license numbers and passing them on to the police, but there is good evidence to show and statistics to show that where citizen patrols are in effect that there are lower crime rates and even much lower crime rates in areas with citizen patrols.

Now, there is a need for increasing the police presence in areas like the north end of Winnipeg. I believe the best way to do that is by extending police foot patrols, which is happening. Already there is a large area of the north end that is covered by foot patrols, and there is a need to extend that to other parts of the north end.

Another significant problem in our neighbourhood which is also linked to crime is that of prostitution. I think that there needs to be

a crackdown on johns cruising residential neighbourhoods. This is a very serious problem, not only because of the victimization, in many cases, of adolescents, but, because it has an effect on people who live in the neighbourhood, people who are being solicited who are not involved in this trade, and also it has an effect on property values. This problem is so serious that we are now hearing stories of families who are becoming dependent on the income from prostitution. Someone has described this as Thailand in the inner city of Winnipeg. It is shocking that this is happening in our community.

For six years my wife and I attended parent council meetings at Sisler High School. Sisler High School, I believe, is the largest high school in Manitoba. We are very proud that our two children graduated from Sisler High School. There are some concerns that need to be addressed at Sisler High School. These were raised actually by students at a parent council meeting. The parent council and the administrators have taken these concerns very seriously and continue to. They were discussed at a parent council meeting on November 3, 1997, and, as a result, communications, I believe in the form of letters, were sent to the Public Schools Finance Board in support of a petition presented to the school board for better change facilities for women at Sisler High School.

This is an issue that I think the Public Schools Finance Board should respond to positively, although they have not in the last few years, but there is the possibility, because students have raised it, of women students of Sisler High School taking a complaint to the Human Rights Commission of Manitoba because they do not have adequate change facilities. The main reason for that is that the football team has taken over the women's change room, and the smell is so bad that even when the football season is over, the girls will not use that locker room. So you have the ridiculous situation of visiting teams changing in washrooms, and it is totally unacceptable that there be different kinds of facilities for girls than for boys at Sisler High School.

* (1450)

I have actually been encouraging them to go to the Human Rights Commission and file a complaint. It seems that it may be the only way to get the Public Schools Finance Board to build adequate change facilities and other facilities which have been requested, including an addition with offices, et cetera, adjacent to the gymnasium.

So a letter was written to the Minister of Finance and to the Premier with copies to the school board trustees in an attempt to access some of the funds from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund to improve many of the facilities at Sisler. Of course, governments always want to know when you are asking for something how you are going to pay for it, and the parents at Sisler High School suggested that the Fiscal Stabilization Fund with its hundreds of millions of dollars would be an appropriate place to take the money from.

Also, correspondence was sent to the division's board of trustees asking them to place Sisler's need for improved facilities at the top of their priority. Now, since that correspondence was sent, there have been a number of announcements by the Public Schools Finance Board about new schools and renovations to existing schools, and Sisler regrettably will not be getting new change facilities. They are doing other kinds of renovations and improvements but not that particular one.

From time to time, I, like many of my colleagues, consult my constituents and ask them what issues are important to them. I have been mailing out a card which says it is your turn to speak out, and the back is blank and leaves a space for people to write in. I would like to quote from some of the comments that people have written on these cards because they are very, very interesting. One person said: Health care must be preserved at all costs. We paid for it for years. I am 83 years old, and if I need it, it should be there for me now, not a year waiting list.

Another comment was Filmon's government surplus is made on the backs of seniors and ill people who cannot fight back. Another said we are seniors and for the first time we are afraid to

open our doors to the children on Halloween night.

Another said the deterioration of all social services has turned our city into a fine example of a Third World metropolis with an ever-increasing void between the rich and the poor. Whatever became of the middle class? Another comment was the MTS proposed rate hike will directly affect the elderly, single parents and low-income families, denying many of them what is often their only link to help in an emergency. Life and health and home are at risk if you have to rely on neighbours being home or running to a pay phone in the event of an emergency or a fire. The best comment of all was that of a constituent who wrote: I found the health advertising as being a scandalous disgrace of premeditated perfidy, an insult to the populous, a nefarious collusion that must be expunged forthwith. Where stands the Premier?

A very interesting survey. I have been reading comments into the record, and this was one of my favourite.

When we summarized these concerns, we found that 64 percent of people commented on health care, 42 percent commented on community safety, 28 percent commented on telephone rates, 20 percent on child poverty, 8 percent on the increasing wage gap, 8 percent on poverty as opposed to child poverty, 8 percent on lottery money mismanagement, and other issues, 28 percent. So those are very interesting views which I appreciate from my constituents in Burrows.

Looking at this government's throne speech, there were many things that we looked for and the citizens of Manitoba looked for and did not find, and it is disappointing that the government did not address many issues because there are many things that Manitobans wanted and expected to hear at the beginning of this session; for example, concrete measures to end the crisis in health care by dealing with nursing, doctor and bed shortages and a health capital plan that moves as swiftly as casino expansions. Now, it is very ironic that this government could find \$55 million in the Lotteries Corporation to expand two casinos and have them open this year but they cannot open nursing home beds

fast enough because they cancelled the capital funding for nursing homes after the 1995 election. This government did it for a reason, because they wanted to save up money in the Fiscal Stabilization Fund so they would have a huge surplus, now close to \$600 million, to use in this election to try and buy their way back into office with goodies in the upcoming budget, just to grease the wheels a bit, as the Minister of Agriculture, the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) says. Shame on him.

People were also expecting a long-term perspective on health care rather than a boom-and-bust investment strategy coinciding with elections. It seems that there is nothing new under the sun, to quote a famous Biblical passage which the member for Lakeside should also be familiar with. It is not just coincidence that we are getting all kinds of announcements just before an election in the spring of 1999. We had all kinds of health care announcements before the election in 1995 and before the 1990 election. It always happens that they have a strategy and a vision and a plan just before an election, but after the election half of it goes out the window, and then they wonder why there is a crisis in health care.

An Honourable Member: They built a brand-new hospital in my area.

Mr. Martindale: Well, it seems the Tory areas are getting new hospitals. In north Winnipeg, your government tried to close Seven Oaks Hospital and turn it into a long-term care facility. If it had not been for the residents of north Winnipeg coming down to the Legislature and writing letters and making phone calls and having rallies at Seven Oaks Hospital, you probably would have gotten away with it, but you did not because the people of north Winnipeg stood up to your government and said that it was unacceptable not to have a community hospital in north Winnipeg. [interjection] And that is the truth.

The people of Manitoba were looking for a long-term, stable commitment to public education, both to ensure that each of our schools provides a quality education to our children and to reduce the reliance of school divisions on property taxes. Now, I was just

asked yesterday for a web site that the CBC is keeping on all of us for the next election, and all candidates in the next election, so I got interviewed by a student from Red River College, as I am sure everyone did, not just the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) and I.

He asked me what the issues were in Burrows, and I said health care, education, crime and property taxes, and we probably do not hear about any other issue in terms of taxation more than the issue of property taxes, particularly education taxes which are a regressive kind of tax because they are not based on the ability to pay. We know that the offloading of this government in terms of education costs to school divisions is being made up by an increase in property taxes, and it is most unfair and people are fed up with this kind of increased taxation, especially from a government that says they never increase taxes.

The people of Manitoba are looking for a strategy that links economic development to skills training and higher education as proposed five years ago by former Premier Roblin and aims at making Manitoba a high skills economy where young people will want to remain and settle. One of the problems that we have now is that this government is trying to create low skilled jobs and a low wage economy because all they care about is numbers and prosperity for business but not seeing that people earn an adequate income to support their family.

We know that real wages are falling in Manitoba, and the people of Manitoba know that, but they do not see a commitment by this government to create an education system that promotes a high level of skills in education and an economy based on high skills where people will want to remain in Manitoba instead of leaving for Alberta, B.C., Ontario and other provinces to get jobs.

* (1500)

People want a frank acknowledgment of the problem of child poverty leading to a commitment by government to attack the roots of poverty through education and employment. People want a real commitment to land-use policies that will stem urban sprawl in the

Winnipeg region, to a system of Capital Region governance that will ensure we do not repeat the Headingley fiasco that is encouraging municipalities to rezone land, so that more and more people can flee the city of Winnipeg and leave us with all the problems.

People expect a new partnership with aboriginal people that makes good on the promises of the last decade, including promises on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report recommendations on education, on health and infrastructure. Probably there has never been as great a need to enter into partnerships with aboriginal people as there is now. Aboriginal people are more cynical about this government than they have ever been in the past, partly because of the vote-rigging scandal where this government tried to use aboriginal people. As a result they have lost faith and lost trust—what little faith and trust they have had—in this government who really do not have a strategy to make aboriginal people partners in this province.

People are looking for an acknowledgment of the challenges facing northern and rural communities with commitments to deal with problems like falling commodity prices, loss of railways and doctor and nurse shortages. Many of my commitments would have benefited from health care improvements several years ago; instead, this government is going the other way. Probably a good example is waiting lists and the fact that if people have money they do not have to wait. They can pay for services if they have \$1,000, for example, for cataract surgery. This is the kind of health care system that people do not want. This is the two-tier health system that exists in the United States where something like 30 million people, maybe it is 40 million people, have no health insurance coverage at all, and about an equal number have very inadequate health coverage. Only those who are much more affluent can afford to provide themselves with private insurance. Now we are drifting because of this government's drift into that kind of system, where if you have money you can get services immediately in some areas, and if you do not, you are stuck, you are on a waiting list.

There are many tax and fee increases that constituents have faced that will not be made up for by election year tax bribes. Certainly there

are many, many tax and fee increases that people have to pay, whether it is for adoptions because The Adoption Act now allows for fees of \$5,000 or \$6,000 to pay for adoptions or whether it is almost any government department charging for something on a cost-recovery basis.

There are many neighbourhood problems that have festered for years without a government response. In my constituency, the closure of the North Y in 1995, increases in crime and the increase in the number of houses that have been boarded up are directly a result of the inaction of this government. We know, for example, in the area of housing that the federal government stopped funding to all social housing under the Mulroney government, about 1993. As soon as the federal government did that, the provincial government cut out all funding for social housing, whether it was nonprofit housing or co-op housing. As a result, almost no new housing has been built in the inner city, and programs like the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program for landlords and for tenants were eliminated. Almost all of the housing programs that were in effect by this government have been eliminated, and the result is that many, many neighbourhoods in the inner city in particular are deteriorating. There are some nonprofit groups like Just Housing who are trying to do good things in the north end with almost no resources. We are not advocating that the government put millions and millions of dollars—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I wonder if I might ask those people having a meeting on the Chamber floor to move into the loge or to their respective seats. I am having difficulty hearing the honourable member for Burrows.

Mr. Martindale: Thank you for your timely intervention, Madam Speaker. I hope they listen to your good advice.

What we have advocated and what our housing platform advocates is giving money to community groups, to nonprofit groups so that they can expand the good things that they are already doing, so that the initiative and the ideas come from communities, from neighbourhoods, from individuals, from nonprofit organizations and that they be the ones that be empowered to

identify the needs in their community and to renovate houses and to build houses, which we know this government is not going to do. They are not going to steal our good ideas on housing, but we are going to have to change the government in order to implement the good ideas from our Housing critic and many people in our party who are giving us very good advice and people in the community, in the nonprofit groups that are already working in the area of housing.

We know that this government is being lobbied by many groups in the community on the issue of poverty. In fact, recently the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg met with the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and they went with a proposal. They wanted the Premier to set up a round table on poverty, but the Premier and his government do not want to say the "p" word. They cannot bring themselves to say poverty and so they changed it. They said: oh, no, we will not have a round table on poverty, but we will have a round table on healthy communities so they do not have to say the poverty word. They will not have to admit that the province of Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in Canada. They do not want to admit that our poverty rates here are a disgrace, a national disgrace, and so they are going to have a round table on something that sounds a little more positive, a round table on healthy communities.

