

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

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The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

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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

Thursday, April 15, 2004

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PETITIONS

Proposed PLA–Floodway

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the

Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

The undersigned names: Doug Browning, Reg Coutts, T. Coutts 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.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The Chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce stated that major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays.

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects the workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

* (13:35)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by Ted Falk, Mike Smith, Chad Penner and others.

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

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and these are the reasons for the petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in a \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-union.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disputes and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from the unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with the business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

On behalf of V. Zvonik, P. Shawn Love, E. Carmichael 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.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built

under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

* (13:40)

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by S. Mark Francis, C. Laberge, B. Verry 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.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): I wish to present the following petition.

These are the reasons for this petition: The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the

Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction

and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

This is presented on behalf of Merna Niblock, Debbie Dangerfield, Jim Dangerfield 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.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, I, too, wish to present the petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly

opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

* (13:45)

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Submitted by Beverly Lacroix, Chrissy Martens, Annette Wilson 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.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, we petition the Legislature of Assembly as follows for the following petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the 660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the cost of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of the B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary cost and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending this Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their own union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed: Connie Benoit, Frank Benoit, Kerry Miller, Audrey Miller 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.

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for the petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

* (13:50)

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by: Romel Dhalla, G. Peters, H. Peters, 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.

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, and I quote, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore developments on the East Coast have repeatedly

incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by Mark Friesen, Frank Hemming, Bruce Cromb 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.

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

*(13:55)

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction

and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by Don Poulin, Judy Chester, William Vis 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.

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): I wish to present the following petition to the House.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly

opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

This petition is signed by Mike Saper, Ruth Smith, Eugene Clune 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.

* (14:00)

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Management Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour-management agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We therefore petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending the Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

This petition is signed by Tod Niblock, Bruce Birchard, M. S. Vodrey 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.

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed: Brian Drader, Jim Cordingley, Wilf Sawatzky, et al.

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

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the province that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the

East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with businesses, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by: Linda Langtry, Dwayne Klassen, Barbara Kelcey.

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

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to this project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-like worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is

afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

And the petition is signed by Gary Coopland, Ron Bachinsky, Christine Watson 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.

* (14:10)

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly

opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his Government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by Doug Brown, Bruce Wishnowski, Patrick Gagnon 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.

Minimum Sitting Days for Legislative Assembly

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Manitoba Legislature sat for only 37 days in 2003.

Manitobans expect their government to be accountable, and the number of sitting days has a direct impact on the issue of public accountability.

Manitobans expect their elected officials to be provided the opportunity to be able to hold the Government accountable.

The Legislative Assembly provides the best forum for all MLAs to debate and ask questions of the Government and it is critical that all MLAs be provided the time needed in order for them to cover constituent and party duties.

Establishing a minimum number of sitting days could prevent the government of the day from limiting the rights of opposition members from being able to ask questions.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to consider recognizing the need to sit for a minimum of 80 days in any given calendar year.

Signed by: Norine Magnaye, Darshan Singh and G. Brar.

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: I am pleased to table, in accordance with section 28 of The Auditor General Act, the report of the Auditor General on Attributes of Managing and Reporting Results: A Survey of Senior Management.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 43—The Personal Health Information Amendment Act (Spiritual Health)

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), that Bill 43, The Personal Health Information Act (Spiritual Health); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les renseignements médicaux personnels (santé spirituelle), be now read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Health, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance, that Bill 43, The Personal Health Information Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, this bill is expected to clarify and reinforce a belief that is already present in the administration, that spiritual health care is central to the overall health and well-being of an individual and spiritual care is an integral part of the delivery of health care.

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

Bill 44—The Colleges Amendment Act

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Lathlin), that Bill 44, The Colleges Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les collèges, be now read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Advanced Education and Training, seconded by the honourable Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, that Bill 44, The Colleges Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Ms. McGifford: Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce an amendment to The Colleges Act. This amendment, requested by Red River College, will provide all colleges with similar powers. The amendments marry changes made to The University of Manitoba Act in the late 1990s, which were designed to allow colleges to develop by-laws that regulate parking. I recommend the bill to all members of this Legislature.

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

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 Killarney School and École Kenogami from Jonquière, Québec, 43 Grades 9-12 students under the direction of Madame Giselle Beaupré, Mr. Rob MacTavish, Monsieur Martin Larose and Madame Reine Murray. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Balanced Budget Spending Priorities

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier went to great lengths to try to justify his deficits. He complained that the federal transfer payments were reduced by some \$100 million, but he fails to mention that he is receiving an additional \$140 million due to a population adjustment. He complains about how Ottawa reimbursed the previous government \$168 million for the 1997 flood costs, but he fails to mention that he is receiving almost \$400 million more annually in federal transfer payments than the Filmon government was receiving in 1989. No matter how you slice it, this Premier does not have a revenue problem; he has a spending habit.

Will the Premier do the right thing and scrap his expanse of VLTs, Mr. Speaker? Will he scrap the hospital laundromat? Will he scrap building a hospital sandwich? Will he scrap the Project Labour Agreement and instead redirect that money so that he can balance his Budget?

* (14:20)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I have always wondered how the members opposite, how many thousands of nurses they had to lay off to deal with the 1% funding for the 2005 year, 2004, 2005 in their platform. I did not—*[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I did not know that they were also going to cancel sandwiches for senior citizens and other patients in hallways as part of their alternative platform.

Mr. Speaker, let me explain to the member opposite. He has four or five different statements and they contradict one another. He has previous budgets; he has this year's Budget; he has next year's budget.

The point he is making, which is valid, is the population is going up in Manitoba. It is going up in

Manitoba because of a growing economy. It is going up in Manitoba because of positive economic results. The dead days of the Tories where we had stagnant growth are over. We have the growing days under the NDP. On that point he is correct.

Mr. Murray: You know, once again, Mr. Speaker, only that side of the House could say it is positive when their expenditures exceed their revenues. If that is what they think is good, I cannot believe it. I know that the Premier is having trouble finding where he might have some savings. Well, let me help him.

Why does he not scrap plans to spend \$100 million to upgrade VLTs, Mr. Speaker? Why is he spending more than \$20 million to build a hospital Laundromat? Why is he spending millions more of taxpayers' dollars on a hospital sandwich factory? Why is he spending tens of thousands of dollars to pay for a consultant to tell the casinos how to rearrange the furniture? Or why is he spending more tens of thousands of dollars to bring in an expert from Toronto to tell us in Manitoba about how we should love our province? Why is he spending more than tens of millions of dollars on unnecessary advertising and higher administrative costs, and why is he insisting on putting a master labour agreement on the Red River Floodway that would add some \$65 million to the cost of that, Mr. Speaker?

Will the Premier scrap this wasteful spending and redirect it to true priorities? Why does he not redirect it towards health care? Why does he not redirect it to making Manitoba more competitive? Why does he not provide a cash advance to our producers? Those are priorities for Manitobans.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba have voted for the priorities of this Government. They have voted for more nurses. They have voted for capital expansion of hospitals. They have voted for more MRI machines. They have voted for more CAT scans. They have voted for more diagnostic equipment out of Winnipeg. They have voted for a reduction in education tax announced by our Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson). Why did the taxes go up 68 percent under the Conservatives and go down under the NDP? Because we do have the right priorities for Manitobans.

Mr. Murray: Once again, as we know, we understand why this First Minister thought that

balanced budget legislation was silly and a pre-election ploy, Mr. Speaker. He should do the right thing and believe that hardworking Manitobans believe in balanced budgets the way that they run their households, the way that they have to run their businesses.

This Premier complains and he blames everybody for his problems, Mr. Speaker, and says, well, they have to make some tough decisions. I have given him some answers on how we can do some tough decisions. It is about being responsible and making the right decisions and not using, for some unknown reason, a part of balanced budget legislation, a never-before-used clause of balanced budget legislation, because he cannot manage the economy. Why does he not do what Manitobans want? Balance the Budget, show that he is responsible, show that he can do the right thing for Manitobans instead of wasting the money that he is wasting.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite campaigned on funding education at 1 percent and campaigned on funding health care at 1 percent. He did not have the fortitude to tell the people that would mean 1500 people would be laid off. How many rural hospitals would be closed? That is the kind of lack of honesty that has put these members—and the public knows that. We had the third lowest—*[interjection]*

The member opposite wanted to cancel physical education and music in schools. I still hear about it. I still hear about it across Manitoba when one of his members popped up and said "Oh, we will have to cancel physical education and music." the Leader of the Opposition said "Oh no, we will not. We will not tell you what we are going to do." That is the kind of honesty we see from members opposite.

The cost of government is the third lowest on a per capita basis in Canada. That includes the investments in health, post-secondary education, education and early childhood development. The credit rating in Manitoba now has been upgraded by two independent sources. Mr. Speaker, we have still maintained the \$96-million debt payment. In fact, we paid down \$75 million in pension liability. In 11 years, members opposite did not pay down one cent, not one red cent in pension liability. It is regrettable

they did not do it, but we are cleaning up their mess today.

Balanced Budget Spending Priorities

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, in reality, this Government is creating the mess. The First Minister talks about a \$96-million debt payment, but he forgets to tell Manitobans that, in order to make that payment, he is not only taking \$142 million out of the rainy day fund, but is ignoring \$75 million in expenses.

Yesterday, the Premier said and I quote: "In terms of the operations of Government, we are spending less than we are taking in." I would ask the Finance Minister to explain to the Premier and to Manitobans how the Government can claim to be taking in more than they are spending when their third-quarter report clearly predicts that expenditure is \$7.4 billion and revenue is \$7.2 billion, leaving a shortfall of \$165 million. That is spending more than you are taking in, plain and simple.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is saying that when you take a transfer from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund that should not count on whether or not you balance your budget. That is their law. That is the law they put in place, and it is important to note, in the last two budgets that the member opposite put forward, they drew \$370 million from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. That amount is equivalent to what we have drawn over four years. They did twice as much draw from the Fiscal Stabilization Fund in their last two years as we have done over four years.

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, I do wish the Finance Minister would come clean with Manitobans. He talks about \$370 million; he forgets \$185 million of it was taken in the year 1999-2000 when they held the reins of government. This Premier's language gets a little testy when he gets outside the House. I am going to have to delete part of his quote here. When he said behind closed doors to his friends: Can we not have the debate with real—expletives, the Premier's words I cannot use in this House—numbers instead of all these phoney numbers? I would ask the Minister of Finance: Would he please open this debate to real numbers, explain to Manitobans why this Government is spending more than it is taking in?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, just to put the record straight, not only did they take \$185 million in each of the last two years of their mandate, \$185 million which the member now is in denial about, but the year prior to that, the third-last year's budget, they took \$100 million. That was \$470 million over three years. Over four years, we have taken \$369 million to balance the Budget. The Fiscal Stabilization Fund was put there for a purpose. The legislation with respect to disasters was put there for a purpose. The members opposite do not want to even support their own legislation anymore. How shameful is that?

* (14:30)

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, I would remind the minister that in '02, they took \$150 million out of the rainy day fund which, by the way, he promised to repay and never did. In '03, they took \$22 million plus \$203 million out of Hydro, for a total of \$225 million. This year they are taking \$142 million out, plus not counting \$75 million in expenses, in total well over \$550 million in three years.

I would ask the minister the simple question. Explain to the people of Manitoba why, when you have had revenue growth of \$450 million, or, sorry, \$278 million, your expenses had to go up \$450 million. Why can you not balance your Budget and how are we going to believe anything you say on Monday?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, under their legislation we are balancing the Budget. I know they have trouble with that. They said it was the strictest legislation in North America. We have complied with their legislation that we balance the Budget. Just to put the record straight, we added money to the Fiscal Stabilization Fund in the years 2001-2002, \$63 million, and we did not sell off the telephone system to do it.

