

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

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Eighth Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 26, 2003

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PETITIONS

Highway 32

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I wish to present the following petition. These are the reasons for this petition:

Rural highways are part of the mandate of the Province of Manitoba.

Under the previous commitment, the Province of Manitoba would be covering the costs of four-laning that portion of Highway 32 that runs through Winkler, Manitoba.

The Department of Transportation and Government Services has altered its position and will now undertake the project only if the City of Winkler will pay half of the total cost of construction. The provincial government's offloading of its previous commitment will cost the City of Winkler several million dollars.

The City of Winkler has now been informed that it will have to wait several years before this project could be undertaken.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Transportation and Government Services to consider honouring the previous commitment and complete the four-laning of Highway 32 through the city of Winkler, absorbing all costs related to the construction as previously agreed.

To request the Minister of Transportation and Government Services to consider the responsibility of the Department of Transportation

and Government Services for the construction of rural highways.

To request the Minister of Transportation and Government Services to consider the significant and strategic importance of the completion of four-laning Highway 32 through the city of Winkler, especially as it relates to the economic growth and the development of the city of Winkler and its trading area.

To request the Minister of Transportation and Government Services to consider the valuable contribution of the city of Winkler and its trading area to the provincial economy and re-prioritize the four-laning of Highway 32 for the 2004 construction season.

These are submitted by Lloyd Thiessen, Al Rempel, Wendell Ewert, Brenda Storey and others.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with our Rule 132(6), when a petition is read it is deemed to be received by the House.

Co-op Program for Nursing Students

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. The background to the petition is as follows:

* (13:35)

A co-op program for nursing students at the University of Manitoba was approved by the Senate and the Board of Governors.

This program will provide the opportunity for students to apply their theoretical knowledge in the workplace through supervised work terms for which they are paid.

Students are hired by participating agencies under supervision of a workplace employee who serves as a mentor.

Students assume responsibilities suitable for their level of knowledge and expertise and will provide patients with much-needed nursing.

The co-op program will enable nursing students to acquire valuable experience by working with a seasoned mentor, become more proficient and better able to handle heavier workloads and increase their knowledge, skills and confidence.

This program will enable students to earn income to help reduce their debt load.

The Department of Health will benefit through reduced orientation costs for new graduates and an increased likelihood that new graduates will remain in the province.

Although the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) was unable to attend the round table held on November 7, 2003, he graciously sent a representative who restated his position to work with the students to reach a creative solution.

Several Canadian universities have successfully implemented nursing co-op programs. Several faculties within the University of Manitoba have such a program available to their students. Therefore, students within the Faculty of Nursing should have equal opportunity and access to a co-op program.

This program will offer students valuable experience and provide the confidence and strength they will need in the future.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Legislative Assembly to consider supporting the proposed co-op program.

Signed by Bev Montgomery Foster, Eva King, Cheryl McDonald and others.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

In accordance with our Rule 132(6), when a petition is read it is deemed to be received by the House.

I would just like to inform our guests that are in the public gallery, there is to be no participation by our guests and that includes ap-

plauding. I ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

Sales Tax Proposal

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

These are the reasons for the petition:

The Mayor of Winnipeg is proposing a new deal which will result in new user fees and additional taxes for citizens of the city of Winnipeg.

One of these proposed changes requires the provincial government to approve an increase in the sales tax.

The Balanced Budget, Debt Repayment and Taxpayer Accountability Act requires a referendum take place before the provincial government can increase major taxes, including the retail sales tax.

*(13:40)

The Doer government has been silent on whether they will make the necessary legislative changes required to give the City of Winnipeg additional taxing powers.

Taxpayers deserve to have a say before having any major new taxes imposed upon them.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Doer) notify the City of Winnipeg that the provincial government will not allow an increase of the sales tax without a referendum being held as required under balanced budget legislation.

This petition is presented by G. Oliver, J. Martens, William Hiebert and others.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with our Rule 132(6), when a petition is read it is deemed to be received by the House.

I would just like to inform all members when they bring a petition forward, the rule states that you must read the first three names that are on the petition.

Walleye

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition. The background to this petition is as follows:

Fish stocks in Lake Winnipegosis began to decline in the 1960s. The walleye fishery on Lake Winnipegosis has been in serious trouble for many years.

A similar situation happened in Lake Erie but it was handled much more effectively. In Lake Erie, a sound science-based management program was implemented and the stocks rebounded. As a result, production of walleye on Lake Erie for 1980 to 2001 averaged 182 percent of the estimated sustainable yield.

In contrast from 1980 to 2001, the average annual harvest of walleye on Lake Winnipegosis was about 14 percent of the estimated sustainable yield for the lake.

Much better management of a walleye fishery on Lake Erie shows that good management of a walleye fishery is possible.

The fishermen of Lake Winnipegosis have been deprived of an estimated 72 million of income between 1980 and 2001.

Economic models of the effects of such primary income loss usually estimate a significant multiplier effect and that may well mean a loss of several hundred million dollars in economic activity for the region.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Finance and the Auditor General to consider undertaking a thorough investigation of the provincial management of the walleye fishery on Lake Winnipegosis.

Signed by George Boucher, Ray Delaronde, Charlie Boucher and others.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with our Rule 132(6), when a petition is read it is deemed to be received by the House.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the 2002-2003 Annual Report for Advanced Education and Training and the 2002-2003 Annual Report of the Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Board.

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the 2002-2003 Annual Report for the Department of Education and Youth.

*(13:45)

Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Industry, Economic Development and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I rise to table for this House the Report by the All-party Task Force on Security, a review of The Security Management Act.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 7—The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that Bill 7, The Criminal Property Forfeiture Act; Loi sur la confiscation pénale de biens, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, this act enables police to seek court orders to forfeit property that comes from proceeds of crime or that is used to commit crime and presumes that the property of members of criminal organizations is from such proceeds of crime, and the proceeds would go to the Victims Assistance Fund or Legal Aid.

Motion agreed to.

Bill—8 The Employment and Income Assistance Amendment Act (One-Tier Assistance for Rural and Northern Manitoba)

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Family Services and Housing): I move, seconded by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade (Ms. Mihychuk), that Bill 8, The

Employment and Income Assistance Amendment Act (One-Tier Assistance for Rural and Northern Manitoba), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Melnick: Mr. Speaker, this bill will establish a one-tier system of income assistance in rural and northern Manitoba. This initiative was requested by the Association of Manitoba Municipalities shortly after the Province assumed responsibility for the delivery of income assistance in the city of Winnipeg in April 1999. A single delivery system will eliminate duplication and administration and allow income assistance benefits and training and employment measures to be delivered in a consistent, efficient and effective manner throughout Manitoba.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 201—The Taxpayer Protection Legal Representation Act (Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Act Amended)

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): I move, seconded by the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen), that Bill 201, The Taxpayer Protection Legal Representation Act (Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Act Amended), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Hawranik: This bill amends The Legal Aid Services Society Act by making criminal organizations ineligible for Legal Aid. It also makes ineligible members and associates of criminal organizations who receive income or property from the organizations.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us from Carberry Collegiate 45 Grade 9 students under the direction of Mrs. Raegan Dyck and Mr. Royce Hollier. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed).

Also in the public gallery we have with us today 50 nursing students from the Co-op program. These students are under the direction of Ms. Linda West.

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

*(13:50)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

**Hells Angels Associates Trial
Legal Aid**

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): My question is to the Minister of Justice. Legal Aid is designed to pay for legal services for those who cannot afford a lawyer. In fact, in today's *Winnipeg Free Press* the minister was quoted as saying: "it was set up so the poor could have access to lawyers."

Given that the Hells Angels associates have been approved by Legal Aid, can the minister provide his guarantee that the income and the assets of these Hells Angels associates have been investigated sufficiently to satisfy all taxpaying Manitobans that they qualify for Legal Aid assistance?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I wonder, Mr. Speaker, why there was not some interest in this issue and this challenge when the former government was prepared to put out millions upon millions upon millions for defence of a prosecution against members of a criminal organization.

Having said that, I am advised there is protocol in place in Legal Aid in Manitoba and indeed in other legal aid programs in Canada to determine eligibility, Mr. Speaker, and I am advised that criteria have been followed as it has been in earlier times.