There are ways that this government could address the problem. One way in particular is the National Child Benefit, which was brought in by the federal government. Unfortunately, the federal government and the provinces agreed that as a result of this new money, I believe \$850 million in the first year, that no child would be worse off, which has to be one of the worst bottom lines in the history of Confederation. They said: here, we will give you the new money, but you can do whatever you want with it.

So in Newfoundland and New Brunswick, to their credit, those governments, neither of which is a New Democratic Party government, are letting all families keep all of the money. What are the other provinces doing? Well, some of them are using the National Child Benefit money and putting it into the pockets of people, putting

it into the pockets of working people; for example, in Saskatchewan and in British Columbia. What are they doing with it in Manitoba? Well, in Manitoba they are clawing all of it back. What actually happens is quite interesting.

People get more money in their National Child Benefit cheque and then dollar for dollar it is deducted from their welfare cheque, so they are no further ahead. The money is being channelled by the Minister of Family Services into pilot projects, the minister's pilot projects. Many of them are good ideas and many of them are needed. Many of them are the kinds of things that we recommended in our Healthy Child platform of a number of years ago, which the Premier has borrowed some of the language of. However, we think that we should be doing both, that we should let all families keep all of the money and we should be doing good things in the community by way of programs.

For example, the federal government has one called Healthy Start for Mom and Me, and I have been to some of their sites in the north end. It is a good program, and they are getting very positive evaluations. The users, the participants in these programs are saying very positive things about it, and there is a need for these kinds of programs. We think that government should be letting people keep the National Child Benefit and doing good things in the community as well.

* (1510)

I do not think the government has a plan for stemming urban decay in the inner city in Winnipeg. Maybe in their budget they will announce a little bit of money. Certainly they have lots of money there to make lots of announcements, but I do not think they care about the inner city or the north end or the neighbourhoods that I represent. If they did, I think we would have seen an announcement in the throne speech that gave us an idea or a plan as to what they are going to do about some of the problems in the inner city in the north end.

An Honourable Member: That would be giving away our secrets.

Mr. Martindale: Well, as the minister said, that would be giving away their secrets, so I guess we will have to wait for the budget. We know

that they have about \$600-million surplus to play with for election announcements, whether it is tax reductions or allegedly more money in health, allegedly more money in education. They would just love to run on their budget and try and buy their way back into office.

Now we did see the establishment of neighbourhood renewal committees announced in the throne speech, seeking new partnerships with the federal government and giving the city more options for tax reduction, which will postpone any major commitment of resources until after the election. So we have already had an announcement, but there is no substance to it.

In the meantime, there is no acknowledgment of the role that provincial policy has played in the decline of Winnipeg neighbourhoods through the absence of land use regulation; the encouragement of exurban sprawl, for example, Headingley's water supply and matching grants for commuter arteries; ineffective Capital Region governance; the inadequacies of the Winnipeg Development Agreement; reduced support for training, housing and recreation options. Similarly, there is no acknowledgment of the provincial government's role in the escalation of the property tax, the tax that is most out of line with other jurisdictions due to reduced provincial support for schools.

There are several promises in the throne speech which mirror longstanding NDP policies. This includes the promise of an elected Speaker, but not just yet. It will have to wait until after the election. The promise of classifications for video games and the promise of public participation on health boards. There is an indication of more support for special needs students, but without any elaboration on detail. We hope that the government will give us the detail in their budget, because we know that we have the special needs report.

We know that there are many, many parents who are contacting us on a regular basis who have special needs students and cannot get the kind of supports in the classroom that they need.

Many of these stories are quite touching. Many of them involve a great deal of hardship on the part of the families involved. For

example, I had one family contact me. Because of waiting lists and because they cannot get resources into their home because of, I guess, a scarcity of resources, they are spending \$14,000 a year to get paid professionals into their home and help their child. This is the kind of financial burden that people should not have to bear, especially when we know that with early intervention many of these children can experience great improvements and be integrated into school classrooms and lead a much more normal life. That is what we would want for all our children.

These complaints were building and building for many years until the Minister of Education appointed a Special Needs Review Committee. The government has their report. There are many good recommendations in that report, and we are waiting to see if this government is going to take any action on it and which of the recommendations, if any, they are going to implement.

Now it is also interesting to see this Tory government taking credit for NDP policies and legacies of the past. For example, low hydro rates and low MPI rates are cited as among the bright spots in the Manitoba economy. So it is always good to get credit for policies that were implemented originally by an NDP government, but no mention is made of the Tories' opposition to Autopac when it was first brought in and also to the construction of the Limestone hydro dam. Also, no mention is made of MTS rates, which were also once part of the so-called Manitoba Advantage.

The boast that the Workers Compensation Board has moved to a surplus position should really be explained as being on the backs of workers in Manitoba. It is very easy to go from a deficit to a surplus when you cut benefits to workers. I know that they have reduced the premiums, but we think that they should have continued the benefits to the workers. In the long term, yes, if there is an opportunity because the deficit has been eliminated to reduce premiums, then that should be done as well, but not at the expense of the benefits for workers.

There is no mention in the throne speech of the province's gang problem, even as the decline

and decay of Winnipeg neighbourhoods is acknowledged and millions of dollars are spent constructing a new gang court.

You know, yesterday I was given a ride home from a meeting by one of my constituents who grew up in the north end, and he made a very interesting comment. He said, when he was growing up, bad kids threw snowballs at buses. He said: today bad kids steal cars. I think that is reflective of a change in our society whereby the kinds of activities that are going on are much more serious than in the past. When the level of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour has changed to that degree, we need to see a substantial change in the way our society either deals with the behaviour or implements preventative programs.

Just a few weeks ago I was at the Aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg for an open house for a program funded by the Justice department, I believe federally and provincially. They have healing circles for aboriginal people who are referred to them by the courts. They had a very interesting statement, I guess sort of a mission statement, on the wall. It talked about the choice that people can make between doing healing time or jail time.

I asked about the success rate of the people that have been referred to their program. I believe it started about last September. They have had about 70 individuals go through their healing circle, and they said that not one of them has gone back to court. We need to have many more of these diversion programs, especially for first offenders, because we know that youth justice committees and these other very good ideas are very successful. They keep people out of jails and they keep people out of the justice system, which we know tend to be revolving doors.

Once someone is involved with the judicial system, they tend to come back over and over again. For those people who are involved in violent crimes, yes, there needs to be appropriate and suitable punishment, but for those people especially who are first offenders, we need to keep them out of the court system and out of our jails so that we do not have to spend \$6 million building a new courtroom.

We just wish that this government would match that kind of commitment with a commitment to funding facilities in the community that would provide prevention, for example by funding or reopening the North Y, by the friendship centre or any other organization that could run it, or funding community centres like Sinclair Park Community Centre in Burrows constituency, which are applying for funding to build a new community centre to replace their centre that was built in 1947. I just heard yesterday that they were turned down in their application for funding. They badly need a new centre. They provide many excellent programs, especially by way of sports, both hockey and baseball. Now they have expanded into basketball and a number of other sports, which are also a preventative kind of programming.

I am looking forward to attending an official opening there for a Kids at Risk program that will also keep kids involved in a positive and healthy alternative to the streets.

Madam Speaker, I would like to conclude with some remarks having to do with the amendment to the Speech from the Throne, where the Leader of the official opposition amends the motion with the following words: "But this House regrets that this government has failed to meet the goals of Manitobans by failing to uphold basic democratic principles as key government officials were involved in a vote rigging plot, which as the Monnin Inquiry states, 'constitutes an unconscionable debasement of the citizen's right to vote. To reduce the voting rights of individuals is a violation of our democratic system.'"

It is very sad that we have to comment on this, but this is the first opportunity that we have had to hold the government accountable and to comment on the Monnin inquiry. I would just like to put on the record some of the things that Judge Monnin said in his report. For example, he said, and I quote: "In all my years on the Bench I never encountered as many liars in one proceeding as I did during this inquiry."

* (1520)

Madam Speaker: Order, please. That very issue came up in Question Period earlier today,

and, regrettably, I did not have the same script that I had raised, offered as advice earlier on during the week, and that was that Erskine May is very explicit in saying that a member is not allowed to use unparliamentary words by the device of putting them in somebody else's mouth. I understand there are many Manitoba precedents on record where individuals trying to use that would be, indeed, cited for unparliamentary language and they would be called out of order.

So I would like to remind the honourable member for Burrows and to clarify the record that, indeed, it has been ruled on several occasions and past precedent has been established that just citing the words from another source do not make them unparliamentary—[interjection] Pardon me, do make them parliamentary, right. Thank you. [interjection] No, I said citing someone else's words do not make them parliamentary. They are still considered to be unparliamentary.

Point of Order

Mr. Martindale: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I would like to ask you to make a ruling on the point of order that I am raising now, because I would like to see in print Erskine May and all of the authorities that you are quoting from. Unfortunately, I am just going from memory of what you said, but I do not believe that I am using this as a device to get unparliamentary language on the record. I am quoting from Judge Monnin and the Monnin inquiry, and I had not even commented on what the judge said. I was merely quoting the judge.

So I would like to raise this as a point of order, and I would like to hear all of the authorities because I believe that I am not using it as a device. I am only using it to quote the actual words of Judge Monnin in his report.

Hon. James McCrae (Acting Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, on the same point of order, partly to give advice on this point of order but partly to seek a little bit of clarification.

The reference in the report I do not believe in any way suggests that any member certainly

on this side of the Legislature is referenced in that, and I know that unparliamentary language is not to be used in reference to any member of the Legislature.

My point of clarification is to find out if it is the position of the Chair that language like that can or cannot be used, whether it is through a device or otherwise, to describe someone outside this Chamber, because I certainly subscribe to what you say, that you are not to use that sort of language in reference to any member of this House.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Burrows, I indeed will take the point of order, review the Hansard transcript and report back to the House.

* * *

Mr. Martindale: I would like to continue by quoting from the Monnin inquiry report. Mr. Monnin said, and I quote: "It is disheartening indeed to realize that an oath to tell the truth means so little to some people." Judge Monnin said: "A vote-rigging plot constitutes—"

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Burrows is providing comment on the throne speech, and I would appreciate the co-operation of all honourable members in affording the honourable member for Burrows that opportunity without interruption.

Mr. Martindale: It seems to me that the Conservative members of this Chamber do not want to hear these quotes, because they do not want them on the record because they are embarrassed by what Judge Monnin said about their party, their colleagues, their friends, their bag men, and the people who provide advice to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and advice to their cabinet, many of them personal friends who have been judged wanting in terms of ethics, morality and standards by Judge Monnin. That is what they do not want on the record, because they are embarrassed.

And I continue to quote: "A vote-rigging plot constitutes an unconscionable debasement of the citizen's right to vote. To reduce the

voting rights of individuals is a violation of our democratic system." Page 13.

And another quote: The basic premise of the vote-rigging plot was "that aboriginal people in these ridings had historically voted for the NDP, but 'the aboriginal vote' would be split if there were aboriginal candidates running. The attempt here at vote splitting . . . was in my opinion clearly unethical and morally reprehensible."

And another quote: "Political mores have reached a dangerous low when one party member can actively support his party, but sees nothing objectionable in helping to finance and organize the candidate of a second party in order to harm a third party."

And I quote again: "I cannot ignore the fact that throughout this episode, especially during the investigation at the hearings, some of these witnesses exhibited a degree of arrogance or an 'I know better' attitude."