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Water Stewardship minister, after fumbling his way through a media scrum, finally admitted that, yes, because there will be a master labour agreement for the floodway expansion, all workers will have to pay union dues. Essentially, the only way that non-unionized workers will not be forced to be paying

union dues is if this Premier scraps the master labour agreement. Can the Premier tell this House, can he tell all Manitobans, can he tell all businesses that are interested in getting on with the work of the floodway, will he in fact have a master labour agreement? Yes or no?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Unlike the member opposite who is a one-dimensional individual, a surrogate representative with one issue, we have a number of objectives to achieve in the performance of construction at the floodway.

One, we want to have, obviously, tenders that allow us to come in under budget, just like we did with Limestone, with an agreement that came in \$500 million under budget. Two, we want to have a situation where there are no disruptions, no strikes and lockouts. Three, we want to have training, including training for all Manitobans and training for Aboriginal people in the agreement.

Members opposite can pursue a Pavlovian, one-dimensional approach. I am shocked that they would take the idea of a no-strike or lockout as part of the discussions off the table. They are the only ones taking items off the table. We have kept all items on the table. Shame on them.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, I do have one object, as has everybody on this side of the House. That object is simple. Build the floodway and do not force companies that are non-unionized to be union and non-unionized workers to pay union dues. That is my objective.

I know that the Premier would like to have nothing more than these difficult questions somehow be directed to the experts, because it is difficult for him to make these decisions. But he is the Premier. He is the one who should be making these decisions. He is the one who is accountable to Manitobans.

The fact is that his minister has already confirmed that a master labour agreement will automatically require all workers to pay union dues. That is what he said. His union boss spokesperson, Mr. Rob Hilliard, also said yesterday that provincial labour laws are clear, and floodway expansion workers under a master labour agreement will automatically be required to pay union dues.

I ask the Premier again: Will there be such an agreement, yes or no?

Mr. Doer: I am glad the Leader of the Opposition has admitted that he is one-dimensional. That is the point we were trying to make. We, on the other hand, have multi-objectives in achieving the floodway. For example, we want recreation. We put in a recreation component in the floodway. We want training. We want the long-term employment of people on the floodway to be applicable to building dams.

I know members opposite are part of the mothball party that cancelled all hydro-electric development in Manitoba. The building crane has returned to Manitoba. The endangered species has returned to this province under this Government. We do not need one-dimensional thinking. They can keep it on that side. We are going to go ahead and achieve multi-objectives with the floodway expansion.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would like to once again remind all honourable members, when a Speaker stands all members should be seated and the Speaker should be heard in silence. The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition has the floor.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, yesterday we heard the Premier make the comment that he wants to build the floodway expansion project, that it will be done on time and on budget. On time? I say on time with a question mark because—the members opposite applaud—this is a member who said he was going to end hallway medicine in six months.

He says on budget, this coming from someone who has run a deficit for the last three years and now is invoking a never-before-used clause in balanced budget legislation so he can legally run a deficit. So much for on time and on budget, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of life is that the experts are saying that a master labour agreement would add some \$65-million cost to the project. That in itself, Mr. Speaker, is almost enough to eliminate the \$75 million that the Premier is adding to the debt for last year.

If the Premier wants to say that he wants to get it right with all stakeholders, and that was the quote he used, get it right with all stakeholders, then he needs to tell Manitobans today that his Government will not force any companies to be unionized and he will not force any non-unionized workers to pay union dues. Say it today, Premier.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, some of the premises are so—well, it is beneath contempt in terms of how ill-informed the member is. Having said that, in the late sixties—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think some members seem to have a real problem hearing when I say order. "Order" is trying to get decorum in the House. So I ask all honourable members to, please, we only have so much time for Question Period and we have the viewing public on television, we have guests in the gallery, and I am sure you would like to maintain decorum in this House. So I ask the co-operation of all honourable members, please.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a number of objectives that we want to achieve, just as—

An Honourable Member: Unionized companies.

Mr. Doer: Well, if the member opposite does not want to hear the answer to the question, he should not be that rude to interrupt, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

* (14:40)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, Cam McLean was hired after there were strikes and lockouts in the early sixties by a former administration to arrive at an agreement that prohibited strikes and lockouts. The member opposite has no desire to have a co-operative agreement that prevents strikes and lockouts.

We are multi-dimensional in our approach. We have great faith that Wally Fox-Decent will approach this in a way that can achieve a number of objectives, Mr. Speaker. Members opposite are surrogates for just one narrow interest—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we will represent the broader interests of the whole community—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: —and we will be proud to do it, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I cannot hear a thing. Was the honourable member up on a point of order?

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for St. Norbert, on a point of order.

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I am sorry. I cannot hear a thing. *[interjection]* I cannot. I am finding it very, very frustrating. *[interjection]* I wore them yesterday. I wore them yesterday, and I could not hear a thing yesterday either.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you have some control and that the members on the other side provide some courtesy and respect to the members in this House as well as to the members in the gallery. Thank you.

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

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Official Opposition House Leader): I am glad the member has raised this point of order because, Mr. Speaker, there is equally as much noise coming from the government side of the House when their Premier is answering a question. There is as much noise coming from that side of the House as there is from this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that they address the issue in their own caucus. For the members' ease, we do have these little devices that, in fact, you can plug into your ears, and you will hear the answer from your own Premier.

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for St. Norbert, it is not a point of order, but I would like to take this opportunity to ask all honourable members for their co-operation. It is very difficult to hear. I am not sitting very far from the members that have the floor on both sides and I am having a hard time hearing.

If someone breaches a rule, rightfully you expect me to rule on it, but I have been on my feet, I have been sitting on my desk asking for order to try to get some decorum. It just seems like I am listened to for about a second and then it is right back. We have guests in the gallery, we have the viewing public, and also, if someone breaches a rule, I have to rule on it. If I cannot hear it, I cannot rule on it.

Also, the member that asked the question has the right to hear the answer. I am not blaming one side or the other. I am asking all honourable members for the co-operation of all honourable members.

Mr. Doer: As I said, Mr. Speaker, we will expect Mr. Fox-Decent to have a multi-dimensional approach to this. The members opposite are shallow, one-dimensional. We are not.

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday of this week, the Minister of Water Stewardship said that all workers on the project would be forced to pay union dues. Yesterday, after Question Period, the Premier said that the issue of forced union dues was still on the negotiation table.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Water Stewardship: Which statement does he stand by, the one that he made on Tuesday, saying that all floodway workers would pay union dues, or the one that his boss made yesterday saying it was still being negotiated?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Water Stewardship): You know, Mr. Speaker, I think if there is any indication of just how little the Conservatives get what is happening with the floodway, it was this petition, which I assume they subscribe to in terms of opinion, which states that the Province of Manitoba may be constructing the Red River Floodway, that the act that we are bringing in may result in the floodway being built.

It is going to be built. We have brought in Wally Fox-Decent to deal with all of the issues in terms of the workforce, in terms of the training and in terms of tendering. I talked to people who are part of the process on Monday and they have faith in the process. I wish they would have faith in Wally Fox-Decent and the stakeholders as well.

Mr. Goertzen: Mr. Speaker, since the minister did not answer the question, I guess Manitobans are left to presume that the conflict still exists between the Premier and the minister. It appears that the Minister of Water Stewardship has lost control of this file. It is little wonder that Manitobans are upset and alarmed that the Government has lost control of a project that is vital to Manitoba or that there still has not been a spade of dirt turned over yet.

Will the Minister of Water Stewardship please tell Manitobans why he and his Premier do not seem to communicate on this issue, why they are not talking to each other, why they are not on the same page on a very important issue?

Mr. Ashton: Once again, on Monday we brought together, under the direction of Wally Fox-Decent, an avid Manitoban, something the Premier has referred to, something I have referred to, we brought together stakeholders.

I want to stress there were contractors at that table. There were representatives of unions at that table. There were Aboriginal representatives at that table. There were women at that table. There were a broad range of stakeholders. They have faith in the process, and we are prepared to give that process a chance. That is our message.

Mr. Goertzen: It is obvious that the minister and the Premier are going off in different directions day to day, but the fact is that they do share one thing in common and that is that they are both on the wrong side of this issue. There is not any worker who has chosen to work in a non-unionized environment who should be forced to unionize or pay labour dues because of the confusion and wrong ideology of people on that side of the House.

Will the Minister of Water Stewardship please commit to meeting with this Premier? If he needs the phone number, I will get it. If he needs his office number, I will get it for him, so that they can get on the same page and take forced unionization and take forced union dues off the bargaining table.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the member is quite right. There are different sides on this issue. The one side that brings in a petition that states the Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation, legislation that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway, is where they are at.

We are in the do. This is the Doer government. We are going to do the floodway.

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, this Government is like a MasterCard ad: A new logo for Manitoba, \$56,000; a rapid transit corridor for Winnipeg, \$52 million; forcing workers to pay union dues, priceless.

I asked the Minister of Water Stewardship who said all workers on the floodway project must be unionized. However, the Premier (Mr. Doer) says maybe not. Can anyone on the government side of the House explain this contradiction?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Water Stewardship): Mr. Speaker, we are working on building the floodway. We have brought together the stakeholders and Wally Fox-Decent. The member knows the first meeting that took place was on Monday and that process is going to look at all the workforce issues in terms of agreements on that, agreements in terms of tendering and agreements in terms of training.

We believe that Manitobans have faith in Wally Fox-Decent and we know that the stakeholders do. I am surprised that members opposite do not.

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, as pathetic as that answer is, at least it is not the Premier's fruit fly answer from yesterday.

The Minister of Water Stewardship says all workers pay union dues. The Premier says maybe not. Can anyone on the Government side of the House explain this contradiction?

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, this Government has said we want a no-strike, no-lockout clause because we want certainty in terms of this project. We are prepared to work with the stakeholders, Wally Fox-Decent. Where do they stand on a no-strike, no-lockout clause that will ensure that this project is built on time?

I stress again, Mr. Speaker, we are getting on with the job of building the floodway. That is what we put in place with the stakeholders' process on Monday. Members opposite may want to get into various different ideological issues that they want to

raise from time to time when it comes to issues in this province. We are going to build the floodway. That is the most important priority for Manitobans.

Mr. Schuler: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Water Stewardship says that the forced unionization is a done deal. The Premier says maybe not. Can Manitobans believe anything this Government says? Maybe not.

* (14:50)

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, once again, we are getting on with the job of building the floodway. It is a major project, one of the most significant projects of this decade. We understood that probably the best way in which we can bring together many of the concerns that have been raised by stakeholders is by having Wally Fox-Decent who, by the way, brought all three parties together on Meech Lake. Quite an achievement.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, because members opposite perhaps have not talked to some of the stakeholders who were at the meeting on Monday. I talked to a number of stakeholders who were. They were there to participate. I heard positive things about the process, and we are committed to allowing that process to work. I wish members opposite would be part of the solution, in this case, of getting the project built. That is the most important part.

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it has just become very clear to us in this House and to Manitobans when the Premier stands up and says "we are multi-dimensional."

Well, they are, because in one dimension this minister says "Yes, you are going to have to be forced to pay union dues." Then a government spinner from another dimension says "Oh, he was only speculating." Then the Premier stands up and says "Well, I am not sure, but we are going to ask the expert." What kind of multi-dimensional signal is that sending to hardworking Manitobans, other than this Government does not have a clue what they are doing on the floodway expansion project?