Mr. Hawranik: In Québec, nine Hells Angels members admitted to the courts that the Hells Angels were in fact a criminal organization. Given the fact the Hells Angels has profited by millions of dollars from crime, did the minister instruct Legal Aid to include the assets and income of the Hells Angels to be taken into

account before Legal Aid decides whether they qualified for legal aid?

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure to have had discussions with the justice minister in Québec about this challenge. It is one that exists way beyond the borders of Manitoba. Legal Aid does have the power, of course, in its legislation to investigate individual cases and it is my understanding, I am advised by Legal Aid that they are doing an investigation into the matters raised by the member opposite.

Bill 201 Minister's Support

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): The Hells Angels associates are members of a criminal organization which has taken millions of dollars through criminal activity, preying on the drug and the prostitution trade throughout North America and Manitoba. Does the minister believe that the taxpayers should pay for the defence of the Hells Angels associates, and if he does not, will he be supporting my private member's bill, The Taxpayer Protection Legal Representation Act?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, any deceiving of Legal Aid disentitles an applicant and, in any event, if assets are found, that will certainly be taken into account in determining eligibility at any time, even as a matter proceeds.

The question really is, the real challenge is finding the assets of members of criminal organizations. Today for the first time in Canada, legislation is being tabled, Mr. Speaker, that presumes that the property of members of criminal organizations are proceeds of crime and can be seized and sold and the monies applied to legal aid, a first in Canada.

Hells Angels Associates Trial Appointment of Lawyers

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, once again we have seen this Minister of Justice at the last minute scraping and covering in order to deal with what is a very important issue in this province. On the eve of a court-ordered deadline,

he has now appointed four Legal Aid lawyers and one private defence lawyer.

Given that he knows there will be a question of conflict, can he provide assurance that he has considered that?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, it was under this Government that challenge was made to certain assumptions and, indeed, arguments that applicants for legal aid in Manitoba have a right to choose their counsel. We took that on as a province and I am pleased with the outcome, an outcome that paves the way now for a wholesale review of legal aid and eligibility for legal aid in Manitoba. I look forward to the results of that for timely action because the status quo in terms of legal aid in Manitoba is not acceptable.

Mr. Cummings: For every question that has been asked in this area, the minister has been very circumspect and his answers have not provided a great deal of light on how much confidence he has in proceeding with this issue, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I ask this minister: Has he considered the ramifications of the direction that he is going?

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, the direction that is being taken is a direction laid out by the court, by Madam Justice Beard. The department officials know full well what the objectives are, and I have full confidence that they are meeting the requirements as set out by the court and pursuing all the criteria that the court has laid out.

* (13:55)

Mr. Cummings: It is very good to see the minister stand up and be accountable on this issue. It seems to me then they should be quite comfortable in answering the question. Is he prepared to provide assurances to the people of this province, to the ratepayers of this province that this trial will, in fact, proceed?

Mr. Mackintosh: I refer members opposite and the member in particular to the sub justice

convention that are fundamental rules of how we conduct business in this Legislature. The matter is before the courts of Manitoba. That is the appropriate forum and I fully trust the prosecutors and the other officials involved in this matter to act appropriately to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the prosecution of this case continues.

**James Driskell
Bail Request**

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, James Driskell was convicted of murder in 1991 and since then he has been serving his sentence. Given the new information that has been put forward in the Driskell case, tomorrow Driskell's lawyers are asking for his release pending a review of this case under the Criminal Code.

Mr. Speaker, what instructions has the Justice Minister given to his Crown attorneys with respect to bail?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It is one thing to have a question like that from, you know, this is a lawyer that just got up in the House and asked if I was going to give instructions on a particular matter before the court, Mr. Speaker. That is unbelievable. What does he want to do, jeopardize all the cases before the courts in Manitoba by insisting that we in this Legislature start being prosecutor, judge and jury?

Those matters are before a forum designed over centuries to ensure that partisan or political interests are not what drives justice in Manitoba.

Mr. Hawranik: Mr. Speaker, this Justice Minister has—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Hawranik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was not asking the minister for anything with respect to the case itself, with the trial itself, with the motion itself. What instructions have you given to your Crown attorneys? That has nothing to do with the case. It is not confidential information.

Given the fact that this Justice Minister is privy to all the information and the evidence and the reports in the Driskell case, does this minister believe there is enough new evidence for a new trial for Driskell?

Mr. Mackintosh: I do not believe what I am hearing. In the year 2003, someone skilled in the law gets up and asks the Attorney General to direct his prosecutors in a particular case. Unbelievable, Mr. Speaker.

I can tell you what we are committed to. We are committed to fair prosecutions, not persecutions, not political grandstanding in the courts. It is unbelievable what I am being asked. I will remind the member, if he needs this reminder, but the issues that are before the court are determined by the available evidence, by the law, by the threshold tests in respect of the particular matter that is before the court tomorrow. I fully trust that the professionals who are paid to do this work will conduct themselves in accordance with the law and the evidence.

Mr. Hawranik: I will remind the minister to do his job.

Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, it was reported that the provincial senior Crown attorney withdrew from Driskell's bail application and a lawyer from the private bar was appointed to take over the case. Can the minister advise this House why the Justice Department would have contracted out with a private lawyer to act as an independent prosecutor in this case?

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, If I was to interfere and direct the prosecution in this particular matter and this particular hearing, the member and his caucus would be up tomorrow or the next day demanding resignation from me. It just shows how ridiculous the question is. In terms of the particular question, that will be answered in the appropriate forum which is the court.

I might just advise the House that today I was pleased that we have ordered an outside independent review of matters involving the James Driskell matter. A former provincial court judge, John Enns, has been asked to conduct that review to look at issues of disclosure past and

future and compare the police review to matters in the prosecution file.

* (14:00)

Child Pornography Sentence Lengths

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Yesterday, a man charged with the possession of 132 graphic photos of children as young as six engaged in sexual activity received a conditional discharge. When will this Government stand up for the 132 abused children and give real time for a horrific crime?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a serious misunderstanding, I think, by members opposite. The person who is entitled and is given the authority in law to give real time is the judge. That was where the decision came from.

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, 132 children have had their lives damaged and the guy responsible gets no jail time. What is the minister going to do about this issue?

Mr. Mackintosh: I can say that there certainly is a sharing of some disappointment with the department on the outcome of that. That was not the disposition asked for. There was a sentence asked for.

Mr. Speaker, I will just advise the member opposite that the issue though of child pornography is a very serious one that this Government is committed to countering as best as possible. That is why we have worked with law enforcement, Child Find and our Prosecutions branch to make sure that Manitoba has an integrated Child Exploitation Unit. It has CyberTip.ca. It has specialized approaches to child pornography in our courts. We are providing best practices. Others are looking at what Manitoba is doing, and we will continue with that approach.

Mr. Schuler: As the father of three young children, I find this minister's answer disgusting. As the former chair of the River East School Division, we took safety of our children seriously. Every child is special and deserves special

protection. When will this minister take kiddie porn seriously and protect the youngest in our society instead of standing there talking in circles and doing nothing?

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, I know he had the questions written out and practised them, but I would remind the member of my answer to the first question. This was a decision of a judge. There was a position put forward—*[interjection]*

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, it is no time for hysteria. It is time for considered action and that is what we are committed to. I know the matter the member raised is being looked at to determine if there are grounds for appeal by the Prosecutions branch.

Mr. Speaker, as well, I am very pleased to say that the department and Prosecutions is looking at developing a comprehensive pornography approach that builds on the strength of the Prosecutions' approach so far. There is more to do and we will do whatever is necessary.

Nursing Co-op Program Development

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, the gallery is full of nursing students who feel that a co-op nursing program would go a long way in keeping them here when they graduate. With the nursing shortage in Manitoba of over 1100 nurses, keeping new grads here is absolutely critical.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health if he is prepared to proactively move to develop a nursing co-op program which will help to keep our new grads in Manitoba?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): I, too, welcome the nurses that are participating as part of the Issues and Trends program at the University of Manitoba on the issue of co-op nursing education as part of the program. I understand it is part of their role and responsibilities to advocate for a nursing co-op program, including letter writing, including attendance,

including a variety of activities, and I commend them on participating in this process.