We are extremely disappointed that this government's friends would act in this way in order to try and fix the outcome of an election. You know, if you rig an election, nothing matters after election day because you are tampering with one of the fundamentals of democracy, and that is fair elections. This province and this country have sent people to countries like Chile, South Africa and the former Yugoslavia to supervise elections. One of them is a friend of mine, Myroslaw Tracz, who just recently came back from the former Yugoslavia.

An Honourable Member: Myroslaw is a Liberal.

Mr. Martindale: Yes, my Liberal friend, Mr. Tracz. It is very disappointing that this government would be involved at all in something like this. When the Premier said he did not know, the people of Manitoba do not believe him. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Shirley Render (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I would just like to acknowledge our former Lieutenant Governor, and also welcome our new Lieutenant Governor, our new Sergeant-at-Arms and our new pages.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our former MLA for St. Boniface, Neil Gaudry, and for the work that he did in his community.

I take this opportunity also to say how glad I am that I had the opportunity of serving with some of our members who will not be seeking re-election. I speak specifically of the MLA for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger), the MLA for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey), the MLA for Springfield (Mr. Findlay), the MLA for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), and the MLA for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski). I very much enjoyed his speech yesterday. I thought he put some very significant comments on record and things that all of us should be taking to heart and trying to follow.

Madam Speaker, usually when I speak on the throne speech, I speak to the throne speech, but this time I am going to depart a wee bit from tradition, because I want to acknowledge some of the people in the riding of St. Vital who have contributed so much to the betterment of that community. For me it has been a privilege to serve as the MLA for St. Vital, and the reason I say that is simply because of the people of St. Vital. I want to just put some names on the record officially, because what they have given to the community, their spirit of volunteerism, their spirit of co-operation, their willingness to work long and hard hours for no pay simply for the betterment of the community, I think, has been outstanding.

At the beginning of this year in January, I put out a call, I guess I could say, for nominations for an award that I started a number of years ago called the St. Vital Heart of the Community Award, and I was absolutely overwhelmed with the nominations that came in. Over 100 nominations came in for people who had volunteered, residents of St. Vital.

I had asked six other people to be judges, and they were: Carole Anderson, who is a Guide leader; Donna Bulow, principal of Glenlawn Collegiate; Ivy Fyfe, long-time resident of St. Vital and a long-time volunteer at Glenwood Community Centre; Brian Teixeira, the president of Old St. Vital BIZ; Bruce Waldie, principal of Frontenac School; and

Trudy Turner, the executive director of the Terry Fox Run.

* (1530)

So, when I had asked these six people to be judges, I had said that I did not think that the job would be too onerous, so we were very, as I say, pleasantly surprised with 100 nominations that came in. So the judges actually had a very difficult time, because the quality of the nominations was simply overwhelming. The decision of the judges was to give the St. Vital Heart of the Community Award to 25 of the nominees and an honourable mention to the others.

Madam Speaker, I would like to put these names on record so that the families of these people, the neighbours and the friends, can see what these people did and just realize that these are very special people for St. Vital. Now, those who received the St. Vital Heart of the Community Award, and in alphabetical order their names are: Doris Ames, chairman of the Revitalization Committee; John Baker—and I am just mentioning one component of their volunteer activity. Actually, I do not think I have time to sort of go into too much detail, so I will name the names: Doris Ames, John Baker, Tracey Belliveau, Cara Borkowski, Gary Coleman, Christie Crow, Lynn Doyle, Margaret Drielick, Patricia Dubeau, Peter Elwick, Jeff Fawley, Jim Fuller, Irene Hindmarsh, Josephine Hogg, Lorraine Iverach, Joe Laxdal, Fran Lemieux, Greg McClelland, Margorie McGavin, Wally Olensky, Aileen Robinson, Lori Semchyshyn, Dorothy Weldon and Victor Majer School, and then a group winner from Regents Park United Church: Hazel English, Elsie Orr and Hilda Shore.

Now, these volunteers did everything from Meals on Wheels to volunteering in schools, to community clubs, seniors events, to Old St. Vital BIZ, to doing things like initiating a Citizens on Patrol group. As I say, the volunteerism just covered everything from scouting, to guiding, to being a good neighbour.

Now, those were the 25 award winners. I would also like to put on the record those who received the honourable mention for the St. Vital

Heart of the Community Award, and in alphabetical order they are: Judi Adams, Maxine Armstrong, Arpi Babaian, Gordon Bell, Len Bergards, Carol Billett, Georgie Booth, Dianne Boulay, Jason Braun, Colleen Champagne, Cathie Chapman, Bill Coe, Yvette Couture, George Cotter, Jolene Daley, Vicky Daubaras, Herb Day, Debbie Dubeau, Pat Duncan, Jean Dunmire, Elm Park Peninsular Flood Team, Linda Elmhurst, Julie Ewanchuk, Betty Fortin, Muriel and Ed Gale, Norma Glenham, and the whole Glenwood Community Centre Board of Directors, Gordon Hancock, Ed Higham, Bruce and Patricia Hobson, the Youville Centre Adolescent Advisory Committee, Georgiana Hodges, Olga Janzen, Johanna Keeler, Janet Klem, Fred and Rosemarie Kvern. Joan MacDonald, Pat Main, Annette Marion, Linda Marsch, Betty Morrison, Brian Nazarko, Michele O'Dowd, Jeff Palamar, Pearl Ratte, Joe and Mardell Rioux, Joan Robinson, Kay Rokala, Angus Shortt, Allan Simpson, Robert Sproule, Brian Teixeira, Greg Thomas, Doreen Trumbley, Rob Truthwaite, Buzz Tyson and Patrick Wield.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge a group of people who worked very hard for the betterment of St. Vital in more of the physical sense. Now, the member who spoke just ahead of me said that he did not think this government had any plans for revitalization. Let me tell you that there has been a very active residents group in old St. Vital and actually in the Norwood area, but I will speak to the Glenwood Residents Committee, the revitalization committee. This is a shared provincial-, city-funded group. The revitalization that has gone on in St. Vital because of these committee members who have devoted hundreds of hours, hundreds of volunteer hours, to the betterment of St. Vital is absolutely incredible.

The members of this committee, I would also like to put their names on record. The chairman is Doris Ames. Other members are Carol Anderson, Bill Bell, Bob Bruce, Julie Ewanchuk, Jeff Fawley, Jim Fuller, Sig Laser, Shawn Love, Joan MacDonald, Bev Munn, Randy Ptashniak, Don Wookey. I hope I have not missed any names. I do not have my full list here.

This group has been working hard for five years. It is not easy to try to prioritize what needs to be done in a community, but this group has bounced the concerns of residents and the concerns of the business community. The two of them have worked hand in hand on a huge variety of projects in St. Vital. Just simply driving down the main thoroughfare of St. Vital, St. Mary's Road, you can see some of the differences that this group has made.

Now, about four years ago, like many people, it does not matter really what part of the province you can talk about, St. Vitallers also had a concern about safety. So I held a public meeting and put together a panel that was made up of representatives from seniors and Citizens for Crime Awareness and parent associations and from the Old St. Vital BIZ and from the community police and from young people.

Again I want to put some names on the record, because these people each delivered approximately a 10-minute talk on what they thought were the main concerns from their particular perspective. Representing the Seniors was Pat Main, who at that time was the president of the St. Vital Seniors. Her back-up in case she was ill that particular night was Georgie Booth. One of the other panel members represented the Citizens for Crime Awareness. I think most of us here in the Chamber are aware of the Citizens for Crime Awareness. Speaking for that group was Beverley Munn and her back-up was Al Perron. I also asked parent councils to present, and the individual, the parent who spoke on the panel that evening was Joan MacDonald, who at that time was president of the Glenwood Parent Councils. She had two back-ups, Trudy Turner and Lynne Doyle.

Old St. Vital BIZ, which had been created a number of years ago—our business community had begun to die in the late '70s and early '80s as growth developed in the south part of our area and a lot of the businesses left old St. Vital and went south. But I am happy to say that our business community has revitalized itself and has formed itself into an official group. They too took part in the safety initiative, because it is to their advantage also to have a safe community. So both the president and other members of the BIZ participated in the safety

panel. The individual who actually was a panelist that night was Carol Teixeira and her back up was Brian Teixeira and Margaret and Art Johnstone.

Now, from the community police, because you cannot have any discussion on community safety without having your community police involvement, that evening Constable Cindy Johnson was the panelist. Because so many fingers are often pointed at our young people, I felt it was very important to ask a couple of young people to be on the panel, so I went to the main high school in my area, Glenlawn Collegiate, and asked for suggestions from the principal as to who would be good representatives to speak on behalf of young people. The two youth were Shannon McNeill and Tonya Shymkiw.

Now from that evening that was held—and I wish I could remember the date. I do not have the date down on my list here in front of me, but it was about four years ago and we held that evening at St. George School. There were roughly 350 people out that night. After the panel spoke, then it was an evening that was open for discussion and people from the audience could put forward their own thoughts, their own concerns. From that evening, there were roughly 12 issues of safety that were identified. Well, there was no way that I felt that I could deal with 12 issues, and I thought that maybe one, maybe two, maybe three issues we could handle in St. Vital, but definitely I needed help. Twelve issues were just too much, and we needed to prioritize those issues and narrow it down.

* (1540)

So what I did was, once again, I went back to the community, called in every single community organization—churches, community groups, scouts, guides, the community clubs, the schools, the parent councils, even the air cadet squadron for St. Vital-St. Boniface. Every community group that I could think of, I phoned a representative from that group. I was hoping that I would maybe get 12 people to come and work with me. Madam Speaker, do you know that every single person said yes and responded to say, yes, they were prepared to work with me

to help do something about some of the safety concerns that we had in St. Vital.

So that evolved into a couple more meetings. We broke out into groups. I had facilitators for each group. After about 12 hours of meetings, we were able to identify three areas of concern, and we were able to prioritize. The three areas of concern that St. Vitalers had were break-ins, youth unrest, and parents who need support. Over the next year, we worked on developing solutions for those three areas and then, once more, we went back to the community, held another public meeting to let the community know about these three areas and some of the possible solutions that these 70 community groups had come up with. Again, I would just like to put some names on the record, because none of these things I could have done on my own. They all had to be done with the co-operation of St. Vitalers.

The people who spoke that evening were Shannon McNeill and Tonya Shymkiw who spoke on solutions for some of the problems that they saw concerning young people. The individual who spoke on break-ins was Julie Ewanchuk, and the resident who spoke on parents who need support was Gerry Corrigan. We also had some added assistance from Joan MacDonald.

Now from that evening, things just kept moving on, just kept evolving. Over the next number of months, again, with the help of volunteers from the community—I do not have all of the names in front of me, but many of the names that I have already put on the record were people who, again, put time and effort and energy into helping develop what was known as a Resource Manual for Keeping our Community Safe, and that turned out to be our slogan: Keeping our Community Safe.

Another year of meetings went on and another public forum was held at the end of October in 1998. Again, it started out we were hopeful that there might be six or seven groups participating. In the end, there were over 70 community groups that participated in this public forum. Again, I would like to put the groups who participated, put their names on the record, because I think it shows the huge

community spirit that we have in St. Vital, the volunteerism, the fact that people are willing to work and work hard. They do not just sit there and complain and expect somebody else to do something. They came forward and gave of their time and energy.

Now the groups were Citizens for Crime Awareness: Marge Neville, Linda Ferguson and Dan Vandal were some of the participants. Realty Watch was another participant for that group, Protelec Alarms, Fog Security Systems, The Window Man. We had invited these groups because one of our issues was break-ins, and we wanted to tell the public some of the things that they could do to make their homes safer. So if some of these names sound as if they are businesses, yes, they are businesses, but they were prepared to give up all day on a Saturday and come out and show the residents how they could make their homes safer.