All of us in this House want the floodway expansion project to go ahead. Mr. Speaker, I hope

the members on the other side applaud when they agree to take forced unionization and force workers who do not pay union dues, take it off the table by doing the right thing. Do that and then applaud.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the sky-is-falling party over there has a lot of ways to justify the sky is falling. We, on the other hand, have a process in place with Wally Fox-Decent. There are a number of issues on the table. This may happen, that may happen, something else may happen, but we have an expert in place skilled in coming up with consensus agreements. It is the kind of expertise that governments use, and we will use.

We have certain principles in mind. We have cost principles in mind. We have training principles in mind. We have disruption principles in mind and lack of disruptions through strikes and lockouts. We have recreation principles in mind, and we also have a desire, Mr. Speaker, to have people trained in skills that will allow them to continue to work in the construction industry from the floodway to the next number of projects, to hydro-electric dams, to projects into the future. We have an economic vision along with the goal of building the floodway. That is why the population has increased, and that is why those members are flat line in terms of public support.

Mr. Murray: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we have heard it all today. This Premier's economic vision for Manitoba is to force non-unionized workers to sign a union card. What kind of a vision is that? I also find it fascinating that the First Minister stands and says we need a project labour agreement because we want to make sure there is labour peace and no lockouts. I cannot recall the last time a non-unionized company went on strike.

If that is, in fact, what he is interested in, then simply put it into a project agreement. Put it in a project agreement and let us get on with building the floodway. That is what this is about. It is about taking forced unionization and forcing non-unionized workers to pay union dues. Take it off the table. Let us build the floodway.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the only person that is taking anything off the table is the Leader of the Opposition who is taking off the table the whole issue of no strike or lockout. We have a process in

place. The only one-dimensional individual on this issue is the member opposite.

We will get the job done and we will get it done on time, on budget, with people trained, and they can act like Chicken Little from now till the sky turns red. The bottom line is we will get it done. That is what we have been elected to do and that is what we are going to do.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, we have heard that the First Minister says that he wants to do the right thing. Well, if he wants to do the right thing, then why does he not assure those companies that were non-unionized and built the original floodway and those non-unionized companies that built the Z-dike on time and on budget, why does he not assure that he will not force companies to be unionized? Why does he not assure Manitoba workers he will not force them to pay union dues?

If he says he wants to do the right thing, stand in the House today and prove it.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Water Stewardship): Once again, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is avoiding, I think, one fact that they should be aware of, that this kind of approach that we are putting in place has been in place since the 1960s with Manitoba Hydro. It is not new to Manitoba. The kind of stakeholder process we put in place on Monday with Wally Fox-Decent I think has been well received by stakeholders and a broad range of stakeholders.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, who, to be charitable, are one-dimensional on this, should recognize that what has worked for Manitoba Hydro for 40 years has worked in many other jurisdictions, is now being considered by Wally Fox-Decent and the stakeholders. That is where those discussions should be, and I wish members opposite would understand that that is the key element we are working on here, which is building the floodway.

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. The Minister of Labour is supposed to represent the interests of all workers in the province.

My question for the minister is: Does the Minister of Labour feel that she can represent non-union workers in the province in the same fashion in which she represents unionized workers in the province, given her Government is demanding that only union workers be allowed to work on this massive floodway project?

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I just want to remind the member opposite that project labour agreements have been used by different governments across this country for different infrastructure projects. It has also been used in Manitoba for different infrastructure projects. Every one of those agreements looked different. The reason that they looked different, Mr. Speaker, is because they are negotiated by the affected parties at the table.

There was an excellent meeting on Monday. The stakeholders were at the table. They had an excellent meeting. There were three committees set up, three committees to determine what is going to occur with that agreement. I would prefer it if the members opposite would wait until there is something in writing.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would trust and hope that the Minister of Labour is in fact in contact with the union workers. I have talked to many union workers. They, too, are frustrated in terms of the image that the Government is portraying. They, too, see the inequity that is being mandated by this Government by saying that you have to have a union card in order to work on the floodway project.

The Government did not say that when we had the flood of the century and non-union people went just as much as union people. It is a sense of fairness. The Minister of Labour has a responsibility to represent all workers in this province. She appears to be taking the side of union workers and union workers alone.

My question specifically to the minister is: Does she feel that she can adequately represent non-union workers, given her Government's stand on the floodway? Will she stand up for all workers in the province?

Ms. Allan: The MLA for Inkster consistently puts misinformation on the public record. Consistently, Mr. Speaker. The project, a labour agreement, is in

negotiation. The affected parties are at the table. There is nothing in writing. We will wait until we have an agreement from the affected parties.

* (15:00)

Mr. Lamoureux: Given that we know that there is not going to be a strike because the Government tells us there is not going to be a strike, there are going to be large, significant amounts of mandatory union dues that this Government wants to collect. Even if you are not a union member, they want the union dues, Mr. Speaker.

Can this Minister of Labour guarantee all Manitobans that not a dollar of those union dues that this Government is going to mandatorily collect are going to go outside this province or end up in a political party?

Ms. Allan: I just want to remind the member opposite that we did bring elections finances legislation into place. I know the member is a rookie member and is not aware of the legislation. Maybe we could get him a copy of it. I can guarantee the member opposite that we will not behave like the federal Liberals in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Member for Interlake was standing. Was that on a point of order, or what was the issue? The time for Oral Questions had expired.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, for two days—

Mr. Speaker: Just wait, just wait. Order.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Asking for leave on a point of order to put a question to the House.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable member had asked that on a point of order. I have another gentleman that wished to speak to the point of order, so I have to recognize the honourable Member for Inkster on the same point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you recognize a certain element of

irony here. When the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Gerrard) asked for leave, it was the Government House Leader (Mr. Mackintosh) yesterday that said no.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Can I have order, please. Points of order and privileges are very, very serious matters, and we need to be able to hear them.

When a member rises, and every member has that right, any member has a right to rise and ask for leave of something, but it is entirely up to the House whether they will give that person leave or not.

To use one issue for another, that is really stretching it. I can only deal with the leave that is requested that particular day or that particular instance. I dealt with the leave. Now the honourable Member for Interlake has asked the House, he is seeking leave in order for him to ask his question.

So I put to the House: Does the honourable Member for Interlake have leave to put his question? Yes or no? Does he have leave?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been denied.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The Official Opposition House Leader is getting up. The Official Opposition House Leader, on—

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order.

Mr. Derkach: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I tried to listen as attentively as I could this afternoon to the questions that were asked and the responses that were given by the various ministers in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, it is against the rules of this Legislature to mislead the House. When I listen to the answers from the Minister responsible for Water Stewardship (Mr. Ashton) and the answers given by the Minister of Labour (Ms. Allan) and the answers given by the Premier (Mr. Doer), one could not help but get the impression and the understanding that indeed we have a case of

ministers of the Crown, including the Premier, not only answering the questions straightforwardly, but indeed if you listened to the different answers, they do mislead this House. They are misleading Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is a serious breach of the rules of this House. It is also a serious breach of the protocol and the process that this Legislature conducts itself under.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask under this point of order, that these ministers who have laid this information before this House, who have misled this House, I ask that you, as Speaker of this House, review the answers that have been proposed to this Legislature this afternoon to determine whether or not these ministers are indeed deliberately misleading this House, which is a breach of the rules of this House.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, of course the Opposition House Leader did not cite a rule or quotation in *Beauchesne* because there is no basis, I would suggest, to the point of order. A dispute on the facts does not constitute a point of order, I suggest.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I will take it under advisement and I will peruse Hansard and come back with a ruling.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: Now we are going to move on to members' statements and we have three. The honourable Member for Fort Garry. We have three and two today.

Racism Stop It! Video Competition

Ms. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I rise before the House today to congratulate Stephen Kernaghan, Colin Ward, Brian Pharsi, Christopher Nelson and Christopher Kwan from Arthur A. Leach School in the Fort Garry constituency. They represented one of eight teams across Canada which were recently honoured with national awards for the Racism Stop It! Video competition.

The Racism Stop It! national video competition is part of Canada's campaign against racial

discrimination. Every year students aged 12 to 18 are encouraged to develop videos with a strong anti-racism message. Every year thousands of young Canadians in every province and territory participate in the competition. Ten winners are selected and they are invited to an awards ceremony in commemoration of March 21, which is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

These videos are also edited to a televised public service announcement format of 30 seconds and broadcast nationally on television. These students from my constituency rose to the challenge and produced a short video called "Diversity of Strength." The video shows a young student daydreaming in school of what life would be like if we were all the same. His thoughts bring him to a school but in another time and place. In this place, all the students look alike and perform all actions and tasks in similar ways like eating lunch in the same manner and playing music the same way. The video finishes with a group of youth declaring that diversity is strength.

This video demonstrates their commitment to the fostering of respect, equality and diversity. The development of their personal film-making style is also admirable. They are a symbol of commitment and leadership. Their film also speaks loudly and eloquently. I am positive that their efforts will not go unnoticed in the stand against racism. Thank you.

*(15:10)

Jeffrey Collins

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, I would like today to recognize and to celebrate the life of Jeffrey Collins, who passed away at far too young an age, March 31, 2004.

I first came in contact with Jeff at university when he was in phys ed. He was an avid and strong supporter of all the Bison athletic programs. Since then, Jeff went on to become a teacher, spending most of his career at Grant Park High School. He worked above and beyond duty ceaselessly and endlessly on behalf of the students that he was involved with. He spent a great deal of his own personal time coaching and being involved in athletics, mentoring young people as well as working with disabled athletes. Jeff was one of those many

individuals who make this province a much richer place. He dedicated his life to helping others.

He leaves behind his wife of 36 years, Cheryl, and his children, Patrick and Jody. Unfortunately, soon after Jeff announced his retirement at age 55, he was diagnosed with a brain tumour. He outlived most of the estimates of how long he would live with regard to the brain tumour. During his final days, I was always touched by the good spirits that he showed and how much energy and effort he had to dedicate to the care of others when he in such pain himself.

Mr. Speaker, Jeff Collins is one of those people who has made all of our lives better off because Jeff's life was able to touch ours. He will be deeply missed. I wish to offer my condolences and, I am sure, the condolences of all members to Jeff's family today. Thank you.

University of Manitoba—Capital Campaign

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise before the House today to speak on the University of Manitoba's recent capital campaign. This year, the campaign broke its fundraising goal and raised \$237 million. This number surpassed the goal by \$37 million, making it the most successful campaign in the history of the university.

This great achievement is due to the commitment and passion of the university president, Eموke Szathmary, and the campaign director, Elaine Goldie. It was also with the generous donations from private business which made it possible for the campaign to flourish into such a success.

Some of the donors included the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which donated 17 million U.S. dollars for the university's HIV-AIDS prevention project in India. The Asper family donated about \$13 million and the Richardson family and companies gave \$7 million. Most of this money has already been set aside for many of the university's projects.

The university is hoping to begin the new \$52-million engineering and information technology complex. Mr. Speaker, \$25 million has already been allocated for the Richardson Centre for Functional Foods and Nutraceuticals. It has also set aside

\$40 million for scholarships and bursaries. However, there are still a lot of other projects that are short of their goals, and the university is still striving to raise money from the private sector for new facilities.

Finally, I would like to thank all the donors and organizers for investing their time and money in the future of this province. It is a great sign that the University of Manitoba and the province have a healthy future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Odeon Drive-In

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, on March 23, Pat Marshall of the Cineplex Galaxy Theatres announced that the Odeon Drive-In in Headingley would close because of dwindling attendance. That was a very sad day.