I can indicate, Mr. Speaker, that what I have done is I have written to each. Putting in place a co-op nursing education program is an intricate undertaking. It requires approval by the university, it requires approval by the Council on Post-Secondary Education. It requires approval by employers and it requires negotiation as part of the collective bargaining process. I have written personally to all of these individuals and asked their advice about the desirability and feasibility of such a program.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, the Senate of the University of Manitoba and the faculty have already approved this quite some time ago. The nursing union leadership says that it is not prepared to let nursing students work along its members in a co-op program. I would like to ask the Minister of Health if he is prepared to demonstrate leadership in this issue and tell the union that he would like to see this program implemented in Manitoba.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, over the past four years, with respect to nursing, we have increased graduating nurses in Manitoba by threefold. When we came into office, there were a thousand less nurses that had been let go during the 1990s. We increased by threefold.

Secondly, we have increased nurses' wages by 38 percent over the past four years in conjunction with negotiations with union, as opposed to reductions to nurses' salaries that occurred in the 1990s.

Finally, and most important, I think, for nursing and nursing students is the fact that with the union we are working on a program of full time, part time, because during the 1990s when a thousand nurses were fired, Mr. Speaker, they were forced to take part-time jobs and we are now trying to go back to full-time work. We are working jointly with the nurses union to have full-time jobs for nurses at a 65% target level, something that has not been in place for a decade.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, well, the minister totally avoided answering that question and he is

totally avoiding his leadership responsibility in looking at some of these issues. There are already over 700 signatures on the student nurses' petition supporting a nursing co-op program, 700 signatures. Will the Minister of Health commit today to the development of a valuable nursing co-op program in Manitoba?

Mr. Chomiak: As I indicated, I have responded in fact to the nurses who, as part of their Issues and Trends program have been tasked with dealing with this issue of co-op education. I have written to the university who I believe in 1999 when the member opposite was legislative assistant to the Minister of Health had dealings with that program. Since then, as I understand, there has been formal approval from the university. We also require formal approval from COPSE. We also require formal approval from the other authorities. We have asked for that advice and we will deal with that when we receive the advice from all these individuals.

Sewage Treatment Facilities Upgrading

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): It was in September that the then-Minister of Conservation announced that he had advised the City of Winnipeg they would have to comply with a Clean Environment Commission ruling to upgrade their water treatment facilities within the next 20 years. Unfortunately, he would not commit to providing financial assistance to the City to accomplish this upgrade.

Given that we have witnessed another calamity that has seen raw sewage spewing into the Assiniboine River, will the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Mihychuk) now outline what support the Province will provide the City of Winnipeg to upgrade the waste water system?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): The Clean—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I just want to remind all honourable members if you are not informed but the questions are asked of the Government, and it is up to the Government whom they wish to answer.

* (14:10)

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have discussed the Clean Environment Commission report including sections dealing with tri-level funding mechanisms that have been in place in other projects in the past to deal with this priority of raw sewage and the treatment of raw sewage in Winnipeg. The Clean Environment Commission not only talks about a time frame but it talks about a partnership. We have indicated to the City that we are going to participate in that partnership. We accept the responsibilities, as we do in Portage, with the tripartite system that was in place as recommended by the Clean Environment Commission in Brandon for upgrades in water treatment, as many other projects. We are working with the City to get the third level of government, the federal level, consistent with the CEC recommendation.

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, it is always somebody else's issue according to this Premier.

This Premier continues to pay lip service to water quality in Manitoba. He knows the City cannot complete a project of this magnitude without considerable provincial support. The question is simple: Three months after the Clean Environment Commission issued its report, Manitobans want to know what the Province is going to do to assist the City of Winnipeg to fix this problem.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member opposite has not read the report, but it does recommend three levels of government participate in the long-term issues in the report and we have said, yes, we are willing to be one of the three partners with the City and with the federal government. So the answer to that issue is yes. Are we working with the City on the time frame and federal government? Yes. The answer to that is yes. Unlike members opposite who sat on a Clean Environment Commission report that was issued to them in 1992 and they did nothing about raw sewage, we are going to act on the Clean Environment Commission report.

Mr. Loewen : Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would just like to remind all honourable members when a Speaker is standing all members should be seated and the Speaker should be heard in silence. I ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

Mr. Loewen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Doer government is already reneging on a major commitment included in its Throne Speech. To claim they are committed to improving water equality while at the same time failing to provide any concrete support to the City of Winnipeg to stop the flow of raw sewage into our rivers is absolutely ridiculous.

As the Premier will not answer the question, I would ask the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Mihychuk) whether she will stand up today and tell the people of Manitoba what concrete support they are willing to give the City of Winnipeg to fix this problem.

Mr. Doer: I want to point out to the member opposite, who is feigning indignation, that in 1987 when we brought the city of Winnipeg under The Clean Environment Act, under The Environment Act of Manitoba, Tories all across the way voted against it, wanted to keep the old ways of raw sewage in Winnipeg not under The Environment Act of Manitoba. We passed that act.

In 1992, you had an opportunity. You did nothing. We have committed ourselves to implementing the Clean Environment Commission report and that includes cash, Mr. Speaker. We are negotiating the amount of cash per year with the City but there will be financial support as recommended by the Clean Environment Commission to the City of Winnipeg to get the job done.

An Honourable Member: The Premier can suck and blow at the same time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would like to ask the co-operation and assistance of all honourable members. I think it is only proper that we have one member at a time asking questions and one member at a time answering questions. It is very difficult to hear when everyone is trying to ask a question or everyone is trying to answer the question. It is very, very difficult.

If there is a breach of the rule, I cannot hear. I am sure that all honourable members would expect me to make a ruling if there is a breach of the rule. I kindly ask for your co-operation and assistance to be able to hear the questions and the answers.

City of Winnipeg Revenue/Tax Proposals

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Many Manitobans are calling for change. For example, we have nurses here today who are calling for change on co-operative education programs.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has fallen behind the rest of Canada in the last four years in terms of economic growth, job growth and population growth. The status quo is not working. Mayor Glen Murray is to be praised for recognizing that the status quo is not working well enough and for proposing changes that will allow lowering of the onerous and regressive property taxes in Winnipeg.

It would appear the Premier is closing doors and options for change as fast as Mayor Murray is opening them. Can the Premier explain why he is not a champion for the city of Winnipeg? Can he explain why he is closing options for the City of Winnipeg even before their final proposal and consultations are ready?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, even the mayor of Winnipeg after listening to the views of citizens has said he is not going to now proceed with a proposal to tax fuel in the winter. The member opposite wants to tax the cold weather in the winter. Most other members in this Chamber probably do not.

Municipal Governments Revenue/Tax Proposals

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the Premier is trying to twist things around as usual.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, surely the provincial government should be opening doors instead of closing doors for Manitobans.

I was in Brandon this morning at the Association of Manitoba Municipalities meeting. Many there viewed Mayor Murray's proposal for a new deal as an opportunity for other municipalities as well.

Can the Premier tell the members of this Legislature how he will deal with proposals for new deals from other municipalities? Will he consider them one at a time or will the Premier provide a framework under which all municipalities in Manitoba can have a new deal?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I hope the member opposite is helping us get some of that \$165 million in GST gasoline tax that he promised to abolish in 1993 back as a new deal into Manitoba for infrastructure and roads. When the member opposite talks about opening a door, the member opposite has two doors, one door to close the floodway in Selkirk and another door to open the floodway in Winnipeg. We just want one door in terms of city issues from this member. That is all we ask.

Mr. Gerrard: That answer is called missing the pitch by a country mile.

Many of the municipal leaders at the AMM convention were talking of the need for change. Many realized that property taxes are far too high in Manitoba, and, like Mayor Glen Murray, are seeking change.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier open the door for change for all municipalities in Manitoba? I ask the Premier to answer the question, to see that the ball is coming at him.