The Family Centre Service also participated. We have a couple of our schools, Glenwood School and Lavallee School; both had programs called FAST, Families and Students Together. They participated in the public forum. Restorative Justice participated. This was Bev Ward who manned that particular booth. Brian Johnston from Street Peace set up an exhibit. The Community Police, again, were there, and that was Constable Gerry Epp. The fire department was there, Marc Proulx.

The Youville Nurse Resource Centre, and this is a nurse resource management centre that has done absolute wonders in our community of St. Vital. They have many programs, and if I do not run out of time, I will speak to some of the programs. Their exhibits that day were: How to Talk to Kids So They Will Listen, Mommy and Me, Parent Building, Baby and Me, Young Expectations, It's Your Choice and Nobody's Perfect. Margie Warner, Jo-Anne Vincent and Leanne Cadieux were some of the people who were out that day.

Age and Opportunity also presented. St. Vital Seniors was there; Pat Main, Diane Frost of St. Vital Seniors. Barbara Whipps from Age and Opportunity presented an exhibit on older victims' services. Manitoba Society for Seniors was there, Pearl Ratte.

The Miriam Centre. This is a centre that has just relocated to Beliveau Road, and Sister Gilberte Carriere and they offered information for single parents. Youth Justice Committee, Brian Woodward was there. The member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) a couple of days ago spoke on many things that the Youth Justice Committee does. The Justice department was there represented by Wyman Sangster. Children and Youth Secretariat. Scouts Canada was there. Girl Guides were there, Carol Anderson manning that particular booth.

The Air Cadet squadron for St. Vital-St. Boniface, 176 Boeing Squadron, was there, Lieutenant Templeman. Old St. Vital BIZ, which has been a marvellous group working to pull the community together, also had an exhibit. St. Vital Historical Society was there, and that booth was manned by John Baker and Doris Ames. Again, this is a new group, began in about 1990, and they have pulled together some marvellous, marvellous displays talking about St. Vital. They were there that day even though the issue was keeping our community safe. It was just another outlet for young people who do not know what to do.

Save Our Seine, another volunteer group, put on a presentation. That was J.P. Brunet. The South Winnipeg Family Y was there. South Winnipeg Family Centre. St. Vital Library. Winnipeg Canoe Club. Teen Stop Jeunesse. Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club. MPI Roadwise. Teen Touch was there, Gord Alvare. The Glenwood Revitalization Committee, which I have already talked about, was there. The Morrow Avenue Salvation Army. The Morrow Street Day Care was there. The Neighborhood Parenting Support Project. Pride St. Vital. Osborne House. Alpha House. The Marlene Street Tenants Association. This is a group that had just been formed.

Madam Speaker, I see that I have virtually run out of time, but again I just want to acknowledge the fact that volunteerism in St. Vital is alive and well and, as I say, I have had the privilege of working with schools, community clubs, scouts, guides, the churches, libraries, many of the groups, and together we have networked, we have pulled together the community. As I say, thanks to the volunteerism

of some of the people that I have mentioned today, we have a better community in St. Vital. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased today to make some comments about the government's last throne speech, I might add; but, before I do, I would like to wish all of the retiring members of this Chamber well in their future endeavours. I think at this point, we do not know who all of them will be because for various reasons one or two may have chosen not to make their announcements at this time, but will at a later date, others may succumb to nomination conflicts, and others may lose at the poll.

I would like to say, Madam Speaker, that nothing is sure in election campaigns. You know, no one is here forever, with a couple of exceptions, but the truth of the matter is that we saw it. Although it is fairly rare, it only happens every 10 years or so, but federally we saw it in '93 with the Conservative Party being reduced to two seats. We saw it Saskatchewan in 1982, with the NDP being reduced to six seats. We saw, in 1988, the Liberals come up from nowhere. So I think we can truthfully say that you never really know for sure.

* (1550)

You know, I sent a cartoon across the way earlier—one, I am told, that I had sent in previous elections—but the fact of the matter is that you never really know when you go into an election. Even if you have polling information or reason to believe that you might be leading at the beginning, mistakes can be made, you can misinterpret the results, and things can turn very adverse. So it is conceivable that, with the right strategy, this government could be returned. It is also very conceivable, and in fact probable that the opposition, our party, will be the government after the next election. Perhaps, with a great number of seats. Perhaps, even more than the 35 we had in 1981. Having said that, it is possible the Liberal Party may rise up from where it is now and repeat what it did in 1988. So, at this point, it is pure speculation.

I would like to also welcome the new Lieutenant Governor, Peter Liba. I know Peter

Liba from many years ago, in fact, 26 years ago, when he was the assistant to the Liberal Leader of the day, Izzy Asper, in Wolseley in the tie vote process of 1973. Peter and I had some dealings at that point, some 26 years ago. So I know he will do a good job as Lieutenant Governor, and I wish him well in that post.

Now, Madam Speaker, this throne speech, I do not really see as a very visionary type of document. I think it is very consistent with the type of throne speeches that this government has delivered for the last 11 years. In fact, I would say, in particular, that this one really, to me, demonstrates a government that is old and tired and has probably run out of steam. I think, even as late as last year, there were people arguing that the government was still somewhat vigorous and still had potential, but certainly in the last six months since the Monnin inquiry into the vote splitting and rigging scandal, this government has really taken a beating. In fact, it is quite possible that it is beyond repair, that this government is destined for the history books at this point.

You know, Madam Speaker, there comes a time in the life of any government where no matter what is done, it is impossible to change. I recall the second term of the Rene Levesque government in Quebec where it was way behind for the first four years of its mandate. The very last part of the fifth year—and I am glad someone is listening to me right now—to the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), in the very last couple of months of its final term, it went and called an election, and it actually recovered and won. But that is very, very, very seldom that that happens. Once the public mood sets in, once the bloom is off the rose, once the trust is broken—[interjection] As the member for Radisson says, once the rose is dead, it just becomes sort of a matter of passing time. At this point I think the Conservatives are desperately looking for a way to somehow try to recover from their current problems. There is sort of, I think, a slight unease over there that change is in the air.

Certainly for the last year people are telling me that it has been time for a change. I am very specific about that. They say it is time for a change in the government, not a time for a change in the member. I do ask them that

question, and they say, no, no. No question about it. It is time to get rid of the Filmon government and get back to sane and sensible government in this province. So on that basis I would say that we are more than willing to see the Conservatives call the election and get on the road.

Now, what this government is doing in the last little while clearly indicates that they are on a track of no return for an election. You see advertising. You see a million-dollar advertising campaign touting the good works of the government on health care. The very same sort of program that they did last time they went to the polls. It is a formula with these people. It is basically an advertiser's dream, I think, this Tory account. They are given basically unlimited money to spend, and they hire the best and the brightest imports from the United States Republican Party, and we know they are around.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

We know Greg Lyle has crossed the border and moved into Manitoba for a while. So we know that the professional managers of the good old Republican Party and their friends are back here to try to save what is left of this government.

So it has worked for them before. The advertising campaign, the pre-election advertising campaign, the cynical strategy of re-announcing things that they cancelled before. You recall last time they announced a capital works project to build hospital facilities, nursing home facilities, only to turn around immediately following the election and cancel the program. They have been that blatant about it, and they have been lucky. They have been lucky. They promised to save the Jets, knowing the Jets could not be saved, and they won. That was a cheap issue for them. They won partly on that.

So they have been riding a wave. Well, the Premier has a canoe. The Premier has his canoe that he gets out of storage every election and paddles up and down a creek a couple of times. I think that this now has come to an end. This is the first real election campaign that these people have had to fight in the last few elections. They have had an easy time of it before, Mr. Deputy

Speaker, and this time I think they are starting to find out that it is a much more serious proposition than what they dealt with in the past. You know, as evidence of that, one can see that what they have done this time is, rather than just announcing the projects, the infrastructure projects, this time they are actually digging holes in the ground, because they know that people are not believing them. People are cynical about their motives and about them.

So this time they actually believe they do have to do more than just announce the projects. They have to dig the holes and actually build the project. As a matter of fact, after the election is over, we may find that we have a fairly decent program to deal with at the time of nursing home construction and other projects. Now, coming out of that, of course, what we are going to have is a horrendous debt that we are going to have to deal with, but that is something that we will have to deal with at the time.

The point is that this particular throne speech really is no real break from the past. It just simply reinforces their old formula that has worked before, and there is an old saying that if it works once—you know, if it ain't broke don't fix it. If it works once, try it again. But this time, I really believe—and I think they are starting to believe—that it could be over for them this time.

The throne speech itself, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), my friend—and I do not know that he will be around after the next election, but he has quite a resilience in this House, I must admit. He has been chased very methodically over the last few election campaigns and somehow he keeps surviving. I am reminded of the cartoon, I think it is the roadrunner. They keep trying to chase him and bag him, and he keeps eluding them. So we do not know whether he is going to be successful in this. In any event, he is on the right track, I think, with his questions on—

* (1600)

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am assuming the member for Elmwood is seeing me as the

roadrunner. My question to him would be: who is the coyote?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order. I am sure he was just asking a question which is not allowed at this time.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member, to continue the debate.

Mr. Maloway: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I did want to say that while he and I have been asking questions of the government in the last few days on the question of the purchase of Centra Gas, he has rightly pointed out that there is no reference made to this huge purchase in the throne speech, this document, this vision of the future that is supposed to guide this government. In fact, while we support the purchase of the gas company—in fact, in 1987, we introduced legislation at the time to take over the gas company. In fact, the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) voted with us and caused a lot of dissension and troubles within—and to his credit—his caucus over the issue.

I remember him arguing at the time and saying that the Conservative Party nationalized or set up the telephone company, I believe, or Hydro in 1908—I am not sure which one it was—and that he had no problems with the idea because he was more concerned about service to his constituents, that he felt if the NDP government of the day took over the gas company, the chances were pretty good that his constituents would have natural gas service and delivery to his area. On that basis, he broke with his caucus, did the right thing, supported the takeover, and, of course, as history will show, the government of the day at the end of the day backed off and did not proceed with the sale.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was done in full view of the Manitoba public. We made the announcements, we introduced the legislation, we made the speeches, we had the vote. The member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) voted with us on the issue. This time, what have we had? A press release. That was it. The press release—[interjection] Well, the member for Inkster (Mr.

Lamoureux) says a done deal. He may be right, but then again he may be wrong because you know we passed the legislation last time, 11 years ago, and at the end of the day there was no deal.

This time around there is a letter of intent and they have a confidentiality agreement. They are trying to do due diligence now to negotiate the deal. A lot may happen between now and then. In fact, we are suspecting that the price is too high, and we are also suspecting that in the due diligence there will be a lot of weasel clauses in the agreement that will allow either party to try to back out of the deal.

The final back-out is the PUB. The PUB is a Conservative-appointed board, and it could—I am not saying that it does, but it could in fact take its direction from the Conservative Party, and that is their final out. What they have done is that the lawyer—as a matter of fact they had no intention. They did not, Mr. Brennan from Hydro did not recognize the authority of the PUB in this deal and decided to accept that the government would pass it through Order-in-Council and that would be sufficient, but three organizations, two actually made representations to the PUB asking for public hearings and that is the basis upon which they changed their mind, because, while they still do not fully accept the authority of the PUB, they accept that there is a possibility that PUB might have authority and then they may have to unscramble the omelette two or three years down the line at great expense to a lot of people. So that is why they are doing the right thing. That is the only reason.