That is the last drive-in in the vicinity. It is in Headingley, in my constituency of Morris, and the only one in the area surrounding Winnipeg or in Winnipeg itself. It has been there for over 40 years.

Who has not been to a drive-in, either as a child with parents or as a teenager or even as a young parent taking your own children there? Call it nostalgia, or call it preserving history, but I did not want to see this last drive-in close or be torn down. So, on Saturday, April 3, an article appeared in a local newspaper after I issued a press release. Frank Landry of *The Winnipeg Sun* was kind enough to do an article requesting people to put forward ideas to save the drive-in. Subsequent to that, a Mr. Allan Anderson responded and put up a Web site in which he collected 11 000 signatures in just nine days.

It was announced yesterday, April 14, that the Odeon Drive-In in Headingley would not close and, in fact, will reopen for the season on May 21. I encourage all people in Manitoba to please support this drive-in so that we will see it continue for many years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Captain Marvin Nordman

Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a Manitoban whose dedication to public service and commitment to his province earned him the admiration and respect of everyone who knew him. I speak of retired Air Force Captain Marvin Nordman who passed away this past weekend.

Mr. Nordman passed away at the age of 79 at the Gimli Community Health Centre on Sunday, April 11, 2004. He was born in Cypress River on August 8, 1924, and was predeceased by his parents, his sister Iris, and his brothers Edwin, Ruric and Ivan.

Captain Nordman married his beloved wife, Ellen, in July 1944, and they were married 53 years prior to her death in 1997. He leaves behind his three children and eight grandchildren, son Curtis, daughters, Cara Tax and Andrea Chow, as well as grandchildren, Trevor, Meghan, Hannah, David, Jaimie, Dana, Adam and Tyler. Marvin is also survived by his companion Jean French.

Captain Nordman spent a lifetime in public service through his employment and his volunteer work. He was very proud to be a career military pilot serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force for 23 years and was one of the early "Mach Busters" having broken the sound barrier in his Cold War-era Canadair Sabre.

Mr. Nordman went on to have a successful career with the Manitoba government in several capacities, including Deputy Minister of Public Works during the Ed Schreyer NDP government.

He was an active member of the Gimli Legion and served in various volunteer positions over the years, and over the last few years enjoyed organizing the Gimli Canada Day Parade.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to pay tribute to Captain Marvin Nordman and, if I may, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly convey our deepest sympathies to his family.

GRIEVANCES

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I want to just put a few comments on the record in regard to what has been the recent controversy brought upon the people of Manitoba by this Government and, that is, the forced unionization of workers that are going to work on the floodway.

I come from an area of the province of Manitoba that when the last floodway was built, construction companies from that area had a new opportunity to develop and grow their companies within this province. Many of the corporations and the companies that currently provide construction

services to this Government, today, got their start from the floodway. They came in, many of them with newly purchased equipment in which they provided the services required of them, to build the floodway that has time after time after time saved the citizens of Winnipeg and prevented huge losses for all Manitobans and I would suggest, all Canadians, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is trying to turn the tables on people like that, the small construction companies who have established themselves over a period of time, a reputation of strong work and strong commitment to the job. I think it is a slap in the face that this Government would try and force unionization or the payment of unionized dues for the sake of what they are saying is to try and get an agreement. If we on this side of the House were to stand up and say to Manitobans that the people who work on the construction of the floodway in the province of Manitoba all had to be non-unionized, we would have screams and hollers from the government and from all the unions in the province of Manitoba.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? That would be just as ridiculous a comment for us to make as it is for this Government. For them to suggest to all Manitobans that the only way that they are going to get a deal done on this floodway is to unionize, it is a slap in the face of the construction workers in this province. These people have committed a lifetime to building their companies, to building their families, to building their reputations, growing Manitoba, presenting opportunities.

We only have to look back a few short years to when the construction industry in this province unionized, non-unionized, friends, neighbours, competitors all got together and pushed forward to save the city of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba from the tremendous flood. It was not something that they had to be told to or mandated by government. It was not something that anybody needed to have written on paper. It was not an agreement that was forced by a government upon the people who work in this province of Manitoba. It was done by honest, hardworking people that had a commitment to get a job done, get it done under extreme pressure and get it done in a fashion that was satisfactory so all Manitobans could benefit.

*(15:20)

Mr. Speaker, when a government takes the challenge, I would say they have the audacity to suggest to the construction industry in the province of Manitoba that they cannot complete a project as simple as the floodway. I use that cautiously but in my estimation and what I am hearing from the contractors in the construction industry, this is about moving earth. This is something that they do on a continuous basis day after day after day. They have done it before. They have proved to the Province that they can do it and for this Province to suggest that nothing can be completed without this type of an agreement I think is a shame on Manitobans and certainly it reflects poorly on this Government, that they would think that they would have to impose that type of an agreement upon the people of Manitoba, particularly the construction workers. I want to point out that in the past 30 years there has not been a strike, lockout or any kind of work stoppage from the non-unionized sector of the heavy construction industry.

When this Government talks about labour agreements and striking agreements to force people into one category or another, they are throwing away 30 years of history from an industry that has said to Manitobans: When you need us, we are there. When you need us, we are on time. When you need us, we are on budget.

This Government is slapping the faces of the construction workers and the owners of these companies in Manitoba, and they should be ashamed of themselves.

These types of agreements are only designed by government, and it was stated earlier today, and I will choose my words very cautiously, but it creates a smell in the rest of Manitoba when they see a government imposing these types of restrictions on construction companies. It creates that aroma of insider information, of paybacks, of scandal, of a way of creating fees that eventually get siphoned back into government or into election campaigns. I think that is disgraceful. The very fact that people in Manitoba, the people of Manitoba are talking about this should be a lesson for this Government that they had better pay attention and hear what people in Manitoba are saying.

We are starting to present petitions on behalf of the province of Manitoba, on behalf of the people of Manitoba. They are saying that the construction

industry in this province has provided good service for the people of this community and good service for the people of Manitoba, and this Government is challenging that reputation that they have by forcing this unionization.

I am not saying it. It is the people that are out there in the public that are saying it. It smells. They are saying that, as much as we have the distrust that is going on at the federal level, this type of deal and this type of representation by the Government creates that same odour of scandal.

The people of Manitoba, through their petitions, through their signing of these petitions—these are not construction people, these are our friends, our neighbours that just do not understand why they as taxpayers should be on the hook for another \$50 million to \$60 million of their hard-earned money when the Government can go out and negotiate agreement with all the contractors, not just the non-union contractors, but the union contractors. We need them all to do a project like this.

We cannot afford as a government, as a province to pay the extra \$50 million or \$60 million. Furthermore, we cannot afford to offend the people that work in our province by suggesting that they cannot get the job done unless they belong to a union, because they have proved over the last 30 years that they can. They are willing and able.

We also have to look at this agreement as taking jobs outside of the province of Manitoba. By forcing unionization you are going to have contractors in this province that are going to say we will not participate. We will not be blackmailed. We will not be railroaded into unionizing our workers to take this contract, and therefore all of our tax dollars, or a good portion of it, are going to be taken from the taxpayers of Manitoba and Canada, are going to be forced to pay for work that comes from outside of Manitoba when we have a capable, competent, ready-to-go workforce in this province of Manitoba.

I ask the Government to reconsider their position. We are asking on this side that they take that type of legislation off the table, that they sit down and negotiate with the construction workers of this province, strike an agreement that worked when we built Duff's Ditch and strike an agreement that will benefit all Manitobans, not just the NDP government, not the union people that they represent

and not the coffers of the next NDP election campaign.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Emerson, on a grievance?

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): On a grievance, Mr. Speaker. I rise today—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sorry, but the records show that the honourable Member for Emerson has already used his grievance.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you please call debate on second readings in the order they appear on the Order Paper with one exception, Bill 41 to follow 14.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 5—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Claimant Advisers)

Mr. Speaker: Resumed debate on second readings, Bill 5, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Claimant Advisers), standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed).

Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain? [*Agreed*] The bill will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain. The honourable Member for St. Norbert wishes to speak to the bill.

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to put a few remarks on the record regarding Bill 5, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Claimant Advisers). The intent of this amendment is to allow claimants to access the assistance of a claimant adviser prior to proceeding with an automobile injury compensation appeal.

I have been involved in four no-fault car accidents over the last 10 years that have left me with permanent disabilities that I must live with for

the rest of my life. I am intimately acquainted with the Personal Injury Protection Program.

Prior to the introduction of this program, I attended the public consultations that were undertaken to allow citizens to have input into the proposed changes prior to the introduction of the Personal Injury Protection Program.

I have a ton of sympathy for people who are injured on the job or in a car accident. I can speak with some passion about how difficult it is to think straight and to formulate concrete plans that you would like to implement while you are in pain or on medication to treat an injury or in physiotherapy to ensure that your injury heals and allows you to return to being a productive member of the workforce.

I felt so passionate about this issue that I made a presentation at the Manitoba Public Insurance public consultations. I put forward the major recommendation that the corporation provide assistance to claimants to ensure that they could understand the personal injury protection process and that they were well informed of their rights.

I am extremely proud of our Government for having the compassion and foresight to introduce this amendment. Many claimants do not understand the Personal Injury Protection plan. In addition to having to struggle to understand the plan, these injured Manitobans also do not understand the scope and purpose of the appeal process.

Unlike the MLAs in this Legislature, many Manitobans find the process of presenting a public address an intimidating and nerve-wracking experience. These injured Manitobans are currently required to struggle through a difficult process during a time when they are in pain.

* (15:30)

Many appellants are intimidated by the appeal process and are uncomfortable presenting their case to the appeal commission. This bill ensures that appellants receive assistance and advocacy, and, most important, it de-stresses the appeal process.

The role of the claimant adviser office will be to assist appellants so that they understand the meaning and the effect of the provisions of this act, the regulations and decisions made under this act, that

they understand that carrying out an investigation or inspection includes obtaining an expert opinion and respecting his or her claim and communicating with or appearing before the commission on his or her behalf.

The advisers that this act will provide for are going to have their salaries paid for as well as the costs associated with the research they undertake paid by a consolidated fund. This means that the claimants will not be out of pocket for the expenses related to ensuring that they are well represented and well advised prior to having their case put before the Automobile Injury Compensation Appeal Commission.

I am very proud of our Government for putting this act forward. I want to commend them for this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): I would like to move that debate be adjourned.

Mr. Speaker: The debate is already standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, so it does not have to be adjourned, but I think we have another member that wishes to speak. Is there another member that wishes to speak?

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise to make a few comments regarding this particular bill, Bill 5, and I must say at the outset that this is a very good improvement to the system that is in place with MPIC.

Mr. Harry Schellenberg, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

Just to look back a little bit in the history of what has happened with MPIC. You recall a number of years ago the no-fault suggestion was made and, actually, by our side at the time, and was discussed somewhat since about 1988. After the election we continued to advocate a no-fault program and the government of the day resisted it. Much to our surprise, I think it was just after a CJOB interview on the subject, in which I was advocating the program, the minister did an about-face; the government did an about-face, and brought in, based on the Québec model, a no-fault system. With that, the rules changed and, of course, it solved a few problems, in that it took the lawyers out of the process and allowed for more speedy resolution, and allowed

better coverages than were previously the case. There was a learning curve there, and there had to be some improvements to the system. You recall that it was, in fact, reviewed about three years later.