Mr. Doer: One of the really interesting issues for municipalities is the fact that we in the provincial sector and members opposite when they were in government, the taxes for gasoline were all invested in roads, infrastructure, transit and other renewable infrastructure proposals in Manitoba. A situation now that we have in Ottawa, the member opposite that was asking the questions was part of this regime that took \$165 million in GST gasoline taxes, diesel taxes and took it to Ottawa and just only in the last couple of years has returned less than 4 percent.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, all members of this Chamber can join together in calling on the

federal government to return to the users the gasoline and diesel tax for roads, highways, renewable energy, renewable infrastructure here in Manitoba. This is something I think we can unite on, and I am glad the member opposite now has seen the light on the road to Damascus to get that gasoline tax back to Manitoba.

Devils Lake Outlet Status

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Interlake, I am deeply concerned about the water quality in Lake Winnipeg, as this body of water in its entirety lies within the borders of my constituency. The proposed outlet at Devils Lake, North Dakota, could have serious implications in terms of foreign biota transfer and nutrient overload in our lake. Could the Minister responsible for Water Stewardship please update the House on Manitoba's efforts to oppose the Devils Lake outlet?

* (14:20)

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Water Stewardship): I am very pleased to be able to answer a question on water stewardship in this province, a very critical issue, and that is the proposed Devils Lake outlet. In fact there was construction of the first stretch of that this year. What I will indicate is very clearly we oppose that. We have called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs for joint reference from the federal government with the U.S. federal government on Devils Lake to the IJC.

I am very pleased to also report that as of yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I sent a letter on behalf of all members of this Legislature. In fact, the Premier (Mr. Doer), the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) and the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) met last week and we have indicated clearly that we all in this Legislature are opposed to the Devils Lake outlet. We are sending a clear message to Washington and to our own federal government. It is time to get involved, time to stop this outlet.

I. H. Asper School of Business Tuition Increase

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, the University of Manitoba students at

the I. H. Asper School of Business are voting to approve a proposed 112% tuition increase. Can the Minister of Advanced Education advise this House if she is planning to approve this increase if requested to do so?

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for her question. I am always very happy to have a question about Advanced Education.

I noticed the member in her question said that the students are voting to approve. I do not know whether she knows the conclusion to this vote. Her question would suggest she does. I do not. I have not received a proposal from the I. H. Asper School of Business. Nothing has been submitted to me. Nothing has been submitted to the Council on Post-Secondary Education, so it is really, at this stage, a very hypothetical question and no, I do not have an answer today for it.

Post-Secondary Education Tuition Increase

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, since coming to office, the Doer government has approved a 20% increase in dental hygiene tuition, a 32% increase in pharmacy tuition, a 79% increase in dentistry tuition, a 91% increase in law tuition, and now, potentially, 112% increase in business tuition. Is the Minister of Advanced Education's intent to continually approve requested increases?

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I find it utterly bizarre that this member when in government was party to decisions that doubled tuition for all students in Manitoba's universities, who now asks me a question concerning the increases in tuition which affect about 500 out of 45 000 students, in other words, about 1.5 percent of students, all of them enrolled in professional faculties, all of them guaranteed high-earning positions when they complete their course of studies.

I also point out that one thing this member has not stated in her question is the Doer government has increased university enrolment to about 30 percent.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, we have a government that speaks out of both sides of its mouth. On one hand it says there is a tuition freeze and on the other hand it allows tuition increases. Will the Minister of Education stand up today and indicate that her Government has misled students and Manitobans and that there really is no tuition freeze?

Ms. McGifford: Mr. Speaker, what this Government has led is a 30% increase in university enrolment in the province. This Government knows that without an education strategy there is no economic strategy. This Government knows that education is the best guarantee of good health and freedom from poverty. This Government stands for education, education, education. That government stood for thousands of students leaving the province.

Kenaston Underpass Funding

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, in response to a failure by the Premier (Mr. Doer) to live up to another one of his election promises to provide infrastructure funding to the City of Winnipeg for construction of the Kenaston underpass, the City of Winnipeg has now had to announce that they are going to have to delay this much-needed project.

I would ask the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, if she is allowed to answer this question, if she can explain to the people living in Winnipeg and in Manitoba why the Premier has decided to renege on this election promise.

Hon. MaryAnn Mihychuk (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade): I want to thank the member for the question and clarify that the funding and commitment for the Kenaston underpass is still strong from the Province. We will work with the City on advancing the project and expect the federal government to also join. If the City of Winnipeg chooses to delay or extend their projects, that is within their mandate and we respect them for that.

Co-op Slaughter Facility Feasibility Study

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, Yesterday, last night, the Minister of Agriculture

(Ms. Wowchuk) and I attended a meeting, so did the minister of industry and trade, in Vita, Manitoba, to discuss the proposal to convert a hog-slaughtering plant, Best Brand Meats, to a cull-cow slaughter plant. It is my understanding that Deloitte & Touche has been commissioned to prepare a feasibility study. Would the minister today be prepared to table that feasibility study in the House, as I understand the minister has a copy of that study? Would she be prepared to table that?

Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Industry, Economic Development and Mines): In fact the minister and I did attend, along with the member from Pembina—

An Honourable Member: Emerson.

Mr. Smith:—Emerson, and, certainly, the Ranchers Choice did in fact give some information to a lot of folks that were out there that are producers in the industry. They went over their views of what they would like to attain, certainly working ahead with what has happened in the BSE industry and non-capacity in Manitoba for slaughtering of the animals.

Mr. Speaker, they did an excellent presentation in putting that information out. We were there to assist them, as we have been throughout this entire process. I can tell you this is being delivered and brought forth by the industry, by the producers. We are proud to be part of working with them on a solution for the BSE.

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Nursing Co-op Program

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, our health care system and front-line workers continue to face incredible stress on a day-to-day basis. Much of this stress is the result of the Doer government's failed policies and unwillingness to explore new ideas. Manitoba's nursing shortage has doubled under the mandate of the NDP and too many nursing students leave after graduation.

However, a potential solution exists, introducing a nursing co-op program. The benefits to

students, nurses and our health care system are many. The co-op program will enable nursing students to acquire valuable experience by working with a mentor, become more proficient and better able to handle heavier workloads and increase their knowledge, skills and confidence. The Department of Health will benefit through reduced orientation costs for new students and an increased likelihood that new graduates will remain in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of rising in this House each day to read into the public record a copy of a petition student nurses have been distributing. It is my understanding that to date over 700 signatures have been collected. While the Manitoba Nurses' Union leadership does not appear receptive to the introduction of a co-op program, it is incumbent on this Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) to represent all nurses, both current and future.

I challenge the minister to review the request for a nursing co-op program with an open mind. He may be surprised to find that the next generation of nurses have done their homework.

Philippine-Canadian Cultural Centre

Mr. Conrad Santos (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, the diversity of people in our great province of Manitoba make it a distinct, attractive and vibrant place to live and raise our families. The cultural diversity is sustained by many new immigrants to our province and by programs and cultural centres. That is the reason why the MLA for Wellington is pleased to announce the groundbreaking for the new Philippine-Canadian cultural centre.

The Philippine centre's new location is the southeast corner of Keewatin Street and Burrows Avenue. The funding for the new cultural centre was provided for by a joint federal-provincial initiative totalling \$900,000. The City of Winnipeg also donated the use of 2.9 acres of land on which the building will be built. The centre will soon be providing a place for athletics, arts and recreation programs. It will be fulfilling the social, educational and cultural needs of the Philippine community in Manitoba. The 7565 square foot building will have a meeting hall, a seating capacity for 300 people, a kitchen, a

stage and a boardroom. It will also be a venue for multiple community events such as the Folklorama presentations.

The new centre will provide a place for all Manitobans and visitors to learn and experience the Philippine cultural, social and traditional values and practices. Since the first Philippine immigrant arrived in 1959, the Philippine community has grown to an estimated 45 000 members in Manitoba. The program at the Philippine centre will help the acculturation and settlement of new immigrants. It will also foster mutual education and understanding among all people in the city of Winnipeg.

* (14:30)

On behalf of the Philippine community I would like to thank many donors, volunteers and co-ordinators who dedicated much of their resources, time and energy to ensuring the construction of the Philippine-Canadian community centre. Projects such as these help to cultivate mutual respect, tolerance and understanding.