If there was no legislation or interpretation of legislation that it had to go to the PUB, they would not do it. They would try to keep it secret. So what we have here is an extremely secretive process and a secretive government. Why, we do not know.

Now, the letter that they sent to the PUB asking for, very reluctantly, I might add, the hearings, basically asked for hearings in private. It said, well, let us not go and have public hearings, I mean, that is too cumbersome and perhaps we should have hearings in private, so now we can say, well, we did not really want to have the hearings, but we are forced to have

them, so now let us have them in private. Now, that is what this government is doing. The Minister of Energy and Mines, the Minister responsible for Hydro (Mr. Newman), says no, that is not what he wants. He wants open, public hearings. That is what he says, but he is not prepared to do anything about it and he is not prepared to contact a lawyer representing the deal and say that they should demand public hearings.

So what is this government trying to hide? Are they trying to hide a deal that is a half-billion-dollar deal? A deal that was only \$158 million ten years ago is now a half-billion-dollar deal. Now, it may well be that the \$245-million purchase price, the \$195 million in debt, the \$90 million in deferred taxes, that \$525 million may in fact be a proper price, but do we know whether the people that are conducting the study were certified business evaluators that specialize in utilities? We do not know that. We know that KPMG was one that did an analysis and there was a second party that did an analysis, but we do not know how valid and what their credentials are until we see them, and we are not going to see these documents until the deal is concluded. We do not think that this deal is going to be concluded any time soon.

What these people are planning to do, I think, is simply get the election out of the road before the deal is even completed because, if you listen to the government, what you hear them saying is that they are in the process, they were talking about closing the deal in April, April 1 I believe it was. Now they are looking at a future date. If and when they go to the PUB they are looking at 30, 60, 90 days for the hearings.

An Honourable Member: Your Leader said we were fattening the calf.

Mr. Maloway: Well, the former deputy leader says that our Leader says they are fattening the calf for sale; in fact, that may well be what they are going to do. The point is they are going to get by the election with nothing more than the announcement. That is what they are trying to do. They do not want anybody looking at how the deal is structured, whether they overpaid or

not, and all the other issues involved here. So we will have a lot more to say about the sale.

Our first goal, of course, is to make certain that we have public hearings, and we will know that in a few days from the PUB. I have some sort of faith that they will see the light. If not, someone over here will let it be known. It would be breaking precedence in Manitoba to have private hearings. They know that. I do not think the PUB will go along with it. It would be to their detriment, I believe, if they did.

* (1610)

At that point, hopefully, we will be able to get the documentation that we require, but once again we are not looking at that to happen until after the deal closes. The deal probably will not close for a couple of months. What we are talking about here is after the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) is long retired. We are talking of probably the fall before this thing even closes, before it goes to the PUB. It will be God knows when. The right process to go through is public hearings before the PUB, so we can take a look at this deal. I told you from the beginning that we support the idea. We support the concept. In fact, it was our idea, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, we do not mind them stealing the odd good idea.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to deal with the issue of debts. This government gets a free ride on the whole issue of debt, because they will talk ad nauseam about how they had to pay off our debt. Well, you know, if you look at the debt and where it came from, a few years ago, I added up the debts from the two different governments. I added up the debts for the Filmon government and for the Pawley government. I was thinking at that time that probably they were worse debt accumulators than us. We came very close. We still kept the Crown, but not by much.

Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

The point is that this government over here is the no-pikers when it comes to debt. They had the biggest deficits in Manitoba history one year, 1993, \$766 million. Okay. Now, let us look at some of these. From 1991 through to 1995,

every year, this government left the taxpayers of Manitoba with a deficit. Their total debt for their period of time in office for those first six years was another \$2 billion. This is from the fiscally conservative, you know, responsible type of Tory government.

Let us look at how they accomplished balancing the budget. Let us look at how they balanced the budget. If it was not for the VLTs and extra lottery revenues, they would still be running the same deficits. I mean if you did not have your lottery revenue, these charts, this 766, there would be a whole bunch more. There would be a whole bunch more of these every year. So how you people get away with claiming to be fiscally responsible is just beyond me. I do not understand it. I never have, I never will.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Sveinson): Order, please. I am having a little trouble hearing the honourable member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker. I have been having trouble hearing myself as well.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) got it right. He said: We have good spin doctors. That is really what it boils down to, that they have been able to sell the public, the press, the public through the press, on the idea that somehow they have got this great, you know, method of taking care of finances in this province and somehow they are better than we were. But the graphs, the history is not there.

Now, let us look at some of these campaign promises that these guys talk about. As I said, they promise all these things, all these initiatives, and then they do not deliver. Let us take the crime issue. Now, was that not a good one. You know, the Premier in his canoe, well, last time he was, what, no, he was not in jail. He was closing the door on the criminals, right? I think we could do some different ads in the future. We do not know how that one—we do not know what the sequel to that one is going to be, Mr. Acting Speaker, but he was getting tough on crime. He was closing the doors on the prison.

But, you know, what has happened is, I remember them talking about boot camps, and they were going to get tough on crime. You know, crime has not gone down at all. Well, after the Monnin inquiry, it has probably gone up. But now the Conservatives want a lower tax commission, right, and that is one of the things I see coming out of the throne speech. Now, once again I would have to be suspicious about what they plan to do with that. We know for a fact that the Minister of Finance there is busily writing his budget, and probably we are looking at, you know, sales tax reductions and income tax reductions, you know, whatever it takes to get re-elected. They have done their polling, their opinion research, and they say: well, what do we need? Tell us what we need to get re-elected. You know, if we need sort of 5 percent more of the vote then how many tax decreases do we have to bring in?

So we will know how desperate they are when the budget day comes around next week. If we see a 1 percent sales tax reduction we know they are only this worried, but if we see a 2 percent sales tax reduction, we know they are this worried. And if they just eliminate taxes completely, you know they are heading for the border. So we will be very interested in seeing.

You know, Mr. Acting Speaker, what we are going to see after the election. All these big tax reductions that we are going to see in this budget, they are going to say: sorry, but we cannot afford these tax reductions. We are going to have to bring them back again.

Now, another myth of Tory management, no new taxes, right? They sold that line. They sold that "no new taxes" now for the last 10 years. In fact what we have seen is all kinds of new Tory taxes. We have seen offloading. Now, admittedly there is offloading from the federal government. The Liberals have a big cross to bear in this one but, you know, they offload to the province, the province offloads to the city. They expanded the base for the sales tax. They increased the number of items that the sales tax covers. They have brought in all sorts of new types of taxation, but, when it is pointed out to them, they still get away with this argument that they are not raising taxes. I mean, what a crock. What a bunch of nonsense. They have raised all

sorts of taxes in this province, and we expect, I would hope, in the next little while to be able to pin that on them a little better than we have been able to in the past.

Now they talk about neighbourhoods in decline. Now that is a real obvious one, right? As if they did not know that before. It took them till a week ago in the budget speech to figure out that neighbourhoods are in decline. Well, if you drive around them once in awhile, you would find out they have been in decline for years. As a matter of fact, I had a constituent last year who wanted to file a complaint with the Ombudsman, because they were dealing with the Public Trustee and the Public Trustee sold the house belonging to the estate. They sold it in the north end, and they sold it for \$12,000, something like this, and they thought that there should be an inquiry into this.

When we got finished talking to appraisers—and, by the way, the property tax assessment on this house was \$30,000 or higher—\$12,000 looked like a good price. This house, if it was anywhere else probably would have been worth \$30,000, but because it was in the area of the north end that is all that the market would catch. What we have is huge property declines, value declines, and people are very, very concerned about that in a whole bunch of neighbourhoods. The member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) lives right in that area.

* (1620)

So what we got from this government is a lot of big talk year after year but no action; that is, these guys just dress it up for the election campaign and then forget about it. Once they get elected, it is back to the golf clubs and back to the private clubs. They could care less about this stuff, just simply build new houses outside the city. That is their solution, right?

This taxation committee that they are going to set up, I am not sure just what that is going to accomplish, the lower tax commission, because as I said all they are going to do is when the election is over they are going to tell us we cannot afford the tax cuts, and we are going to have to take them back.

Oh, and another neat trick these guys are masters at, they just keep changing the ministers. How many times can we recycle these guys? I mean the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), this guy has been recycled and had more hairdos than anybody I have seen. They repackage him, and they trot him out. I remember when he came here. They took him and they kind of moulded him one way, and then that did not sell too well. So they took him out and they wheeled him in again under another, put a new sweater on him, cut his hair. You know, they wind him up and he goes out there. Unbelievable what these guys get away with. I mean, we could never get away with stuff like this.

When we were in government, the press were alive and active around this place. We had full-time reporters here and working overtime, chasing around after every little perceived scandal, and if they could not find one, they made one up. Then these guys came in power, and all of a sudden, what happened to the press? They disappeared, and those who are here, you know, they buy the line. They do not give them enough stuff to do the job. So these guys have gotten away with murder. If they had a really tough few weeks with the press that we had to put up with years ago, it would be a different story. But that is a deliberate attempt by part of the press of those days to really chase the government.

You watch the coverage that the government of the NDP gets in Saskatchewan or B.C. relative to the equivalent kind of government in a Tory government or a Liberal government for that matter. [interjection] The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) said I should stay away from Saskatchewan, and I will. I will stay right here in Manitoba for the moment.

Now one of the things—and I do not want to be totally negative about this government. I know it is hard to be positive about them, but, you know, there are a couple of things in the throne speech that I actually like. There is some reference to looking at the Internet and providing a government program called NetSmarts. There is also a rating system that they want to introduce for video games. Having a 12-year-old boy who loves video games, I can say that it

is probably a good idea to be looking at something like this. I do not know what we are going to accomplish necessarily, whether it is going to achieve much in the way of results, but it is good window dressing, and it sounds good in the throne speech. You know, if you can do something about it, I guess that is probably a good idea.

The National Highways Program, I think, is a very good idea. The federal government has to get on board, so I guess we need the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) here, if he could just do something, get his leader to talk to his federal colleagues or maybe he could talk to Reg Alcock and maybe turn some buttons, push some buttons.

An Honourable Member: Tell us about Judge Monnin.

Mr. Maloway: Well, the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) wants to talk about Judge Monnin. I think it is about time I did that too. I want to get into that.

There are a few other things that I did want to mention. I think the elected Speaker by secret ballot, that is a good idea, and once again long overdue. They are waiting just for the election to do it.

The whole idea—well, let us deal with the Monnin inquiry. I mean, this is their Waterloo. This is the swan song, I think, the Achilles' heel, as the member for Burrows said. Judge Monnin, I think, was shocked himself. When he was asked to do this inquiry, I think he thought this was going to be a couple of weeks and collect his cheque and have a little bit of interesting experience and that would be the end of it. But I think he was quite surprised at what actually came out of this report. You know, he had some very interesting observations in this inquiry.

He said: "In all my years on the bench I never encountered as many liars in one proceeding as I did during this inquiry." Page 16.

He was referring, Mr. Acting Speaker, to all of the Conservatives, all the President's men, all

the big operators of this Conservative Party surrounding the—now, you know that is like H.R. Haldeman and Erlichman and all the President's men knowing what happened in the White House, but the President did not know. He did not know. So there comes a point where it becomes a little hard to believe that you could have gone for four years, three and a half years and not know, especially with all of these people so tied together. I mean, the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and Cubby Barrett are good friends. These people know each other. You know, they do not even spread the net beyond families. They are like husbands and wives. There is Gord McFarlane here and Barb McFarlane there. And there are Julian Benson and his wife. I mean, they do not trust anybody over there. You have to keep it right closely in the family. But there is a lot of room at the top over there now. There is a lot of room for advancement for the junior Tories.