One of the suggestions we made at the time, and there were several, was that we have a worker-adviser- or worker-advocate-type position put forward so that people could get through the maze, get through the paperwork, and present a proper case at the appeal process. In the first couple of years, we put the appeal under the Consumer and Corporate Affairs department to make sure it was at arm's length from MPIC. In the beginning, we were surprised to find that only, I think the first year, three appeals were filed. We expected a flood of appeals and, in fact, it was only, I think, three appeals the first time, under the previous government. But, nevertheless, even though there were only three, and they said, "Well that is all there were." We said, "Well, no, no, people do not know about this as well as they should. We should be publicizing it more. We should be making it easier for people to file their appeals, short of having to hire a lawyer." So what we have done here is we advocated this. I remember the Member for Thompson advocating this at several junctures. The government changed. It has been a couple of years now but, finally, we have this in a bill form before the House, and this is just one more improvement in the system. I think it shows that this Government is willing and open to new ideas, and willing to discuss changes that are necessary in the MPIC program.

I think, because there is another MPIC bill coming up later on this afternoon, I will leave the rest of my comments for that particular bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Schellenberg): Are there any other speakers?

As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed).

Bill 9—The Manitoba Immigration Council Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Schellenberg): Our next debate is on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister for Labour and Immigration (Ms. Allan), Bill 9, The Manitoba Immigration Council Act. This

matter stands in the name of the Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler).

Is it the will of the House to have the matter remain standing in the name of the Member for Springfield? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): Mr. Acting Speaker, I rise to speak to support Bill 9, The Manitoba Immigration Council Act. This very important bill needs support from all members who believe in Manitoba's actions and strategy for economic growth. This is a plan to double immigration to 10 000 annually. I believe the creation of the Manitoba Immigration Council will strengthen the ability of the Government to meet Manitoba's immigration goals.

The action strategy is soundly based in the commendations of the Premier's Economic Advisory Council after input of Manitobans from the diverse sectors. It states that it is clear that Manitoba needs an increase in immigration to keep its population and workforce in balance. Guiding us to strengthen our commitment to partnerships with business, labour and community, this strategy directs that we build on existing advantages to reach Manitoba's economic goals.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as an immigrant who landed in Manitoba some 33 years back, I understand the complexities of new immigrant families in choosing their new home in a new country. The difficulties faced by new immigrants in adjusting to Manitoba's minus 40 degrees Celsius temperatures, new cultural environment and the other social economic challenges are not very ordinary factors.

The challenges are many, and to establish this council is the best possible solution to be applied in solving these complex problems. The establishment of the council was strongly endorsed by the Business Council of Manitoba, several ethnocultural communities and ethnocultural advisory councils. We must applaud our minister for her leadership in this area to bring innovation in the area of immigration and settlement.

Through the proposed appointment of a 12-member council from business, labour and multi-cultural organizations, we will strengthen the existing community relationships and develop new partnerships to ensure that our programs support new

commercial participation in Manitoba's dynamic future. As evidence in the history, Mr. Acting Speaker, once good references are given and received, more people will follow suit and come and settle in Manitoba. We need a lot of people to choose Manitoba as their new home.

* (15:40)

The council will provide the advice and information to the minister in three key areas: attracting immigrants, which is a very big challenge in the dynamics of population movement in the world today; provision and development of settlement services; and providing aid to the development of crucial supports to retrain immigrants in Manitoba. As provinces and countries compete globally for the attention of potential immigrants, these tasks grow more challenging.

Mr. Acting Speaker, let us face the facts that when Manitoba competes with other provinces in Canada like Ontario and British Columbia, we need some innovative approach to effectively attract, settle and retain immigrants who will fully contribute to Manitoba communities. We know that it requires a tremendous amount of courage and is a challenge.

Recently the Government of Manitoba has negotiated and signed a new Canada-Manitoba immigration agreement which provides for the development of new initiatives to meet regional needs; addresses barriers and recognition of qualifications; and supports settlement and integration; as well as it also encourages the movement of temporary workers and international students and builds on collaboration with minority language communities as part of the Provincial Nominee Program.

I must say to the members in this House that the Provincial Nominee Program, which is very unique in this country, is well recognized throughout Canada. They look at Manitoba as a leader on this particular challenging front. In support of our mutual goals the federal government has stated its commitment to allow greater numbers of immigrants to come to Manitoba through the Provincial Nominee Program as well as through others such as the humanitarian and Family Unification Program.

I know from my personal experience that the Provincial Nominee Program is working. It is

working to be one of the best in this country that we had last year 6500 new arrivals into our province. This has been the highest number over a decade. I think that with the challenges and the program and the formation of this council, we hope that the numbers will increase to 10 000 per year and beyond.

Among these are the first ever community sponsorship agreement with the governments of Winnipeg and Canada one year ago and the recent International Student Off-Campus Work Pilot program. Without these innovations Manitoba will fall short of efforts to address skill shortages, retain our best and brightest and meet the challenges of a highly competitive global economy to be the destination of choice of immigrants.

I believe that this kind of program to develop a council that will be from the different groups, from multicultural groups, from business groups, from the social groups that will form the membership of the council and will advise the minister, is one of the best solutions to this tremendously challenged program.

I would like to conclude that those who believe that immigrants who leave their old countries, their relatives, their friends and their old environment need a lot of work for them to settle in the new environment, would need a warm reception and a new and caring body that will help them to settle in the new society with excitement, compassion, hope and full integration into the new society. This council will be mandated to do all that. I think we should be very proud that the Government of Manitoba has initiated this tremendously desirable act to have the Manitoba immigration act passed.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to commend the vision and the work of the minister in the introduction of Bill 9, The Manitoba Immigration Council Act. I want to point out to the members that when it comes to attracting immigrants to the province we have set some very good goals here, and we are well on our way to achieving the 10 000 a year. Approximately we are at about 6500 arrivals at the moment.

But you have to remember that we are in competition with B.C., we are in competition with Toronto. Certainly the weather in B.C., by all accounts, is generally better than it is in Winnipeg.

So it means that we have to put extra efforts in our settlement services and in other initiatives to attract the immigrants to our province. So it bodes well for the future of Manitoba if we are able to overcome these natural barriers with the weather and the fact that there are in some cases better opportunities elsewhere. We are doing quite well.

I also wanted to mention, Mr. Acting Speaker, that I recall as early as, I guess, the early eighties, the whole issue of foreign-trained professionals was an issue in the NDP caucus then. Sterling Lyon was the premier, and we were trying to knock him off and, as it turned out, we succeeded. But that was a hot issue in the caucus, at the time, as to how we were going to solve this issue of having foreign-trained professionals, for example, foreign-trained doctors who were washing dishes and cleaning floors here in Manitoba, when they could have been put to work serving patients.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

You know, in opposition, it is so simple to look at these issues, right? We look at it and say, well, you know, when we get in there, we are simply going to mandate that the government is going to order that so many doctors be trained. But, of course, once you get in government you realize that it is not so simple.

The previous Filmon government knows that only too well, as well, that when they tried, and when we tried, as a government, to help the foreign-trained doctors get established, there were barriers. The society of medical practitioners, the college in Manitoba, had very definite ideas and very definite rules and some would say they were very unfair rules, because they gave preferential treatment to people that came from Commonwealth countries. Of course, that whole issue has been challenged, or is being challenged, by people in the courts at the moment, and I do wish them well in that.

It is a big challenge to expect people who come from a different country with their professional qualifications, settle in a country where they may not know the language, and then to have to fight an uphill battle, because what they have to do is pass. They are not asking for any special treatment here; they are willing to pass the standards courses, the courses they have to take, and the testing.

In order to do that, these are people who do not have a lot of means, they have to put out a lot of money to buy books, and put the time out for studying to be able to pass these tests, and then, even if they pass them, there is no guarantee that they are going to be allowed into the medical school. So this is a very long-standing, serious problem that has passed over several governments in different provinces, and I, certainly, would like to see us put our efforts into trying to resolve this in favour of the foreign trained professionals, as soon as we can possibly do that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No other speakers? As previously agreed, this bill will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler). Agreed? *[Agreed]*

Bill 10—The Gaming Control Amendment Act

Mr. Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on Bill 10, The Gaming Control Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Commission de régie du jeu, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed). Stand?

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed? *[Agreed]* It will stand.

Bill 11—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Protection of Crown Assets)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), Bill 11, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Protection of Crown Assets); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba (protection des biens de l'État), standing in the name of the honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik). Stand?

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

* (15:50)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that this bill remain standing in the name of the honourable

Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik)?
[Agreed]

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to address the Legislature today on The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Protection of Crown Assets). One of the founding principles of the NDP government in creating Manitoba Public Insurance was to create a basic plan to return approximately 85 percent of the premiums collected from motorists in claim benefits. At the time, this was a very commendable objective. Despite the lofty goals behind the objective, Manitoba Public Insurance has exceeded this objective. Over time, Manitoba Public Insurance has consistently paid more than 90 cents of the premiums collected to claimants.

Another goal of the program was to create a compulsory auto insurance plan comparable to a public utility. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this goal has been accomplished with great success. The current Manitoba Public Insurance system works very effectively. Despite many other insurance rates increasing well in excess of the rate of inflation, Manitoba Public Insurance has maintained rates that are affordable and do not place a hardship on the average Manitoban who requires a vehicle to transport themselves to and from work and for recreation.

During the 30 years that Manitoba Public Insurance has been in place, auto insurance rates have increased at a rate slower than the inflation. The sad events of September 11, that all of us remember here in the House, that occurred in New York, have had a huge impact on the insurance industry. The cost of doing business here in Manitoba and across North America has gone up in part due to the huge increase in insurance costs. Here in Manitoba, businesses have not had to deal with the unpredictability or the unprecedented increases in auto premiums as a result of the September 11 tragedy.

I think many Manitobans would credit Manitoba Public Insurance as contributing to their quality of life. Drivers in other provinces are facing double-digit increases in auto insurance rates, while our publicly owned Crown corporation has maintained steady and predictable premiums for Manitobans. Consistently low, Manitoba Public Insurance rates are a contributing factor to Manitoba's low cost of living. Many citizens of other provinces have been

looking with envy to Manitoba where our public insurance provides affordable, comprehensive insurance for the citizens of this province.

Prior to the introduction of our publicly owned and operated system, a reporter in the *Winnipeg Tribune* in 1962, Russ Paulley, said this of the private system: The motorist is getting a drubbing. The system here is ridiculous as well as costly.

The bill requires that any privatization of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation be approved by referendum. The bill requires in section 14(1) that "the government shall not (a) take any steps to privatize the corporation or any part of its insurance undertakings; or (b) present to the Legislative Assembly a bill to authorize or effect such a privatization; unless the government first puts the question of the advisability of privatizing the corporation or undertaking to the voters of Manitoba in a referendum, and the privatization is approved by a majority of the votes cast in the referendum."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a government bill such as this would not be necessary or, in most likelihood, even considered if the previous Conservative government had not sold off one of our Crown jewels, the Manitoba Telephone System. I was one of the impassioned speakers who came to the committee hearings to speak against the privatization of the utility, one which we all owned. I listened to many presentations made by other individuals and they were all opposed to the privatization of our publicly owned phone system.

In keeping with the presentations made that now, in retrospect, seem to be very prophetic, phone rates have been increasing steadily. In 1997, basic phone rates for Winnipeg were \$17 a month. Today, the rate paid by Winnipeggers is \$25 per month. In rural Manitoba, rates were between \$11 and \$14 per month for service in small towns. Current rates in the same area have, in some cases, doubled. The rate for phone service in this same area is \$24.20 per month, now.