Hells Angels Associates Trial

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Not a red cent, not a thin dime, not a quarter, a loonie or even a toonie. / To the Attorney General the Hells Angels said: Please, we have no funds / We have spent it all on prostitutes, drugs and guns / Please, dear sir, we need representation / We find ourselves in quite a situation / Charged with all sorts of crimes, we worry about lost production time/ and of course we want to avoid it all on the taxpayers' dime. /

So the Attorney General thought and mulled. What can I do? / I have flipped and flopped like a fish out of water / I can barely remember my most recent fodder. / And smiling a smile, a deliciously evil grin, / the Attorney General decided, what is one more sin? / Let the media ask, the taxpayer howl, / even the Opposition can yell out loud. / I will offer excuses, / I will pretend not to hear. / I will find a way out before the time draws too near. / The taxpayer is rich and will not notice the loss, / and even if they do they will not make a fuss. / I will point my fingers east and west. / By the time they sort it all out, I can say it was all in jest. /

No, oh no, this simply will not do. / Criminal organizations deserve our taxpayers' dollars, too. / And so, Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves victims of a Minister of Justice who has made a mess so deep and so tall / that all the taxpayers together cannot solve. /

Ronald Stewart Moore

Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I rise to inform the House of the passing away of a prominent Manitoban and former member of the Canadian Parliament, Mr. Ronald Stewart Moore. Mr. Moore passed away last week in Brandon at the age of 91. Ron Moore served as a Co-operative Commonwealth Federation MP for Churchill from 1945 to 1949 and remained active in the CCF and New Democratic Party throughout his life. He was a passionate believer in the finest principles of our party: equality, inclusion, compassion and social justice.

Born in Foam Lake, Saskatchewan, in 1911, Mr. Moore grew up in the Swan River district. He began working as a young man with the Canadian National Railway. During the Second World War, Mr. Moore fought with the Canadian Navy. Upon his return to civilian life, Ron was elected as the member of Parliament for Churchill from 1945 to 1949. Ron married Eugena Scriver in 1948. Eugena Moore, who had a long and distinguished career with the *Brandon Sun*, predeceased her husband this past June.

After defeat in the election of 1949, Mr. Moore returned to work for the CNR in Brandon. He worked to get his engineers papers and moved to work at the CFB Shilo's central heating plant until his retirement in 1975. Ron remained a very active person with the NDP and received recognition for his involvement in the cause of social justice. Along with other social democrats and democratic socialists in my home community of Brandon, the example of Ron's politics has been important in establishing my own beliefs.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members of the House to join with me in extending condolences to the family of Ronald Moore, one of Manitoba's most important progressive citizens.

Government of Manitoba

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): All over our province Manitobans are calling for a government that listens better and a provincial government that embraces change rather than supports the status quo.

From Melita last Sunday, for example, I was asked to convey to the NDP MLAs from the city of Winnipeg that they were not seen as listening to the concerns of cattle producers. It was requested that I ask the city MPs for the NDP to remember that each slice of beef they eat comes from an animal with four legs and that rural communities depend on being able to market their cattle to people in Winnipeg and elsewhere.

Today in the Legislature, many nursing students want change; they want a co-operative education program for nursing students. They have been waiting for four years and this Government has not acted. They are tired of waiting for the inactive NDP.

Today, in Brandon, members of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities are meeting. I was there this morning. Many there are calling for change. Property taxes are too high. Many see the new deal proposed by Mayor Glen Murray as an opportunity for change and improved conditions in the rest of the province as well. They want to be included in this opportunity for change.

Today in the Legislature, even the NDP government realized that its efforts in justice and legal aid over the last four years has been totally inadequate and that the status quo is not working. It is sad that the last four years of NDP government were not more productive.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ADJOURNED DEBATE (Fourth Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition

(Mr. Murray) in amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), who has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Nice to see a large repeat crowd to see Act 2 of my inaugural speech in the Chamber. I will not take very much more time, Mr. Speaker, out of respect for others who will be presenting today.

When we left off yesterday, I was describing some of the phenomenal organizations and people who are, as we speak right now, rebuilding their communities from the ground level up after a decade of neglect from members opposite.

In particular, I would like to commend members of the Aboriginal communities in both the West Broadway and the Spence neighbourhood associations, both of which reside in my riding of Wolseley. Residents there have started up two Aboriginal neighbourhood associations called I Can and the West Broadway Aboriginal Residents' Group respectively. They are doing an amazing work of drawing in Aboriginal people living in Winnipeg to have a strong say in matters that are of concern to them, and issues that they would like to see addressed.

I was very happy recently, through my office, to be able to help support an initiative called the second annual Aboriginal Film and Video Festival recently held at the University of Winnipeg. We were able to help promote the event and encourage people to attend, and the results speak for themselves. For the second year in a row, this very innovative project was a huge success, and I hope to have an opportunity to describe it in more detail to this Chamber at a later date.

I would also, certainly, like to extend a very warm welcome to all of the recent immigrants who are residing in the riding of Wolseley, Spence neighbourhood and the West End in particular; but throughout my riding I have a large number of people who come from all over the world, and rather than adopting a very narrow and ideological stance, our community thrives on diversity, and is very much impressed with the work of this Government to facilitate

increased immigration and encourage more of the same.

The basic principles of the riding of Wolseley, I think, could be summed up on a theme of diversity and of respect, understanding and, certainly, very strong interests in local issues such as safety and housing, right through to global issues such as the common cause of our environment.

In closing, my inaugural speech to the Speech from the Throne, I would just like to commend our Government, once again, for addressing so many of these very important issues through the creation, for instance, of the new Minister responsible for Water Stewardship (Mr. Ashton) and, of course, the new Minister for Healthy Living (Mr. Rondeau), both of which have enormous potential for very positive benefits throughout our province. Certainly, all of us in Wolseley will be happy to support their efforts and those of our Government in the days ahead.

I would like to thank all honourable members for listening to my opening statement. I, now, will give the floor to you, Mr. Speaker, for our next presenter. Thank you very much.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment on the recent Speech from the Throne by the Government.

Going into the Speech from the Throne, we were looking for action in five particular areas. First, we saw that there is a need for change. There is a need for a plan that will result in better economic growth and in more and better jobs in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we saw the need for an agenda for growth in Manitoba, restructuring the way taxes are levied and providing a framework for economic growth. We have seen, over the last four years, that the economic growth, the job growth and the population growth have all trailed the rest of Canada. The net result, for example, in terms of GDP alone, is that our Manitoba gross domestic product is hundreds of millions of dollars less than it should have been had we been growing at the same pace as the rest of Canada.

The net result is much less income for Manitobans, much less disposable spending, much less tax revenue for government, and problems all the way around. Unfortunately, this issue was not addressed in any meaningful way by the Government in the Throne Speech.

Second, we saw a need to refocus spending in areas that have been badly neglected. There is a need, for example, in many areas of government, to cut administrative expenses. Administrative expenses in health care, for example, have ballooned at a rate far faster than the rate of growth of government revenue. Instead of taking this approach, instead of listening to the concerns of Manitobans, the NDP have not even tried to do much in this area.

In areas where the NDP have spent much less than their growth in revenue, in highways infrastructure, in support for families on social assistance, there has been virtually no increases, indeed, in constant dollars. These two areas have decreased. Yet they are both important, important to the fabric of our province, and important to the well-being of our citizens, important to the health care of Manitoba, and the cost of health care. In fact, we are improving things for those who are least well off, because that action, to improve conditions for them, will result in lower health care costs and improved conditions that will allow us more revenue that does not need to go into health care to look after problems, because we have looked after the poverty issues and looked after the well-being of those who are less well off. This area was not addressed.

* (14:40)

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Thirdly, we looked for the Government to commit to reforming health care in Manitoba. The Government, indeed, has plans for a forum at its disposal in the form of recommendations made by Senator Kirby and Roy Romanow from their respective commissions. The present government has barely touched the possibilities for change and improvement within the health care system. Over their first four years, they have barely touched the recommendations made by Kirby and Romanow. Even Roy Romanow

himself, within the last three weeks, has been saying how disappointed he is that the provincial governments have done so little, including Manitoba, to implement his recommendations. It is a disappointment to Roy Romanow. It is, certainly, a disappointment to the Manitoba Liberals that the NDP have not done more.