Now, Judge Monnin goes on to say: "It is disheartening indeed to realize that an oath to tell the truth means so little to some people. That is very, very discouraging."

He says: "A vote-rigging plot constitutes an unconscionable debasement of the citizen's right to vote. To reduce the voting rights of individuals is a violation of our democratic system."

He says: The basic premise of the vote-rigging plot was "that aboriginal people in these ridings had historically voted for the NDP, but 'the aboriginal vote' would be split if there were aboriginal candidates running. The attempt here at vote splitting . . . was in my opinion clearly unethical and morally reprehensible."

He goes on: "Political mores have reached a dangerous low when one party member can actively support his party"—and this is unbelievable—"but sees nothing objectionable in helping to finance and organize the candidate of a second party in order to harm a third party." It is almost like a horse race, having more than one horse in the race here. Unbelievable. I thought these people had more sense than this.

He goes on. He says: "I cannot ignore the fact that throughout this episode, especially during the investigation and the hearings, some

of these witnesses exhibited a degree of arrogance or an 'I-know-better' attitude." Yes, well, that comes from winning three elections. You can have a problem in any party with that. Right? Once you have been in for too long you just assume that—

An Honourable Member: Or you can have it after one election if you are in B.C.

Mr. Maloway: Well, my constituent, the MLA for Rossmere (Mr. Toews), points out that that is true, that some governments can run into that problem in one election, but certainly after two or three, usually all governments have a problem. He also says a considerable amount of time, effort and money was expended by this commission in order to confirm, and by the way, the money that was expended by this commission should really be paid for by the Conservative Party. The Conservative Party are the people that brought us to this point at this time and this commission in order to confirm, it should have been freely admitted at the outset, the bank records and other documentation of the PC Party of Manitoba election account and of other individuals had to be obtained and examined to find out what really occurred. So what happened was these people basically hid the information. They did not volunteer anything. They would not co-operate in any way, shape or form with anybody in authority to deal with this problem.

* (1630)

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Acting Speaker, members of the Legislature, first of all, I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the new pages that have been appointed to service during this coming session. By the demonstration that a few of them have shown that were before us, I think we have truly selected a very intelligent and great group of young people to serve in this Legislature, and I just say to you that I hope that what you take away from here will truly serve you well in the future, in any future endeavours that you choose to enter into, and maybe it will be the political arena some day.

I also want to congratulate and welcome our new Sergeant-at-Arms. It is truly a pleasure to

have you with us. I want to also take the opportunity to congratulate our new Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Peter Liba. The choice that has been made by the Queen to appoint Mr. Liba to serve in our Legislature, I think, is indeed an honour that is bestowed on very few people in this country and indeed our province and we certainly look forward to the services that Mr. Liba will provide to this Legislature on an ongoing basis for a number of years to come.

I want to express my extreme appreciation to those that have served in the Speaker's Chair and especially welcome back again our Speaker to this Legislature and all the people that serve us here in this Legislature, the staff, all the services that they provide are truly appreciated. We certainly look forward to spending many more years with you as we all serve the people of Manitoba.

I want to express my disappointment to those that chose not to serve again in the coming year and at the same time as expressing my disappointment, want to thank them for their services. I think the four people that are leaving us this year were truly exemplary of the kind of people that choose to run and serve in this Legislature, serve the people of Manitoba, because truly they were servants.

Mr. Driedger, I think, is probably the longest-standing elected representative who is currently retiring, and he has served the Emerson constituency before me. I believe he was the member there for 13 or 14 years prior to me becoming the representative in the constituency of Emerson, and he is well known. Not only is he well known as a person who will work hard, but he is well known as a feisty fighter for the rights and the needs of his people. He went on to serve the people in the Steinbach area and developed the same kind of a reputation in Steinbach.

We will miss Albert, truly miss Albert in this House because of the colour that he brought many times when we needed it most. So the Albert, Albert, Albert chants will no longer be here, and we will truly, truly miss them.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

The other person whom I have developed over the years a great deal of respect and appreciation for is the Honourable Mr. Jim Downey. Not only has he served this House in recent years as Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, but I think he as a young man entering this Legislature made a name for himself and indeed for the province of Manitoba as being a person that truly believed in the agricultural community. He served the agricultural community well as the minister for a number of years, developed new policies and a new direction for this province and the farmers of this province as the then minister in the Lyon administration.

We thank you, Jim, for the many years of service, the dedicated work that you have done not only in this province, but, indeed, in the international arena lately to develop and encourage industry and industry leaders to come here, visit with us and indeed look at Manitoba as a home for them in the future. So we thank you from the bottom of our hearts, Jim.

The other person that I want to truly thank is Mr. Glen Findlay, who in my view has a deep knowledge of agricultural policy, and he demonstrated that time and time again in the debate in this Legislature. Glen, your knowledge and expertise will truly be missed in this Legislature from the agricultural side. You served the agricultural community extremely well during the Filmon administration, and the people in the agricultural community will recognize someday the tremendous contribution you have made to the agricultural community.

We also thank you for the very significant amount of work you did as the Minister of Highways in changing the direction because you entered that portfolio at a very difficult time when the federal government, in fact, chose to move away from the transportation policy that had guided the western Canadian provinces for many years and, indeed, brought a stabilizing effect to agriculture and the industries that emanated from the agricultural community in providing stable transportation costs to the community.

When that was taken away—virtually at the drop of a hat, the federal government decided to

do away with the Crow benefit, which changed forever the way the agricultural community is going to do business in this province and, indeed, western Canada. It changed the entire economic structure and indeed will keep on forcing us to change many of the institutional mechanisms, whether it is supply management, whether it is processing, whether it is manufacturing—indeed changed the environment in this province.

The negotiations that went on and the changes that you had to make, Minister Findlay, in that transportation effort and in the direction that we had to change, we thank you for the involvement that you had there.

Rosemary Vodrey, the honourable Minister of Culture and Heritage, I had served here for two years when you came into this Legislature, and you provided an interesting dimension because you demonstrated that—well, you were the first woman Justice minister that this province had, and I think you demonstrated that women were truly and should be accepted truly as members of the Legislature for their ability. You demonstrated that you could carry the Justice portfolio as well as any person who had served before you. You entered the educational field at a period of time when there were massive changes taking place in the Department of Education, and you guided them well and you guided them through. Having said that, you have served the last year or two in the Department of Culture and Heritage, and we truly appreciate the services that you have provided through your department to many of our communities in providing services that might not otherwise have been possible—through the Community Places Program and those kinds of things.

Our young people, I think, are truly dependent on the recreational abilities, and that is part of an education process that we seldom ever really look at. But those facilities that we need in rural Manitoba to make sure that our young people have the ability to grow up in a diverse and maturing process would not be there had your department and the people that served you in that department demonstrated that willingness to serve our communities. So we thank you deeply from the bottom of our hearts

for the time that you have served here, and we truly look forward to continuing the friendships that we have developed here.

I want to talk a little bit about my community. I touched very briefly on the transportation changes that had been driven by a singular decision without much thought by a newly elected government. It demonstrates to me that any government coming to power anywhere, whether it is in this province or federally, needs to take a long, hard look before they make massive changes just at the flip of a switch. Because our agriculture community did not make much noise about the cost effects of changing the Crow—as a matter of fact most farm organizations and farm leaders applauded the federal government for the massive changes they were making without really, I think, realizing the true impact, because we were in a spiralling economic, agricultural, industrial side of marketing that we had not seen previously, at least had not seen for a long time and prices went straight up—the impact of the changes were not even noticed.

*(1640)

However, it did not take a very long time before the prices came down to a level that we have not experienced for a very long time, and the impact of the massive increases in freight rates that we are seeing now are being felt by each and every one. In order to somewhat impact that, the federal government, of course, implemented the Crow offset. The Crow offset was a very short-time payment period that somewhat buffeted the impact of the freight rate increases. However, they are all gone and we have developed now a program—the federal government has come out with a program without consultation, a program that is supposedly to help those who are in dire need in rural Manitoba in the agricultural sector. The Farm Aid Program that the federal government developed and forced provincial governments to participate in, in my view, is one of the poorest programs. I have said in my advice to our Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), when he asked me, do not participate, because I truly believe that the program will not be utilized to any great degree by anybody. It is estimated today, Madam Speaker, that the average farmer

in western Canada will indeed probably benefit by \$8 each out of this program in the 1998-99 crop year, \$8 each. I mean, that is some program, and we have many, many of the farm community who are suffering severely.

On the brighter side, the changes that have been forced by the Crow benefit changes by the unethical program behavioural attitudes of the federal government have driven change whether we liked it or not, and some of the changes are starting to prove to be fairly beneficial to some of the communities. Plum Coulee, for example, is now the home of one of the largest bean processing plants in all of Canada, and this would not have happened had farmers not been forced to make changes in their cropping procedures.

Will this serve over a long period of time? We do not know. Will the changes that are being made in the agriculture community today, the diversification that we are seeing driven by an unethical move to change transportation without consideration of policy, serve the agriculture community well? Will the dramatic impact of the investments that are being made by individual farmers and/or industries in Manitoba have a longevity? Time will only tell. But if they do, then the way we have done business in this province will have been changed forever. That is the positive side of making decisions on the Crow benefit that has been debated for many, many years, which I congratulate the federal government for, because I believe it does take guts at times to make decisions. Whether right or wrong, whether the impacts can be mitigated, it does take some significant stamina from time to time to make decisions, and we all must do that.

That brings me to the point that I want to make today, because I want to talk very briefly about some of the decisions that some of our businesspeople have made and are making which have truly made Manitoba probably one of the most diversified economies now in all of western Canada. I want to speak about my own community and some of the things that have happened there. When I look at the industry that has carried agriculture to a significant degree in western Canada over the last number of years, it is the canola. It is the lowly little canola plant

that comes up and is so tiny that you can hardly see it when it comes out of the ground. When it blooms it has flowers that are so fragile that when you get a significant wind blowing it blows the blossoms right off the plant, but it turns into a plant that produces a seed so tiny you can almost drop it through the eye of a needle and yet produces a value that is greater now than any other commodity that is produced in western Canada on the agricultural front. So it has a very dramatic and large impact.

The canola crushing plant that was built back in the 1940s, started in the late '30s, built in the early '40s in Altona with an investment by farmers, and remember, we are talking about the end of the Dirty Thirties, by investment of farmers, of a few farmers who put their hands in their pockets and sometimes took the last \$10 they had out of their pockets and invested it in a canola crushing plant and operated as a co-operative. It was called Co-op Vegetable Oils. It was the first vegetable oil crushing plant in all of western Canada and indeed in all of Canada, and it has proved to be one of the most successful ventures and probably the brainchild of an industry that nobody would have ever guessed would have grown to the value it has today. It was started as a sunflower plant, crushing plant, turned into a soybean crushing plant when the sunflower industry was not doing well and then later on to a canola crushing plant. That canola industry has been the saving grace during the last number of years because that has added the kind of value and the kind of employment that our communities in rural Manitoba and indeed in the city of Winnipeg need.

The printing industry in the town of Altona, the Friesen printing plant is probably one of the most important printing operations in all of Canada. Indeed, it has become one of the largest ones, and again is situated in a quiet little community of 3,500 people that nobody would ever expect could generate that kind of growth and economic benefit to a totally Canadian economy. They employ some 600 people, and it was started by one person because that one person had a vision. That person said this tiny little community of Altona needed a printing plant and operated a hand-run printing operation for a year or so and then started it on its growth

path, and today it is indeed one of the largest printers in all of Canada and one of the best—indeed, I would suggest the best—in all of North America.