As concerning as the rates that subscribers are paying is the loss of jobs that have been experienced by MTS employees. The question that begs to be asked is why is this utility that charges a higher fee, yet, at the same time, laying off staff. Undoubtedly, the need to pay dividends to stockholders plays a role in the increased rates we are paying.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to say that Manitobans have been well served for over 30 years by the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, and it is in Manitobans' best interest that they have an opportunity to be consulted prior to the privatization of the corporation. It is my hope that this legislation will ensure that Manitobans feel that their voice counts in any major changes like the privatization of this important corporation.

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): I rise here to support this bill for Manitoba Public Insurance privatization protection bill. This is a bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is so dear to me, personally, being a business owner, that I wish I could keep on talking for, perhaps, 10 hours, but I will not do that. I will try to be brief.

I think the whole ideology of privatization of publicly owned assets is something that needs to be, literally, debated on all Crown corporations, particularly on this MPI, which is one of the best run in this country. This bill is, absolutely, a must to protect Manitobans against what was done to Manitoba Telephone System by the last government that we all are suffering today, that the ownership has been taken away from the hands of all Manitobans to a selected few who are enjoying the multiple profits and benefits at the cost of all people of Manitoba. I think that this is a very serious issue on the public front.

MPI was created by the great visionary leader, Ed Schreyer, who believed that there are certain services, certain requirements that must, in a civilized society, be given to all citizens. As my colleague stated, 9-11 has created a disaster. Insurance industries may not be able to function and provide. There are houses; there are homeowners that may not be insured because the insurance industry does not perceive itself to be providers of services to all. They are in the business.

MPI, on the other hand, has been created, mandated, to serve all Manitobans that own vehicles, that they will be protected by giving them insurance, which will eventually return on their accidents and the incidents that happen. Ninety cents collected by the premiums are returned to cover those.

* (16:00)

You cannot believe how wonderful this particular jewel is to us, which must be protected

against being sold by other political groups that may win elections and decide to dump. It must be given, the right must be given, to the people to say yes or no. This legislation is talking about that particular act that will protect Manitobans against that act, decided by few, that will choose to make their budgets maybe balanced by selling MTS as they did the last time, and that is what I think. I have become very passionate.

Air Canada is one example, that, when you give business into the private hands, it is the shareholders' interest. Shareholders look at how to make the profit most relevant, provide the best service. There are railways. There are services that are required to serve all the people. Now, Air Canada was given to the private hands and now see what is the condition of that airline. Today, they are almost going bankrupt. If it was held by the public, they would say it is mismanaged, so the whole ideal difference between privatization and public ownership is something that I understand. I come from a business. I own the business and I know exactly what the business wants to do. We are talking about a public utility. We are talking about a utility, a company, a business that will serve all the people. I think that we have seen examples of private corporations that have miserably failed and it is not the ownership. It is the management. The ownership does not make a company fail or succeed. It is the management.

Manitoba Hydro, which, I must say, is a publicly owned Crown corporation that is one of the best in the country, run most efficiently. MPI is run most efficiently. There are shareholders, and we are all of us shareholders.

I think it is very, very important for us to understand that such progressive legislation that comes must be acknowledged and endorsed by all. I think the examples in the whole world today; in the energy sector, Enron was the giant leader in the world with billions of dollars lost; WorldCom, world leader, billions of dollars were lost. They were not Crown corporations. They are held by private shareholders. I think we must understand this very clearly. That it is definitely the management. It is not the shareholders. The management of the Crown corporations are the responsibility of the governments to make sure that they appoint managers who are competent, and we are proud to say that Manitoba today stands tall in this country by looking at the Crown corporations that are doing extremely well under leadership of the Government, that we are in power today.

I think MPI must not be given remotely a chance to be reconsidered. It serves all the people. With several examples I can give, which will be a repetition of several points raised by my colleagues here, that it is extremely important that the vision seen by Ed Schreyer in those days, to make a Crown corporation that will not only be profitable for people of Manitoba, it will be beneficial in economic terms. I know of certain families in Ontario, my family lives there, and they compare the rates and they think maybe we should register our cars in Manitoba and drive to Kenora and then from there we go back to Ontario. Now this speaks for the vision that Ed Schreyer did today which typically in the business community will say, these are socialists, they do not know how to run a business, but we definitely are showing a demonstration that when in Ontario, which is hardcore Tory country, for a number of years their people were coming to buy cars here in Manitoba illegally and are registered here because we are very good. We are good because it is managed well and ownership remains with the people of Manitoba, all people of Manitoba. I strongly suggest that anybody who has sense to live in and be proud of Manitoba should support this fantastic bill.

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the previous speaker said that he felt he had a lot more than his allocated time. We on this side would be prepared to give him leave.

Ms. Theresa Oswald (Seine River): I am pleased to stand today to speak in support of Bill 11. I would concur, of course, with my colleagues on this side of the House in their support, in their analysis of how important this bill is. There is no question, as we know, that the bill requires any, heaven forbid, proposed privatization of MPI, would have to be approved by a referendum. And in addition, we know, of course, that the bill requires that any proposal to amend or repeal or override the referendum requirement would be referred to a standing committee at the Legislative Assembly and the public would have an opportunity to be heard. This is really why I stand today to address that issue.

I would suggest that, indeed, while MPI serves all Manitobans in a significant and profound way, when we compare ourselves to unfortunate Canadians across the province that do not reap the benefits that we do, that we all understand why MPI is so important to Manitobans, and we understand

why its existence as a Crown corporation is very important.

I would like to address what happens when we do not protect our Crown corporations and that, of course, was the dark time in Manitoba when we watched MTS be privatized. It was, indeed, an atrocity. We see Manitobans being abused daily by rates in MTS. It is my understanding that rates back in '97 were about \$17.80 and, today, we are paying over \$25 a month. I think about what this does to my pocketbook and, perhaps, more significantly to the pocketbook of my mother, a senior citizen, and it is, indeed, an abuse. We know what happened at that time when we saw democracy subverted in the most heinous way. It was a violation of all Manitobans and, I would hasten to add, of Seine River constituents in particular.

I would just like to say that I stand in strong support of this bill. It is about protecting MPI for Manitobans. It is, indeed, about preserving a voice for Manitobans which is a value I would hope we can all embrace. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I would like to put a few comments on the record regarding this particular bill. I guess it is somewhat of interest that, after 30 years, a government in power would even have to introduce a bill such as this, given the history of the corporation and the fact that even a previous Tory premier, Sterling Lyon, after having done an examination of the corporation with the full intention to sell it off, at the end of the day, after leading a lot of people on here into believing that they were going to sell off the corporation, pulled back, stopped and decided that he could not do it. There was just too much investment money retained in Manitoba that would otherwise flow out of the province to Toronto and other centres.

I would like to also mention that in Saskatchewan, when Ross Thatcher came in after many years of a CCF government, the people that actually started the first public insurance corporation in Canada, Ross Thatcher had the same mind to sell off the corporation. And when he was asked about it, he said: I may not be a socialist, but I am not stupid either.

* (16:10)

Ross Thatcher, the Liberal premier of Saskatchewan who followed the NDP, the NDP

would not do it because of that reason. The major, major reason why Conservative governments have kept MPIC around has been the fact of the investment dollars. When they look at the whole thing, as much as their ideology dictates that it has to be sold according to their ideology, and as much as there are willing partners out there that want the corporation privatized for their ends, financial and ideological, they cannot do it. They cannot do it for those reasons. As a matter of fact, the corporation's investment portfolio used to be around \$700 million. I think it may be a billion now, but, certainly, it does not invest in equity markets, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It does not buy huge blocks of Nortel stock. Recently, in the last couple of years, it did get involved in some equities, egged on by the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen), as a matter of fact, who was complaining a couple of years ago in committee that in fact MPIC should be increasing its investment in equities from, I think, 5 percent to 10 percent. I personally think that is wrong, that MPIC should not be investing anything in equities. It should be in bonds, it should be safe investments, and it should be in Manitoba, and that is where it should stay.

I am not overly concerned that there would be a privatization, but, given what they did with the telephone system, anything is possible. Especially if the neocons in the party over there take control and become extremely ideological, who knows what could happen in the future? So this is worthy of support, because it is that protection, that added protection, that slows them down a little bit if and when they should decide that they want to change the system.

Now, I did want to make some comments about the industry in general. The previous speakers did mention that September 11 was a watershed causing premiums to be raised across the world. I can tell you that Warren Buffett, the second richest guy in the world, actually third richest now, who owns Gillette, American Express, Dairy Queen and a lot of other companies, owns one or two reinsurance companies, GEICO Insurance United States, and he personally lost \$3 billion in reinsurance on the World Trade Centre attack.

Now, you know, I have to admit that that is what the industry uses as the reason for large premium increases, and there is a certain amount of truth in that, but I can tell you that that was a convenient argument, that in fact investment results have

deteriorated because of the equities market. The equities market has fallen. We all know that from the pension plans that we are all in. Equities markets have dropped and they have dropped for the insurance companies as well. To make up the loss of income, they have simply raised their rates.

So what we have seen across Canada are big increases, 20%, 25% increases in auto insurance across the country. What do we see in Manitoba? Mr. Deputy Speaker, 2 percent, 3 percent. Well, is that not a big difference, 2 percent versus 22 percent, and if you have a couple of accidents in private insurance jurisdictions like New Brunswick, your rates will double and triple. You will be riding a bus. Someone argued maybe we should be doing more of that, but I think most drivers would actually, when they think about it, like a system that provides full coverage, does not penalize you the way a private system does in another province and keeps the rates very reasonable, 2 percent, 4 percent.

Now, how and why can they do that? Why can they keep their rates at 2 percent, provide their investments in the province and do that when all the other companies around are raising their rates a lot more? Well, there are actually several reasons for that. One of them is reinsurance costs. MPIC is big enough, they have a captive market of a million people. They can go to London to the reinsurance and get substantially lower reinsurance than an individual company can.

Another reason why they are very reasonable is that they are not mandated to make big amounts of profit. As indicated in the documents here, the original plan was to return 85 percent of the premiums collected to the motorists, and in fact I think we have returned more than 85 percent. Now, do you know of any insurance company anywhere in the world that can run its operations on 15 percent? It just cannot be done. So, because it is run on a non-profit basis and it does not have to pay shareholders profits, and stockholders, it can operate on a very small margin. Another example, and you know whenever I have people ask me about private insurance being better I tell it, well, if you are in Ontario, you are going to pay twice the amount and the premium, probably get less coverage, and they say, well, you know, we want private insurance. I say, hey, bring it on, baby, because the insurance agents in Manitoba make 5 percent of a little premium and in good old Ontario they make 12.5

percent of a huge premium. So where would these agents rather operate? I mean, they would rather be in a private insurance environment, where they can take out 12.5 percent of a much bigger amount.

But so why are they happy with 5.5 percent? They are happy with 5.5 percent because there is not the work. There is not the work involved as there is with private insurance. When you go into a private insurance agent in Alberta or Ontario or New Brunswick, you have to fill out multiple applications, all sorts of personal information about yourself, and you send it off to two or three companies and you wait and you hope that they will come back with a decent premium and a decent coverage.

In Manitoba we do not have any of that stuff. So, you know, the more you look and the more you think about how the system operates, it is amazing how good an idea this is. You say why has it not replicated itself more quickly. Why did it not get replicated in Ontario? I wonder about that quite often. Here we have a government in New Brunswick that shows a lot of promise. I do not know whether they are going to actually implement the system, but they are showing a lot of promise here when they have done their study and their study says that a Manitoba system is the best system that they can find.