Let me just give you a few examples, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The provincial government is spending another hundred thousand dollars recently to hold public meetings to find answers to the problems in the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority, which, if they had been doing their job the last four years, they could have looked after, and we would have never needed this independent investigation and inquiry.

Many people in the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority, and it is true in other rural areas, cannot afford the added cost of emergency treatment because of the cost of ambulances. It is adding up, and this cost is substantial. It is a barrier to access to care. The Government has not been paying attention.

The public now, with the RHA system, has much less input into health care. The RHA, the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority, have not held public meetings. They have not been open to suggestions, consultations. They have been proceeding with change without, apparently, any real plan. They have not opened up the plan. They have not made public hearings and public input. It is a very distressing situation.

As we have seen, physicians are leaving the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority in droves. It is like a sieve. The NDP are calling 1-800-South Africa. The doctors are coming and, like a sieve, they are pouring out the other side. The doctors are leaving almost as fast as they are arriving. It is a problem, not only in the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority, but in a number of other areas as well.

Mr. Speaker, there is a potential problem in the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority and elsewhere. The doctors who are left will not be able to look after the patients which are there. There are emergency rooms being closed in the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority. These things in health care are not working, and yet we

have a government which has not paid adequate attention to the voluminous Kirby and Romanow reports when they had some answers at their disposal. They have answers as well in the words and suggestions from many all over Manitoba, which they are not listening to.

We were looking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a commitment to democratic renewal. This last provincial election had a dismal low voter turnout of only just slightly greater than 50 per cent. It should have been a notice to the Government that there is a problem here with democracy in Manitoba that needs some attention. This was not even to any significant extent mentioned in the Throne Speech. There should have been some attention to this area, because it is important for all of us that we preserve our democracy; we protect our democracy; we improve our democracy.

There are many other governments across this country, provincial governments, which are looking to make changes to their democratic processes. In British Columbia, in Ontario, in Prince Edward Island, in New Brunswick, in Québec they are all looking at ways to change and improve their democratic processes. Yet, here we have a government which is stuck in the status quo, which brings forward a major Throne Speech, and does not even mention this whole area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we looked for a commitment to an environmental action plan. After four years in government, the NDP's first action on the environment seems to be to enlarge the bureaucracy, create a new ministry. An action plan of what the ministries will do to assess the environmental issues is still missing. We have got committees all over the place, but we have no action, and in most cases we do not even have any real plan. The only plan was for the city of Winnipeg from the CEC. Here we have a government that needed to rely on the CEC to provide an option because they could not do it themselves.

Where we are talking about Lake Winnipeg, let me review the 1999, four years ago, Throne Speech of Gary Doer's NDP government—sorry, the Premier's NDP government—and all the members of the NDP party who were MLAs,

who were elected, their government, our government, I guess, but they are running it. In the 1999 Speech from the Throne, it was said: "Your government will take immediate steps to protect our water resources and preserve our lakes, rivers and streams."

Four years later, we are still waiting for what these immediate steps are. There has not been any significant change in Lake Winnipeg, except to get worse. There has not been any significant change in the Red and Assiniboine rivers. We are still getting raw sewage dumped into the Red and Assiniboine rivers, as we learn again today.

There has been all too little done. We see this in Lake Winnipegosis, where there was a report making a whole series of suggestions. The only thing that was done was to set up another committee; it was not given any resources. It still has not made any recommendations. Four years later, the immediate steps have never been taken, and we are wondering about the credibility of the NDP government. It certainly does not have the credibility it had four years ago, and we are wondering if it has any credibility left at all.

In the 1999 Throne Speech, the NDP said our first priority is to rescue our health care system, and today many waiting lists are longer and larger than they were then, for scans and imaging in particular. Today those with chronic pain have to wait more than a year for help. We have Manitobans in chronic pain, day by day by day, waiting for this immediate rescuing of the health care system which has not happened. They are waiting in pain while the Government fails to act.

In the 1999 Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the NDP said we must end the indignity of receiving treatment in a hospital corridor. Today there are still patients being treated in hallways.

In the 1999 Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the NDP said another priority for Manitoba is to build a modern, responsive education system. Today, our major university, the University of Manitoba, remains at the very bottom of the universities in the *Maclean's* ranking.

In the 1999 Throne Speech, the NDP said a third priority for Manitoba is to increase our

citizens' sense of security. Today, Manitoba is still the murder capital of Canada.

In the 1999 Throne Speech, the NDP said the responsibility for building a better society for our children and our grandchildren has fallen to us, and today children in families on social assistance have seen no increase in support for four years. In constant dollars, this is a decrease in support.

In the 1999 Throne Speech, the NDP said they would ensure that Manitobans who fell victim to the flood would have their homes and lives restored, and, I understand, there is at least one lawsuit still outstanding, still people who are waiting for answers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would say that I have now listened to five of the Premier's throne speeches. It is the same old deal. Only in Manitoba do we have a mayor championing a new deal for Winnipeg, while the Premier (Mr. Doer) presents a Throne Speech focussing on an old deal, the same old deal for the rest of the province.

Only in Manitoba can we have five throne speeches which focus on health care, but still have larger and longer waiting lists than when it started.

Only in Manitoba can we have a Throne Speech trumpeting the Government's accomplishments in health the same day Winnipeg's major newspaper reports that people in pain still wait more than a year for an appointment.

Only in Manitoba can we have five throne speeches in a row which promote public-sector growth rather than private-sector investment.

Only in Manitoba can we have the fifth Throne Speech in a row hammering crime, and yet we are still the murder capital of Canada.

Only in Manitoba can we have five throne speeches in a row talking about wonderful things the Government is doing for higher education and still have the University of Manitoba in the very last place in the *Maclean's* ranking.

* (14:50)

Only in Manitoba can we have the same government which promised in the 1999 Throne Speech to take immediate steps to protect our water resources, and yet, four years later, after lots of committees, there has been no action. Raw sewage is still being dumped into our major rivers, and Lake Winnipeg is on the verge of an environmental disaster.

This is the same old, the same old, the same old NDP. We have not had what many hoped for. Clearly, this is the same old speech, and the plan is not working. When will the Premier ever learn? When will he ever learn that there are still these issues which even he complained about when he was in opposition but which he has failed to address when he is Premier and in government?

I asked the Premier a very simple question. What was his goal for the next four years to have a province which will have economic and job growth and population growth equal to the rest of Canada? Better than the rest of Canada, or worse than the rest of Canada? The Premier would not give me a clear answer.

It would appear that the Premier does not know which of these three choices that he does not even have an adequate goal. One of the problems, of course, is if you do not know where you are going, it is hard to get there. It is difficult to achieve goals which you have never even set because you do not know and the rest of your Government does not know where you are going.

Those who so eagerly awaited the declaration of what the Government's goals would be have waited in vain. The Speech from the Throne was a major, major disappointment. We have one item after another that has not been adequately addressed.

We have a province where we have a government which seemingly is happy that Manitoba is not growing as well as the rest of Canada. For, if we would have grown at the same rate as the rest of Canada, Manitoba would have almost 26 000 more people, 27 000 more jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars more in economic activity.

We have a university in last place in the *Maclean's* survey and the Government in its Throne Speech does not even consider addressing this with an action plan. The Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and I have suggested that we would even be willing to be part of an all-party committee, looking at this very important issue for post-secondary education and for education in our province. There has been no answer from the Government. They just do not seem to be interested.

We have a mayor in the City of Winnipeg, as I have said, who has been championing a new deal. A mayor who has recognized that the status quo is not working, that the status quo with extraordinary high property taxes in Winnipeg is a problem, that there needs to be a change in tax profiles so that we have an agenda for growth instead of an agenda for stagnation.

Part of our problem here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the Government does not seem to have an agenda at all. They do not seem to be supportive of the City of Winnipeg in exploring new options. They are sitting on the sidelines, rather than trying to improve things for citizens in Manitoba. Clearly, Manitobans deserve something that is much, much better than this.