Golden West Broadcasting—started by a group of local entrepreneurs that wanted to invest beyond the businesses that they were involved in. They were agricultural people and they were other business people that made an investment in a broadcasting system, built a little station called CFAM which is now turned into Golden West Broadcasting. I believe they own now some 12 or 13 stations across Canada and have become indeed one of the forums in the radio-broadcasting industry. Elmer Hildebrand, who has been the life blood and indeed the director and the manager of that industry, certainly needs to be congratulated. Not only did he raise the stature of the broadcasting industry and the ethical side of the broadcasting industry in this province, but he demonstrated that he was also willing to get involved in the growth side of the community and was a major promoter of the town of Altona and many of the industries that are established there, and has been involved in developing many of them.

Seed-Ex at Letellier is a brand new industry, a small industry, and I think that is a demonstration of the kind of things that need to happen in all of Manitoba. When individuals have an idea and get involved in the marketplace and see the kind of growth potential that is there, I think it is a demonstration of the kind of confidence that our rural people have in their communities, their people and indeed their industries.

*(1650)

The Agricore elevator at Letellier is again a demonstration by a group of farmers that got together, formed a pool and decided to market their grain on their own through their own grain marketing organization, the pool. They have since merged, become partners with the Alberta Pool and call the corporation Agricore and is building large grain handling plants all over. The success, I believe, will be demonstrated in our ability to ship product to both sides of the border simultaneously in a process that will see us haul products one way and back haul products

the other way, and I think that is why the strategic location of that facility is where it is.

There are a number of other industries in this immediate southern area, and one of them is of course an oat processing plant at Emerson, again started by a couple of farmers that thought that they could add value to a product that really was not doing very well. It was marketed by the Wheat Board, it was controlled by the Wheat Board, and it was sluggish starting. They had a lot of difficulty at the outset in attaining the kind of supply and the quality of the product that they needed to make that venture successful. The Wheat Board, of course, got out of the marketing of oats and ever since then the Can-Oat Milling company at Emerson has done extremely well and is exporting now very significant amounts of its products south of the border and is seen as a major growth industry in the Emerson area.

Elmer's Welding is probably the only manufacturer in western Canada of row crop equipment, again I think driven largely by, first of all, the need to have that kind of an industry in western Canada because of the sugar beet industry and the sunflower industry, the row crop industry. But now it is largely dependent on the bean industry. The bean industry of course has bought significant amounts of equipment from Elmer's Welding, and they indeed are now a major export, exporting 90 percent of its production south of the border to the large row crop areas in the United States. Vicdor Manufacturing, manufacturing air seeders, harrows, and all kinds of other implements.

I am going to end my discussion on the industries, because the reason I mentioned all these industries is that they are a diverse group of industries, but largely dependent on the ability to secure product that is some of the primary production that we do in this province. We can look at some of the other major changes that are currently happening, the livestock sector, the hog sector, and there were many in this Legislature who questioned our ability to serve, from an environmental standpoint, as large a change in the livestock industry that we have seen. Yet when one truly looks at the livestock industry, one of the most natural supplies of fertilizer is the excretions of the livestock that

we grow. It is one of the natural products, one of the most natural products that you could buy and apply to your soil to make things grow. So it is a perfect fit for many of the grain production and other livestock productions to grow grasses, to grow hay, to grow alfalfa, and to grow all the grains from a far more natural standpoint than we have ever been able to in this province. Slowly but surely we are weaning ourselves, the farm community is weaning itself from the chemical application process. I think you are going to see a very gradual but slow and sure movement away from many of the manufactured chemicals that we use in the production of agriculture. I think that will be beneficial to all of us.

So I think the diversity that we are seeing in this province serves many various faceted areas in a very different manor than many of us would have given it credit for even 10 years ago. But like I said before, it takes gutsy decisions sometimes. It takes people who have vision and it takes direction. Sometimes when we make those kinds of decisions we also need to look back sometimes and say: where did we come from? I have always said to my children: unless you know where you come from, how do you know where you are going to go? How do you know where you are heading?

I think this is clearly again a demonstration, when we look at this province, how it was formed, where it was formed, why it was formed, the people who came here, how they came here, from whence they arrived, how justice was applied in this province, how indeed the governmental process was established.

Where did they come from? Well, some were the original settlers, as we would say, but then there are those who argue that initially there were no people in this great land, and they either came across on a land bridge or they came across the ocean by boat, but somehow they arrived here. Those people call themselves the aboriginals, the initial settlers, but they were truly foreigners at one point as well in this great land of ours.

Then of course came the European. We all got here in one form or another. Our forefathers got here, whether it was by ox cart or by boat or

later on by train or by plane, but somehow we got here and we established ourselves here.

During that time of establishment, there was a requirement to ensure that there would be justice applied. Police forces were formed. The North-West Mounted Police were formed, and they were stationed initially at Fort Dufferin at Emerson, probably one of the greatest historic sites that we have in this province, and yet it has gone almost a hundred years or over a hundred years unrecognized as such. The town of Emerson at one time was designated—and I see the mayor of Emerson sitting in the gallery at the present time. We welcome you here, Mr. Arseny. Truly we welcome you here in this Legislature, because I believe that you are the mayor of a town that was initially destined and designated to be the capital of this province. Something happened to change that.

But without question, Fort Dufferin remains and the site of Fort Dufferin remains. This will be the site on May 8 as one of the greatest spectacles, I believe, that we have seen in many years when the re-enactment of the march west of the RCMP will happen again at Fort Dufferin. There will be at least 300 people leaving the town of Emerson-Fort Dufferin area to march west to Fort Whoop-Up as an indication of our appreciation to the justice system and the enforcement agencies that we take for granted today, to all the organizers that have been deeply involved in the town of Emerson to make this event a success, to all the organizers within the RCMP police force and others. I congratulate the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Cummings) for the financial contribution that he has made to ensure that the site will be well prepared for the take-off and the celebration that is going to go on at Fort Dufferin. We welcome all of you. We would like to see all of you out to the town of Emerson on those days, in early May, to see off those people who will spend a significant amount of time on the trail re-enacting the trek west of the Northwest Mounted Police.

There are, I think, a few things that I want to touch on today: the reason some of the media reports that we have seen prior to us coming to this Legislature and some of the criticism that has been extended by our honourable friends

opposite, especially those in the NDP party, for not calling the Legislature back into session before we did, the criticism for staying out as long as we did, and the need to bring this Legislature into session in order that we could debate the boundaries bill. [interjection]

Well, the second day that we were in session, we suggested that we introduce the boundaries bill that had such a great need to be debated and passed in this House and considered, and yet the NDP chose not to allow the debate to happen as quickly as we would have liked to have seen it happen. I think this is clearly an indication as to how honest and how serious the members opposite are with the people of Manitoba. I think it is clearly an indication that they are willing to say one thing one day and do exactly the opposite the next. I think it is clearly an indication of how people see them and will see them during the upcoming election campaign. They will know them for what they are, Madam Speaker.

* (1700)

You know, I looked at the Monnin report and some of the criticism that has been extended to this side of the House, although I would say to you there are some political parties that have actually been charged in the courts previously for actions they took during election campaigns and yet nobody can point a finger at the Conservative Party for having had charges laid against it during any actions taken by political people. Yet I challenge the opposition members that they claim the same thing, and they cannot.

The one thing that I want to bring to the attention of this House, Madam Speaker, I want to read a part of the Monnin report. On the 57th page of the Monnin report, towards the bottom of the page, it says (E), and then it says, Sale, underlined. And then Mr. Monnin says in his report: "I also wish to express my views on an incident which occurred during the investigative process. Sale is the NDP member for the constituency of Crescentwood. He was deeply involved in an investigation of his own and in the debate in the Legislature prior to the establishment of this Commission. My investigators held a formal interview with him on August 5, 1998.

"On September 21st or the 22nd he participated in a three-way telephone call with Sorokowski and the peripatetic Kim Sigurdson. He learned that Sorokowski was to be interviewed within a few days by Commission counsel and the two investigators. In response to Sorokowski stating that he was not 'keen' on meeting with investigators, Sale, by his own admission, told Sorokowski ' . . . it is my understanding that if you don't want to meet with investigators, you don't have to.'"

We have heard terms like "lying Filmon." We have heard terms like "so many liars," and the fingers were always pointed at this side of the House. Madam Speaker, where should the finger really have been pointed? Let us ask ourselves that. I raise this as a caution to all of us on all sides of this House. We are elected by the people of this province to represent them. We are elected, and those people have put their trust in us. We are here to serve. Many forget that. Many forget why they came, and for some it does not take very long that they forget why they came, but we are servants of the people, and we should never, never forget that.

See, I have a great deal of difficulty with some of the things that I observe, No. 1, when governments and/or individuals start making decisions based on colour of skin, when we start making decisions or accusations based on linguistic abilities, whether in this House or any other House in this nation. I say to you, Madam Speaker, that we tread very, very delicately in those areas, because in the long term we need only look at our European counterparts and how they interact with each other when they let those kinds of things come to the forefront and become the ruling factors.

So I say to all of us, regardless of what the debate has been, whether it is the Monnin inquiry or whether it is indeed linguistic legislation or indeed policies that reflect the creeds and the colours and the ethnicity of our very nature in this province, let us be very careful of how we proceed and deal with those matters, because they can bite us. Sometimes those things take a long time, and they take a long time to brew and maybe hibernate, but they do come to the forefront. We need to be very careful how we deal with these matters.

So one of the key important factors, Madam Speaker, in my view, one of the most key elements of trust that is put in us by our people who elect us is that we will have the wisdom in the decision-making process that will keep us from the conflicting types of situations that we now see in some of our countries, that some of our people are probably going to have to go to serve in to bring peace to those areas.

I want to take a few minutes to address some of the decisions that our governments have made, and the Conservative Party or the Conservative government has never, I believe, truly been recognized for having a social conscience. The opposition members have accused us many times of not having a social conscience. Yet, let me say this to you, Madam Speaker, that never in the history of any of this province have you seen a party or a government that has been more concerned about the services that we apply and provide for our citizens in health care, in social services. Never have you seen a greater expenditure by any government, even in times of need have you seen a greater expenditure provided to health care and to social services, and indeed to the education of our young who will come and follow us and be here someday.

So for that, Madam Speaker, I take a great deal of pride in having been able to serve, and for that I thank all the people in my constituency for having put their trust in me for the last 10 years to serve them in times of need. For that I am truly thankful to all my colleagues on both sides of the House for having been here and having served our people, because we are truly those that the people have put their trust in. Whether we have significant debates once in awhile, whether we always agree on both sides of the House is immaterial. At the end of the day, it is important that we make the kinds of decisions that reflect the needs of our people, and if we keep on doing that, we will truly, I believe, be held in respect in the eyes of our people.

Thank you very much.

* (1710)

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): It is my pleasure to rise today and put a few words on the

public record having to do with the amendment to the Speech from the Throne.

Madam Speaker, I want to begin by stating that I think, along with all of my colleagues here in the Legislature, that I for one will sadly miss Mr. Neil Gaudry, the MLA for St. Boniface. I want to start this way in my Speech from the Throne because of all the great conversations that I had with Neil and the advice that he gave me, the compassion with which he approached issues. The commitment with which he represented his constituents in St. Boniface I think was exemplary. I do want to say that I will miss Mr. Gaudry in this House, and I wish his wife and his family well.

I also want to congratulate Mr. Peter Liba, our new Lieutenant Governor. I want to congratulate Mr. Liba on his appointment and his participation in the throne speech here a short while ago. With that, I also want to give my regards to the former Lieutenant Governor Mr. Yvon Dumont, who I think did a very fine job of representing Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II here in the province of Manitoba. I also wish Mr. Dumont all the best in his future endeavours, as well.