Furthermore, Manitoba has an on-line system which is second to none. I think it costs a lot of money, if I am not wrong, \$30 million, something like that. It is an excellent system. In fact, it is so good that the people in New Brunswick would like to use it for their system. So, that is an example of where technology has made the operation even more efficient than it was before. In the current environment I can tell you that the corporation is looking at Internet faxing to reduce the amount of documents that are collected from the public. So, when the public come in, they Internet fax the documents over to the corporation and there are no paid documents left around, so privacy issues are addressed. That will provide efficiencies that I think could be replicated throughout other arms of the Government.

So there is some indication there that this system is showing some initiative and a bit of imagination that may have been lacking in the past, I am not sure.

I wanted to mention also the CLEAR system. This is a system for rating vehicles that the

corporation adopted that pressures auto makers to make safer cars. I mean we have a million captive customers here, and a system that the charge is based on how expensive it is to fix a car, or how many accidents a car has, is a good system, because if a certain model of car costs a lot to fix it is going to cost a lot more to insure. Pressure will be put on the markets and General Motors and Ford and these companies actually do respond to public pressure to produce safer cars.

So these are some of the arguments that one can use to defend a system like this. There is a role for the private market and you can make convincing arguments if you want one way or the other on the telephone system. I just happen to believe that their argument was wrong. But when it comes to public insurance, even Conservatives are smart enough to realize that it is a very good system and worthwhile keeping. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

* (16:20)

**Bill 12—The Highways and Transportation
Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment
Act (Trucking Productivity Improvement Fund)**

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If there are no other speakers, the next item under consideration is the resuming of debate on second reading of Bill 12, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the will of the House that this matter remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina? *[Agreed]*

**Bill 14—The Gas Accountability Act
(Financial Administration Act Amended)**

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Next, is the consideration of resuming of debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Mackintosh), Bill 14, The Gas Accountability Act (Financial Administration Act Amended); Loi sur l'obligation redditionnelle concernant la taxe sur l'essence (modification de la Loi sur la gestion des finances publiques), standing in the name of the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurchou).

Any speakers on this bill?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: This bill will remain as previously agreed.

I ask the question: Is it the will of the House that this Bill 14 remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie? *[Agreed]*

Bill 41—The Profits of Criminal Notoriety Act

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The next bill is Bill 41. Resume debate on Bill 41. On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), The Profits of Criminal Notoriety Act; Loi sur les profits découlant de la notoriété en matière criminelle, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Emerson, who has 29 minutes remaining.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for your indulgence. I truly appreciate the opportunity to put a few words on Bill 41. As I had indicated previously when I spoke, somebody said to me, that was one of the best speeches you gave. I think it was two minutes in length. I probably had more substance in that than I might put on the record today, but we will see.

I want to reflect on some of the items that my honourable colleague put on the record the other day. I want to also reflect on the government's statements that they have made from time to time about this now being a province where crime is no longer tolerable.

When I look, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the record of this Government in how they have dealt with matters of crime, and now they are talking about penalizing or not allowing a criminal once that criminal either has served his time or even while being incarcerated, not allowing that person to profit from those crimes.

I respected what the Minister of Justice said the other day when he introduced the bill, when he said we are not going to tolerate criminals making a profit, in other words, benefiting from crime.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Well, any time, Mr. Speaker, any time a person takes something that is not his or hers, sells that

piece of property to somebody else without being caught, or somebody taking and having a marijuana grow operation and selling that marijuana on the streets, profiting from it without being caught, in my view, is profiting from criminal activity.

Regardless of what the Minister of Justice has said in this House, there is more crime on the streets today in this province of Manitoba than we have ever experienced in this province, in the history of this province before. Why is it that this NDP government cannot put laws in place and cannot put a justice system in place, cannot put an enforcement system in place that will get rid of the Hells Angels? Why have they headquartered in Manitoba? I would suspect the only reason they have done so is because it is a relatively safe haven; that is why they are here.

Why is it that it is a relatively safe haven? It is because this Justice Minister does nothing but sit in his chair and talk and does not put in place the kind of laws, does not put in place the kind of protective agencies and enforcement agencies that will deal with the matters. He does not give the policing authorities the tools to do the job. That is the main reason.

I think it is reflective of this Government, historically, as saying a lot of niceties as they did during the last election and the previous election when they were first elected four and a half years ago when the now Premier of the province went to the people of Manitoba and said: Trust me, trust me. I will save your health industry. Give me \$15 million and trust me, in six months I will have fixed it. Boy, oh boy, oh boy, are the people of Manitoba ever disappointed. Now, after four years, after four years and spending an additional billion dollars a year on the health care system, this minister, this Premier is now trying to sort of slough off and sort of placate the people of Manitoba and say, hey, look, we have done our best.

He said the other day we have the best health care system anywhere in Canada. You try and explain that to the lady that came to see me the other day that has waited a year and a half for hip surgery, a year and a half. The reason she came to see me, she could not walk, she was in a wheelchair, and she said I am going to have to wait another year, they tell me, before I can get in. This lady does not live too far from the city of Winnipeg here. She is a business-person and she cannot attend to her business. She

could not look after herself because she could not get into the offices that she had to climb the stairs to. So she had to change offices, and now she is left in a position where she cannot even come to this building because there is no wheelchair in this building to bring her up into the gallery so that she could be presented here as a case that is totally ignored by the health care system in this province.

That is the same thing we have with our justice system. Our Justice Minister has told everybody that we are safe, and yet almost weekly we hear of beatings in the street. Elderly people are afraid to walk out of their houses. Elderly people and young people are afraid to walk our streets at night these days for fear of being mugged. I think just this last week's paper, if you have been following the papers, look at the pictures on the front pages of our papers. Bloody, savage beatings, by whom? What is our minister doing about it? All he does is smile. Does he put enforcement agencies in place, does he put stringent laws in place to penalize these criminals that make money off their activities? No. He will turn his back on Manitobans because he cannot handle it. They do not know what to do, and that, ladies and gentlemen, is the sad part about this Government.

This Government thought that they could walk in without any management or public skills in managing the systems and giving direction clearly to give their civil servants the tools to do the job. Whether they are policemen or enforcement officers in the field, dealing with such things as manure management, and the Minister of Water (Mr. Ashton), and some people call him the waterboy for the Province, is now trying to put legislation in place that will be more draconian than anything that this province has seen so far.

* (16:30)

I have just taken a very preliminary look at that legislation that he is putting forth, The Water Rights Act. It will put restrictions on people in areas of this province that might be fairly detrimental, or could be, I say, fairly detrimental to the city of Winnipeg because the city of Winnipeg is partially located on a fairly significant aquifer and if the law were truly applied, as it is written, and if the minister is serious about getting the job done or protecting the aquifers, then I would suspect he might, in fact, take the opportunity, because the act allows for shutting

down parts of a municipality if need be, shutting down for all activities to maintain a pristine area. So, if he chooses to shut down part of the city of Winnipeg, he would have the right to do that.

You know what I suspect, Mr. Speaker? I suspect once he has done his bill, he will totally forget about that act except in those areas where there are few people, sparsely populated areas, and will bring down the hard hammer of the law in those areas, because that is the nature of this Government, attacking those that are not able to fend for themselves.

You know, I think the BSE crisis in this province is a perfect example, a perfect example of the inadequacies of this Government in dealing with crisis, least of all managing a crisis. They simply have not got the knowledge of how to deal with these matters. I would suspect that if the Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) would have paid attention to what was drafted in The Water Rights Act and how it would affect his town, and how the floodway expansion would affect his town, he might have, in fact, been a bit concerned. He might have actually wanted to enter the debate and support those that would say we should bring and put into place and being a management structure and a construction agreement that would allow all people, whether unionized or not, to apply for jobs on the floodway, that would allow all contractors, small or large, whether unionized or not, to bid, tender, and/or contract out to contractors to get the job done.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Justice owes the people of Manitoba—

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I suspect two things. The honourable member is smarting because he was unable to stand on a grievance today on the floodway. Second of all, I know he is eagerly anticipating the Budget debate. I wonder if you can remind him of the rule of relevancy. Before the House is the bill dealing with profits from criminal notoriety. I wonder if you could direct him back to the bill.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Member for Fort Whyte, on the same point of order.

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, on the same point of order. I would ask the minister to be a little more patient. The member was obviously making a point. If the minister wants to talk about someone smarting, he should look in the mirror and look right next to him. I think the Government is smarting from the lashing they took in Question Period today. That has made them a little testy.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Mackintosh), I will listen carefully for relevancy. I am sure if members stray a little bit, they will get right back to the relevancy of the bill. I am sure that the honourable member was probably steering that way, so I will give him the opportunity to do just that.

* * *

Mr. Penner: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I find it interesting that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) is a bit sensitive to some of the issues that are before them, because the actions that they have taken on many issues, whether they be over-budgeting, or whether they be the floodway or other, it does not surprise me that he is smarting a bit. I do not fault him for rising and trying to deflect the discussion.

However, the reason I raise the issues that I have just raised, it is a demonstration of the lack of ability to get the job done that they promised the people of Manitoba. This piece of legislation that the minister has put forward, I think, and, again, is an attempt to do a snow job on the people of Manitoba. It has very little to do with the protection for the profiting of crime that this bill really speaks to because had he intended to really, really put the clamps on that, he would have worded the bill differently and he would have used different language in this bill to describe to the people of Manitoba what he really intended to do.

But I think the intent is clear, Mr. Speaker, that this Justice Minister wants to portray through this three-page piece of legislation that he is actually

doing something. That has been the model that the minister has presented to the general public continually and that is his Achilles' heel. He has not demonstrated to the people of Manitoba yet that he has any will or knowledge to try and deal with crime on the streets. If he had, we would not have seen the cruel images on the front pages of our papers of people having been beaten to a pulp under his watch, under his watch.

I would not be at all surprised, Mr. Speaker, that, because of this bill, there will be an attempt by some people to actually sell their stories to the media and maybe get a movie made out of it. I doubt whether there are any teeth in this piece of legislation. I doubt whether there are any teeth in this piece of legislation that would truly prevent that. I think that is why the minister is a bit sensitive to my standing and talking about some of the other relevant matters that have been before this House, or been brought before this House, or not brought before this House because of promises that have been made previously by this Government in trying to convince people to vote for them. They did. They did twice.

* (16:40)

But I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that that is not going to happen again. I think they have seen twice, but not three times, that they are going to be misled by this Government. I think that, if the minister would have truly wanted to ensure that there would be no profits of crime, he would have drafted an entirely different bill. He would have put in place laws that would have stopped the Hells Angels in their tracks before coming to this city, before coming to this province. He would have put in place laws that would have ensured that the Hells Angels would not want to settle in this province. He would have put in place enforcement agencies that would have the teeth to deal with the criminals in this province, yet we have not seen any of that.

He has tinkered and tinkered and tinkered, and I think it is time this Justice Minister admit to the people of Manitoba that he has sadly failed in addressing the issues that they were expecting of this Province, of this Government, when they were elected four years ago. You have failed miserably, and I think it is truly an indication of the kind of contempt and disdain that I hear in many communities and by many people when they are talking about this Government now.

I think what has really brought this to a head is the Premier's (Mr. Doer) attempt to force small little companies, construction firms with three or four or five people, to not allow them even to get involved in the largest construction project in the province of Manitoba. He will not allow it simply because of the nature of their operating in small communities and not having the ability to bid and tender on these huge projects and not being unionized because these are all neighbours knowing each other, working for each other and with each other. This Government does not understand that.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, this act, again, demonstrates the contempt that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) has for those small communities out there in not being able to provide the kind of legal protection for them under law or the resources for criminal protection, or the groups of people living in downtown Winnipeg being afraid of going outside by themselves at night. I remember that, when I first came to this city many years ago when I was 16 years old, we walked anywhere as kids. We walked anywhere. We would walk down from Fort Gary to downtown Winnipeg down the railway track. It was three or four miles to walk, but so what. We would have no fear. There would be no reason.