It is too bad that after all that has happened, all that the NDP saw when they were in opposition, that there has been not much more progress made. I look here, for example, just one small point, but an important indicator, the rate of capital investment per capita in western Canada. Over the last 10 years, the accumulated new investment, new per capita capital investment in Manitoba amounts to only 40 percent of the Canadian average, 40 percent of the growth in the rest of Canada. What a shame. Yet we did not have a plan from the Premier and his Government in how to address this deficiency.

We have a Premier who seems bent on public-sector projects, but who did not talk very much, if at all, about private-sector investment. It is rather interesting and disturbing, I would suggest, that the economic development aspects of the Throne Speech were at the back end, were not at the front, were not the first concern of this Government, but they were at the end. I had a business leader come up to me afterwards and

say: What a disappointment; if you blinked you would have missed it all.

This is happening at a very time when a survey, a professional poll of business people, of entrepreneurs in Manitoba, shows that 60 percent of Manitoba entrepreneurs feel that the economic development approach of this Government, this provincial government, is very poor, is inadequate. And yet, in the Throne Speech, this was not even adequately, poorly even, addressed. There is not a recognition that the status quo is not working as Manitobans need it to work for them, for all of us.

I have talked about health care. I have talked about the environment. I have talked about justice issues. I have talked about a number of areas which, I believe, are very important to all of Manitoba. And I have mentioned already that the NDP themselves spoke out on a number of these issues in opposition much better than they have seemed to be performing in government.

What is particularly frightening in this Throne Speech is the abdication of responsibility to lead. It is so obvious and so evident in this Throne Speech. We expected much; we got little. It is too bad, in a sense of sadness, that I now come to make and move a subamendment, but before I do so, I want to talk a little bit about this subamendment because the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and I, our Liberal caucus, have gone back, and we have reviewed carefully some of the things that the NDP themselves were saying in opposition needed to be done. We have seen that, for some reason, the reasonable words that they were speaking then, they have completely forgotten now, that some of the more positive ideas that they had talked about then, they seem now to have dismissed, to feel are not important.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my colleague and I, we want to know where the NDP stands on these ideas now. We want to know whether the NDP will still support the ideas, indeed the words that came from their mouths not so long ago when they were in opposition, because, from their comments on previous throne speeches, we see that some of their ideas were not so bad then. We wonder why their actions are so horrible now.

* (15:00)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would like to know where the NDP stand. It is for this reason that I stand now, and I move, seconded by the Member for Inkster, Mr. Lamoureux,

THAT the amendment moved by the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Murray) be amended by adding thereto the following words:

THAT this House further regrets

1. that since assuming office this Government has been both arrogant and extreme in its disregard for the people of Manitoba; and

2. that this Government has no plan to address child poverty in Manitoba, the highest in Canada, and instead blames the federal government for this problem; and

3. that this Government has not been forthright with the people of Manitoba in outlining its plans for health reform, leading to uncertainty amongst patients and health care providers and cutbacks in health services and lost jobs; and

4. that this Government has failed to have any environmental strategy in place to protect the quality of water and quantity of downstream water in this province; and

5. that failing to adequately fund an education system that will meet the needs of our future citizens and workforce; and

6. that failing to implement an effective strategy to address the growing problem on criminal gang activity by offering hope and opportunities for youth who are being lured into gangs accompanied by an effective justice system response to gang crime.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Member for River Heights, seconded by the honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the amendment be amended further by adding thereto the following words:

THAT this House further regrets

1. that since assuming office this Government has been both arrogant and extreme in its disregard for the people of Manitoba; and—

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: This motion is in order. The debate on the Throne Speech will proceed.

The rules of this House provide for rotation of speakers. Are there any members of the government party who wish to speak on the Throne Speech?

There being none, the Chair—

Point of Order

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable Member for Charleswood is raising a point of order.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I understand there was some negotiation that occurred which would allow the Member for Inkster to speak now and that those decisions were made with the House leaders.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Despite the agreement of the House leaders, it is still part of our proceeding that the rotation be part of the proceedings, so I am putting it on the record. I am asking if there is any member of the government party wishing to speak. Seeing none—

An Honourable Member: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable Minister of Advanced Education, on a point of order?

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): I wish to address the point of order raised by the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) and say, yes, that I understood that agreement had been made. That is all I wanted to say. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair wishes to put on the record, again, the rotation, practice and convention in this House and still respect the agreement, if that is possible. So I am again saying the point of order is not in order because

there is an agreement, and I am following the conventions of the rules of the House.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There being no one on the government side, the Chair recognizes the Member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is really quite the pleasure for me to be able to second this motion and maybe put on the record a few words in regard to the Throne Speech.

First, I must start off by saying some of the things that I have in common with our Premier (Mr. Doer). You know, the other day I was looking at the *Free Press* and I saw this picture of the federal Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Paul Martin, and there is a picture of Mr. Doer sitting side by side and smiling. [*interjection*] What did I say? I am sorry. The Premier of our province sitting side by side with our soon-to-be Prime Minister, and I have a picture of myself with the soon-to-be Prime Minister. That is one of the things that we have in common.

But there is another thing that we have in common, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is, the Premier of this province along with other New Democrats had the good wisdom years back to put forward good solid amendments to prior throne speeches. When the Tories brought in a Throne Speech, the New Democrats of yesterday had the good common sense to say where there were some faults. They pointed them out and pointed them out quite well.

* (15:10)

In fact, I and today's Premier have another thing in common. We both voted for every one of the resolutions that had been proposed by the Leader of the Liberal Party. Both I and the Premier voted for these amendments. I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am going to be consistent. I am going to continue to vote for these very same amendments that this Government made years back to prior throne speeches, and I will anxiously await—albeit, no doubt, I will be somewhat disappointed—to see what the New Democrats today think of the

types of amendments that they proposed in years past.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier set the stage for this Throne Speech, in my opinion, when he made the great Cabinet shuffle, the great Cabinet extension. When we were in here for that little mini-session, I asked the Premier of the province what were his intentions about Cabinet, and I indicated to the Premier that if you look at it, Manitoba does not need additional Cabinet ministers.

I had indicated that the Province of Manitoba does not need more Cabinet ministers, that maybe the New Democratic Party needs more Cabinet ministers, but there is no argument to be made that you need to expand the Cabinet. I talked about that a little bit during the Estimates, and the Premier's response at the time was that I should not worry, that all I really needed to know is that I would not be a part of Cabinet. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not want to be part of Cabinet, so that comment I did not take personally and I was not upset. I can assure you of that.

But, having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we see is a government that put the taxpayers of this province, Manitobans, second, when it made the decision to be able to increase its Cabinet. The Cabinet decision was of a political nature. It was because of the New Democratic Party that they made the decision to do the type of Cabinet changes that they did.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there were some disappointments, and now is not the opportunity for me to go into why it is I was disappointed in some of the specific changes, and some of the changes that maybe should have occurred that did not occur, but only, I am sure, through time, I will be afforded the opportunity to be able to comment on that.

Rather, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wanted to comment first on a couple of issues that the Leader of the Liberal Party has talked about. We talk about, how Manitoba as a province is doing, and it is interesting. Someone from the Opposition stands up and poses a question, and they will say, statistically this, this, this and that, and it sure makes Manitoba look bad. Then the

Government will stand up, and they will say, statistically this, this, this and that, and it sure tries to make Manitoba look good.

Well, I like to try to simplify things. I think what we need to do is we have got to compare Manitoba on the balance to the rest of Canada. Would it not be wonderful if we had a government that had the courage to be able to establish goals? What does this Government really want to achieve when it comes to jobs? Does it want to be able to maintain the same average as Canada, as Canada's jobs grow, or the job market in Canada grows? Does it see Manitoba decreasing, on average, or does it see Manitoba increasing? Does the Premier want to see Manitoba do better?