I also want to welcome everyone back to the Legislature after quite an extended absence from being here in the House. Along with that, I would like to welcome our new pages—hopefully, they have a rewarding experience here in the Legislature working with all of us here in the House—also the staff who have returned to help us out so much in the Clerk's office and here on the floor of the House.

I also want to pay a couple of minutes of respect to those MLAs who, for one reason or another, will not be returning after the next election. I want to point out and signal the thanks of the people of Dauphin for the work that has been done by the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey), the member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger), the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay), the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), and the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski).

It is my assumption that we, as honourable members of the Legislative Assembly, are here

for the betterment of all Manitobans, and when the time comes for an MLA to move on to other things that it is only appropriate that we point out the good job that these members have done, the service that they have provided for Manitobans. Madam Speaker, I do believe that the profession which we have entered here as members of the Legislature is an honourable one, one that a small percentage of Manitobans actually get to fulfil. It does take a great amount of commitment on the part of the people who are willing to put forth their name in public service. That applies to provincial politicians and federal politicians and all those municipal politicians who willingly put their names forward to act on behalf of their constituents.

So to those MLAs that I just mentioned, I wish them all the best as well in their future endeavours and express on behalf of my constituents in Dauphin our thanks for the work they have done over the years that they have been representing people here in Manitoba.

I want to touch a little bit too on the member's statement put forward earlier today by the member for Portage (Mr. Faurichou). The member for Portage was decked out in the outfit worn at the time of 100 years ago. I appreciated the sense of history which he brought to the House this afternoon. I guess it was not 100 years ago. It was during the time of the sinking of the Titanic and in celebration of the event happening at the museum, I understand, in Portage la Prairie, Fort La Reine.

So I want to use that as a springboard actually to brag a little bit about what we have been doing in Dauphin over the last year. Since this House sat last back in June, we have had many opportunities in Dauphin to celebrate our centennial. The town of Dauphin was incorporated in 1899, and this year we had the homecoming and centennial celebrations, all of which were very well attended and very well organized by many, many volunteers from the city of Dauphin and from the R.M. of Dauphin.

We gained city status in 1998. We had an excellent Countryfest, well attended once again. The Ukrainian Festival's attendance rose, as well, in the month of August. Jesus Manifest was a success, and a growing success. We

hosted the second weekend in August, The Passion Play that was up from South Dakota. That was especially gratifying for many of us in Dauphin because we were in a competition Canada-wide to host this event; and, when the organizers at Spearfish, South Dakota came and witnessed the success that we have with events like the Ukrainian Festival and Countryfest and saw the site, the Selo site, on the north side of Riding Mountain, I think very wisely they decided that the city of Dauphin would host that event. I attended the event, and I can tell you it was very much a success.

I was pleased to be joined by my colleague the MLA for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), and also the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Cummings) at Agricultural Heritage Days in Dauphin which took place on the September long weekend.

Madam Speaker, in speaking with members of the Dauphin business community, they tell me that this summer was an excellent summer for people coming into their shops, as far as people coming up to our community and visiting with us, and it really did translate into an economic boom, and that is good news.

Despite this government and all the obstacles they threw up against us, the people of Dauphin persevered and we had an excellent summer. We were strong moving into the fall. The recreation complex, which was completed the year before, had a very successful year and did it is part in attracting people to our community as well.

Also on the good news side, and a lot of local credit to be handed out here, is the work that has been accomplished on our water treatment facility, which I am told is very much ahead of schedule. Dauphin can look forward to clean, safe drinking water in the not-too-distant future. That, of course, is very important for our community, for our region, in attracting further industries, in providing safe drinking water and in attracting business to our area.

Another success story since we have sat here last is the little community of Gilbert Plains, which is experiencing something in rural Manitoba that is a little bit rare. Their

population is actually increasing, and this is due to a number of things. I know the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed) would comment that that is maybe not a fair comment, but he has a hard time arguing with the statistics. We just heard the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) talking about boundary redistribution. Our constituencies in the Parkland area are getting larger, because we are losing population. Rural depopulation is happening. If the government wants to stick its head in the sand some place and not understand that and not take action on attracting people to the rural areas, then it can do so at its peril.

We will not do that on this side of the House. We are going to look very closely with a lot of local people, and we are going to work to come up with ideas that will attract people to rural Manitoba, much like the little village of Gilbert Plains whose success has given them the opportunity, if they would like, to move from being a village to being a town.

Another success story in my constituency deals with some activity that is going on at the Valley River First Nation, which is located northwest of the town of Grandview. The chief there, Mr. Gordon McKay, and his councillors have been working very hard in a co-operative way with the communities surrounding the Valley River First Nation and they have some good ideas on the go in the area of ecotourism, in the area of aboriginal tourism. They have some good plans for economic development.

* (1720)

Madam Speaker, we should all be supportive of these kinds of efforts put forth by the First Nations community, not like what I just heard the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) saying when he referred to aboriginal people as foreigners. That is not the attitude that provides for co-operation, that is not the kind of attitude that is emanating from this government that is helpful in solving some of the concerns of our aboriginal people in this province.

So, Madam Speaker, I want to see happening in the rest of the region the kind of announcements that I saw last week with the Consolidated Growers and Processors

announcing the construction of the world's largest hemp processing plant near the city of Dauphin.

We may still be at that stage where people are still getting used to the fact that hemp production and hemp growth and the spin-off jobs associated with hemp production is a little bit of a novelty. In Dauphin, we have had comments from people about, oh, in Dauphin, we are high on hemp because we are high on the jobs that are going to come because of this processing plant. Well, this is industrial hemp. You would pretty much have to smoke a whole quarter-section just to get a little bit of a buzz on, but we understand that in this new ball game that we are entering with hemp there are going to be some misconceptions. What we have to do is work together, educate people about the realities of hemp, educate people of all the uses of this plant.

When the announcement was made, I was fortunate enough to be joined by my colleague the MLA for Interlake (Mr. C. Evans), who also threw his considerable weight behind the project. We were all very happy that he did that.

One of the things that hemp will do, as well, is provide for the farmers in our area a way to diversify their own farm operations. The farmers in the Parkland area have never been a group to shy away from a challenge. They have never been a group that would shy away from diversifying or adding value onto their product. This will be no exception, Madam Speaker. The farmers in our area have taken on with zeal the challenge of producing more and more and more acreage for hemp. Farmers in our area have, in a progressive way, taken that risk to grow hemp, to actually plant the seed into the ground so that we could land this deal with Consolidated Growers and Processors. It is going to be a good deal for our part of the world.

Madam Speaker, the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) also pointed out that we wanted to be back in this Legislature so that we could debate the new boundaries. Well, that was one of the things that I would have loved to have had a chance to talk about. One of the most frustrating parts of the nine and a half months that we spent outside of this Legislature was

dealing with farmers in my area who wanted all 57 of us in this Legislature debating the crisis in agriculture. That is important to our area in the Parkland, and it is important to most of the areas that we represent in this province.

Because this government got itself wrapped up in an election rigging scandal and because this government did not want to answer tough questions on health care and education, we were the only politicians in this country who did not get an opportunity this fall to come into this Legislature and debate solutions for our farmers. That is where the member for Emerson is absolutely wrong. We wanted to come in here and we wanted to talk about some of the important issues facing the citizens of this province. We did not want excuses why we could not be here.

We wanted to be here so we could talk about the farm aid package. That is why I am so glad that my colleague the MLA for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) set up a series of meetings on agriculture. I was glad to join with her in six of the seven meetings that we held. We gave farmers, we gave producers, we gave anybody who wanted to attend a chance to come and tell us how important agriculture is to the rural economy, and we gave farmers the opportunity to come and tell us what they thought of this Farm Aid package that had been talked about throughout the fall.

We gave them that chance. We listened to people from the National Farmers Union. We listened to people from Keystone Agricultural Producers. We listened to people from the Women's Institute. We listened to people from each of the communities in each of the regions that we went to. We listened and put together their ideas, so that this government and our party as the opposition can put together some kind of alternatives and some kind of solutions to help our farm communities.

The other issue in the Parkland that really has been botched by this government is the whole area of health care. Madam Speaker, two years in a row now the amount of money going to the Parkland Region has been cut by 4 percent—4 percent in each of the last two years. Further to that, our Parkland Region has been

asked to assume the administrative costs of the Parkland Regional Health Authority. That is more money that the Parkland Regional Health Authority has to take out of its budget that it did not have to before. Where does this government think that the Parkland Regional Health Authority is going to get the money to pay for nurses, for equipment, for doctors, for everything we need to put forth a quality health care system when this government time and time again cuts from that pile of money that is supposed to go to health care in the Parklands?

Each year, Parkland health has been cut by 4 percent. Now, maybe the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) does not want to face up to that fact, but those are the cold hard facts. There is less money for health in the Parkland Region now than there was three years ago, because this government took the money out and denied that to the Parkland Region. Is it any wonder that the people in Gilbert Plains are worried about their ambulance service when this government continues to cut money out of our Parkland budget? Is it any wonder that the people in Grandview are worried about the future of their hospital when this government continues to cut money out of the Parkland health budget? Is it any wonder why we have problems attracting doctors to the community of Grandview when they are under so much pressure because of the cutbacks of this government in health care?

Now, let us look at education. Does it get any better? No, it certainly does not. In our area, in education, every year that this government has been there since the last election they have cut the amount of money going to education in the Parkland, and they have told local authorities to raise the taxes. They have told local authorities, you either cut the budgets—and it happened in Beautiful Plains School Division as well—you either cut your budget, you either cut the resources in the schools or raise your local taxes.

This government would love to have outside of the town of Neepawa or the town of Dauphin or the town of Roblin, they would love to have a big billboard that says: 11 years and we have not raised your taxes. Well, I am sorry, you did. Outside of Roblin, when you put that sign up

that says you have not raised taxes in 11 years, you put another sign underneath that says we have your local town council to do it for us, because that is what you are doing. You are cutting the amount of money that is going into Parkland education and you are telling local people to raise the taxes themselves. That is a cowardly way to do it, and you ought not to be doing that.

My attitude is we should call an election so that the people in the Parkland area can make a decision on the decisions that you have been making. I do not think you will be too happy with the outcome.

Madam Speaker, the other way that local schools are being forced to raise money is by sending the students of the schools out to do some selling of chocolate bars, door-to-door sales, so that they can have textbooks in their classes, garage sales so they can have computers in the classes.

* (1730)

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Pursuant to subrule 40.(3), I am interrupting the proceedings in order to put the question on the motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), that is the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do the members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: That the motion be amended by adding to it after the word "session" the following words:

But this House regrets that this government has failed to meet the goals of Manitobans by failing to uphold basic democratic principles as key government officials were involved in a vote-rigging plot, which, as the Monnin inquiry states, "constitutes an unconscionable debasement of the citizen's right to vote. To reduce the voting rights of individuals is a violation of our democratic system," and has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba and this House.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Formal Vote

Mr. Martindale: Yeas and Nays, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

Division

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

Yeas

Barrett, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Hickes, Kowalski, Lamoureux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Mihychuk, Reid, Robinson, Sale, Santos, Struthers, Wowchuk.

Nays

Cummings, Derkach, Downey, Driedger (Charleswood), Driedger (Steinbach), Dyck, Enns, Faurshou, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Penner, Pitura, Praznik, Radcliffe, Reimer, Render, Rocan, Stefanson, Sveinson, Toews, Tweed, Vodrey.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 22, Nays 29.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly defeated.

* * *

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I will be presenting the 1999-2000 Budget on April 29.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that debate be now adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, there may be a willingness of the House to call it six o'clock. [agreed]

Madam Speaker: The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning (Friday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 15, 1999

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