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

In opposition, the consensus is that we want to be able to see Manitoba better. If you take a look, Mr. Speaker, at the track record of this Government, you will see that they did not fare well, that in fact on the issue of jobs, which is critically important to our province, they did poorly. In Manitoba, from 1999 to 2003, job growth increased 2.3 percent. So, is that not nice? The Government can stand up and they say, well, you know, in Manitoba our job growth, we increased the number of jobs since we took office in 1999.

That would be the truth by the Government to be able to say that, but, at the same time, Canada increased the job growth rate with 6.8 percent. Well, what that meant is that had Manitoba kept up with the rest of the country in terms of actual job growth, today we would have 27 000-plus more jobs in our province.

When you take into account the population of some of our cities outside of the city of Winnipeg, you really get a clear picture of failure and why it is that this Government truly believes and tries. You know, they have the spin doctors. They have the election coffer after making the changes that they did, to be able to go out and advertise and to push out those news releases and to get all those news doctors or spin doctors that they have to try to tell Manitobans that they are doing good on job creation.

The truth is this Government has failed. It has failed miserably. If we would have kept up to the rest of Canada, we would have had over 27 000 more jobs. That is what Manitobans are concerned about, jobs. Jobs is what feeds social expenditures and so forth.

What about population growth? What about population growth, Mr. Speaker? Again, another critical indicator for our province. In Manitoba, the Government could say, well, we grew population from 1999 to 2002 by 1.7 percent. Again, the Government can say that and try to portray it, and it has been very successful, I must say that the province is doing wonderful. We have increased the population, and they have got the spin doctors and, well, I have already given that line.

But, the point is that, yeah, there is some accuracy to it, but at the end of the day, what are you comparing it to? What about the rest of Canada? While Manitoba grew by 1.7 percent, the rest of Canada grew by 3.9 percent. Again, Mr. Speaker, if Manitoba would have kept up with the rest of Canada, what does that mean?

It would have meant that the province of Manitoba would have 25 762 more people living in the province of Manitoba. Again, you put it in perspective of our rural communities. That would be the third largest community in the province of Manitoba that never existed as a result of the Government's inability to be able to achieve a moderate goal of just trying to do as well as the rest of Canada is doing.

Mr. Speaker, if you listen to what the Premier (Mr. Doer) and his caucus, the NDP team, that NDP today are preaching, you would think that Manitoba is far outweighing, doing so much better than the rest of Canada. That is not the reality. The reality, Mr. Speaker, speaks louder than words, louder than the propaganda that the NDP can pump out 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Let us talk about health care. Health care was such a critical issue in '99. I did not maybe do as well as I was hoping, but you take what is given to you, and I benefited tremendously by not having to be in the Chamber for a few years. I will tell you, in the '99 election, door after

door, people were saying, you know, Kevin, we are concerned about health, hallway medicine. It was the current Premier that coined the phrase "hallway medicine." The waiting lists—[*interjection*—someone said, pretty witty. Our Premier is witty, I will give him that much.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, let us recognize that that was the platform of this Government, to improve health care. Well, let us talk about reality. Let us talk about reality. Is there still hallway medicine being practised today? Of course there is. Have the NDP been able to fix that problem? No.

Quite frankly, I believe our current Premier knew back then that he was not going to be able to do it, because he never had a plan, he never had a vision. That is what the Leader of the Liberal Party was talking about. There is no vision. They did not have a plan. Their plan was: Be critical of the Filmon government at all expense, criticize, criticize, criticize, and hopefully they will fall. We will be in government. We will increase Cabinet. We will give all sorts of nice, wonderful jobs to a lot of New Democrats, and so forth. That was their plan.

They fell short on health care. Look at the critical areas of waiting lists. They talk about health care management, CT scans. CT scans are critically important. The ultrasounds, the MIBIs, these are all critical services, all of which the number of weeks has increased dramatically. MRIs, they have done reasonably well in. I understand that they are going to be expanding and getting more MRI machines.

No doubt, and I do not mean to be overly critical of government, it is just that it is so easy with this particular government. You have got to recognize that sometimes they have done some things reasonably well. You have got to really search, especially in comparison to former years.

* (15:20)

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I look at the amendments. The one amendment that really came to mind for me was No. 6. You have got to keep in mind, this is our Premier that made this particular amendment, that failing to implement an effective strategy to address the growing problems on criminal gang activity. Boy, when I read that, could you imagine the flood of thoughts that I had about the Hells Angels.

Yesterday, I talked about a gravel road to a four-lane highway, Mr. Speaker. I guess I should have checked with someone in regard to plagiarism. I hope the leader and I have not crossed any plagiarism lines here by taking quotes from NDP. I guess I am qualifying it by making that particular comment.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, if you go through these amendments, I made mention of the gangs. We talk about child poverty. How is Manitoba doing?

Well, you know, in opposition as New Democrats, if you listen to their speeches, and I was afforded many years of listening to the speeches of New Democrats in opposition, you would think that child poverty would have been absolutely wiped out by now in the province of Manitoba. All one needs to do—because you do not have to believe me; that is the wonderful thing about Hansard—you can go back, as the leader and I have, and you can see some of the comments that some of the MLAs in the nineties made in regard to the issues that we are talking about today. I say that we all know where we are with child poverty, and we all want to be able to do what we can in regard to it.

We talk about the plans for health-care reform in this amendment, and I have already pointed out some of the waiting lists. Protect the quality of water. The Leader of the Liberal Party on numerous occasions has had the opportunity to talk about our environment and the quality of our water and, I think, has really been in the forefront. What we have seen is that this Government's plan on a water strategy has finally come to the table. That just came to the table very recently. Now, they have appointed a minister. We still do not know what it is the minister is going to be doing, but it took four years for them to be able to come up with something that maybe gives us a flicker of hope.

Funding education systems, I used to be the Education critic for our party, and we cannot afford as a province to continue to neglect our public educational system, our universities, our post-secondary institutions. Hopefully, in the next short while as I get more material, we are going to be able to come up with some good, positive, creative ideas that the Premier (Mr.

Doer) will hopefully come on side with. We need to recognize that education is an area which we cannot afford as a province to let slip, and the funding of education is a critical issue.

There are many inequities in regard to the property taxes that we are talking of, not only in the city of Winnipeg, but in all municipalities through the province. There is a lot that is there that really needs to be talked about. It has been a real pleasure for me to be back in this Chamber, and I see that the time is winding down. I think it would not be proper for me to not, during my maiden Throne Speech, say something positive, as the Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) has pointed out.

So the first positive—I should not say "the first positive." I say a lot of positive things, but one of the things that I would really like to express a great deal of appreciation for is my wife, who has been very supportive of me over the years and inspires me. *[interjection]* Well, you never know, we might be able to convince her to run, and then she can be a seatmate, but I do appreciate the efforts of my wife and how supportive she has been over the years.

I also want to pay special tribute and say thank you to the constituents of Inkster. I do not necessarily understand everything that happened during the election, but suffice to say, I really appreciate my constituents providing me the opportunity to represent them once again in this Chamber, which, I think, is just such an honour to be here.

I also wanted to extend a thank you to members of the Liberal Party in terms of not losing faith in me and allowing me to be able to continue in a very significant way, in particular, the Leader of the Liberal Party, who really kind of roped me back in, if I can put it that way. I am so very appreciative of the fact that he took the time to sit down with me and to talk about the future of a Manitoba Liberal Party that can be

relevant in today's time, something which I passionately believe in.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that I want to make comment on is just the sense of fellowship that occurs amongst members of all political parties. I can honestly say there are a number of members in which I truly did miss having that sense of companionship over the years. I look forward to being able to foster relationships on a personal level with many members of this Chamber.

I also want to extend my appreciation to the support people of this Legislature, from you—I was going to say you, Mr. Speaker, but, of course, you and your staff, the Clerk's office.

You know, we have a choice. We do not have to be inside this Chamber to listen to people like myself and others. Poor Hansard, they have to listen to us. I appreciate them listening to our speeches and putting it into a printed format so that we have possible content for future speeches and so forth.

But it really, indeed, is a privilege and an honour. I value my position as an MLA tremendously, and I hope to continue to serve the constituents of Inkster as long as I continue to have their blessing, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, when this matter is again before the House, the debate will remain open.

As previously agreed, the hour being 3:30, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 26, 2003

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