Today, would we do it today? I am not sure that I would, Mr. Speaker. I really would not be secure enough in wanting to walk down that railroad track today, in the dead of night. Yet we have a minister that is putting forward a piece of legislation, The Profits of Criminal Notoriety Act, he calls it, to try and demonstrate to the people of Manitoba that he is going to do something to stop people from profiting by telling their story after the crime is committed. In this bill, I do not see a great deal of strength for what we would call in common language "I don't see the teeth in this bill" that would give me comfort that this bill will adequately address the issues of profit from criminal activities.

As I said at the outset of my comments, I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is only storytelling and story writing and/or movie making that criminals profit from. It is the almost everyday activities that they are involved in where the real profits lie. If this minister would have been sincere about not allowing profiting from the acts of crime, then we would have an entirely different act on our docket today to deal with. I would suspect that it behooves all of us, every one of us, opposition and government sides, to

encourage the minister, to encourage the Premier to encourage his minister to bring forward legislation.

We should encourage this Government to put enforcement agencies in place to stop the criminal activities that we see daily in this city. Only then, only then will I have the comfort as a grandfather that my grandchildren that might have to move to the city to work might do so in a safe place. I think it behooves all of us to pitch in and give advice to the minister, and we are quite willing to do that. But every time we suggest that to him, that we are quite willing to help, he sort of chuckles and waves his hand at us. It is not wanted. It is not needed. He knows full well that he is incapable of doing it by himself, and we are offering today. We are offering a helping hand because I believe we have some people in our caucus that would be quite willing to sit down with him and help draft a piece of legislation.

We would concur with putting more resources into protection agencies than what is happening now, and if it need be, put more police on the streets. It is not only the police on the streets that could do the job; we have heard that time and time again. It is the other resources that they lack, that this Government has not put in place and therein lies the problem, and therein lies the greatest profitability for criminal activity in this province. We have not dealt with it, and we are not dealing with it under this act.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure for me to rise today and place a couple of words in comment regarding Bill 41, The Profits of Criminal Notoriety Act, and despite what the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) might have felt about the Member for Emerson's comments. I want to tell you I always enjoy listening to my colleague from Emerson. He brings many, many years of wisdom to this House, and often as a new MLA, I have gone to him to ask for advice and to seek guidance on certain issues. Certainly, issues that he brings up I always think are relevant to his constituents, to my constituents, and really to all Manitobans.

So I want to thank the Member for Emerson for his comments that I think touch on a number of very significant issues but obviously issues that are sensitive to the members across the way: issues related to how they have handled the farm crisis in Manitoba; issues related to how they handled justice, of course, in speaking on the relevance of the bill;

issues of how they have handled health care in the province or, I should say, not handled; issues of health care.

I can understand why members across get sensitive listening to this. No doubt they echo many of the comments that they are hearing from their own constituents of concern. When they go back to their ridings, I am sure that individuals are coming to them and saying: What are you guys doing there? We are hearing this difficulty with forced unionization. We are hearing the difficulty with forced union dues—here, of course, hearing the issues regarding BSE and the entire livestock industry, Mr. Speaker, and specifically hearing concerns about the justice system.

So, when you go home and you hear constituents who are concerned day after day after day about these critical and key issues for Manitobans, and then you have to come and listen in the House as well, I can understand why the members across the way in the NDP caucus are sensitive about that, because certainly it must be difficult to hear the complaints of Manitobans day after day, Mr. Speaker.

But, on this bill in particular, Bill 41, I want to give specific credit to my colleague from Lac du Bonnet, who always does a tremendous job in ensuring that our caucus is prepared for the bills. I would hope that the current Minister of Justice is doing as thorough a job, as thorough of a job of preparing members on that side of the House as the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) is on this side of the House for our Conservative caucus, preparing us for every Justice bill that comes forward.

It is just a tremendous asset to have within our caucus, to get the information and the very, I think, clinical and specific detailed information that we receive from the Member for Lac du Bonnet. Of course, I know a number of my colleagues have already had the opportunity to speak to this particular bill and express their concerns.

* (16:50)

I have read over their comments and looked carefully at the many things that they said because, certainly, every member of this House who speaks to bills, and I understand that the members opposite are

just starting to speak to a few bills, but they have been reluctant to up until now.

I suppose that maybe they were not entirely comfortable with their own legislation, with their own bills. Maybe they did not know what to say. Maybe they had not been given their particular speaking lines, the Member for Lac du Bonnet mentions. Maybe there are too many inconsistencies within their legislation. I would say that I would agree with them.

You know, certainly, when you see the members bring forward a bill like this that is supposed to prevent people from profiting from crime, and then, yet, you see in the same day, and in the same week and in the same month, issues related to forced unionization of workers, of making people pay union dues, making people pay labour dues when, in fact, they already are working in a non-unionized environment.

Some would say that that borders on being, from a worker's perspective, criminal as well. I note these kinds of inconsistencies that come from the Government day after day. It makes one wonder if they are kind of running government by the seat of their pants, or by the opinion polls of the day.

You know, I used to think, maybe as a more casual observer of politics, that the current government was running government by opinion polls, but that seems to have changed because they are not even listening to the opinion polls anymore.

They have gone off, veered to the left, one would say, on a number of different issues, and they have kind of put their flag into the sand and said, forget it, we are not listening to Manitobans anymore. We are going on our own ideology. We are going on our own direction, and we simply are not going to listen to what Manitobans want. We are simply not going to do what is right for all Manitobans.

So, in relation to Bill 41, Mr. Speaker, certainly, the member from Emerson's comments were relevant in the sense that, when you look at one Justice bill, it should not be looked at in isolation from other Justice bills.

The reason for that, Mr. Speaker, is we bring laws into the province but, really, it is how those

laws take form, how they are enforced, how the Government responds to the laws that are passed that really make the difference.

So to stand up and look at a particular bill like Bill 41 and say, it is fine in principle, we agree to it in principle, does not tell the whole story, because you really need to look at the history of the Government that is bringing it in to see if they are serious about what they are saying, to see if they are going to follow through on what they are saying and to really delve into whether or not they have the conviction, the conviction of the beliefs that are expressed in the bill or in the preamble of a bill to go through with what is stated in print, because words on paper and words in a bill only mean so and so much, Mr. Speaker, if you do not as a government go forward with conviction and with a determination in enforcing a particular piece of legislation, whether that is bringing resources—

We have seen bills that have come here to this House before, Mr. Speaker, that looked fine on paper, that, certainly, in relation to the area of justice, it seemed to make a lot of sense, but then there were no resources. Police officers were lacking for resources. You had people in the community who were working in the justice system lacking resources, citizens on patrol. You had lack in resources on different issues.

You know, it is funny. In my home community tonight, there is going to be a meeting on justice resources and how to make the community safer. One of the issues, of course, is there are not enough resources being placed in the justice system.

Now, to one extent that, of course, automatically, we think about police officers, whether there are enough boots on the streets as it were to ensure that there is safety within communities, but that is only one aspect of justice.

There are a lot of other areas that need resources that are not provided with those kinds of resources from this current government, and that really is where you look at it in terms of a priority, when you look at justice as a priority issue. It is not enough simply to put out the news releases that the Minister of Justice does.

I will give him credit. There is one thing the Minister of Justice does well. He issues news

releases. He can pump news releases out as well as any minister on that side of the House, and he can bring forward pieces of legislation that, I think my colleague from Lac du Bonnet referred to them as motherhood and apple pie legislation. The kind of legislation that people look at, and you go well, you know, it is one of those things. How is it that you are opposed to something like that? You know, I might relate that actually to the Department of Water Stewardship.

I remember doing an interview regarding the creation of the new Department of Water Stewardship I think back in November or early December when it was created, and I said to the reporter well, you know, it is one of those issues. It is hard to criticize the creation of the Water Stewardship Department because it sounds pretty innocuous.

But the issue becomes what are they going to do. Three or four short months later now we have seen it. It sounded great when the Department of Water Stewardship was created. In a sense you go who could be opposed to it. But we see what is being done: forced unionization, forced payment of labour dues. So suddenly, something that seemed very easy to agree with and something that seemed very innocuous, turns into something that is very significant and serious because it is more than just simply putting a nice gift wrapping on an issue, Mr. Speaker. There has to be something behind it.

So Bill 41, when I look at it, and you look at the bill about trying to prevent people from profiting from crime and from their criminal activities, certainly there is a history related to a bill such as this. The Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) laid out I think very clearly, very succinctly and as he always does, very accurately in terms of where the genesis of the bill came from; and the Son of Sam case in the United States many years ago and the prevention of people from profiting from heinous crimes or any kind of crimes that are really violent and beyond social norms, Mr. Speaker.

So, to look at the bill from that elevation, to look at it from 30 feet and to say, we all agree with that principle. There is no one in this Chamber, I venture to say, I would take the liberty to say there are very few Manitobans who would want to say that any person should profit from the fact that they have committed a crime. Committing a crime has a number of sanctions. As a society, we put in those

sanctions to ensure that to one extent there is deterrence, both general and specific deterrence; generally so that society as a whole recognizes that these are not the values of that society and specific deterrence. These, of course, are in the principles of sense in saying specific deterrence against that particular individual.

It is one of the reasons that we bring in legislation. We want to ensure that in this legislation as well. We have said we have agreed with the principle that those who are committing crimes that have been sanctioned against society, that are intended to be sanctioned against society, are punished.

So the principle of the act stands on its own and certainly the legislative history in the United States is well laid out. I understand there are a number of similar types of legislation in the United States with probable variances of our legislation in terms of the wording of the different acts and how they get applied. That is fair enough for the Government to look to the United States for some direction on that.

I note the government side does not always have very good things to say about our neighbours from the south. Unfortunately, some would say the relationship that they have developed with our American counterparts is not a healthy one, and not one that is beneficial to Canadians overall in a number of different areas. But to the extent that they look south for direction on this particular piece of legislation, I think, is entirely appropriate and entirely worthwhile.

Let us not forget, and I want to go back to the point I was making earlier, that these laws, this type of legislation, whether we are talking about health, whether we are talking about justice, whether we are talking about agriculture cannot be looked at in isolation. When we look at Bill 41, when we look at how the Government is going to apply it, we simply have to look back at how they have dealt with other justice bills and issues. If you do not, Mr. Speaker, it is very, very difficult to determine how this particular bill is going to be put forward, whether or not it is going to have the kinds of sanctions or the kinds of resources or the kind of enforcement that is necessary on any type of legislation and, I would say, in particular one that deals with criminal justice or any type of criminal matter.

My colleague from Emerson referenced the situation with the Hells Angels. This is a sensitive issue, I know, for members opposite. Clearly there was a published book that specifically said that the Hells Angels established in Manitoba under this Government's watch, under the NDP's watch. It is in writing. A third party has said it has come in under their watch. I definitely understand that the members opposite on the NDP side of the House do not want to hear that. I am sure they do not want to hear that they have set up a business establishment beside their own Minister of Justice's constituency office. It is kind of a poke in the eye.

That is the kind of thing, I think, that does not reflect well on Manitoba overall and, of course, it does not specifically reflect well on this particular government, but we need to look at the history. We need to look at what they have done on other Justice matters before we delve specifically into one particular piece of legislation, because they all relate together, Mr. Speaker.

* (17:00)

We know that even with the trial that is currently before the courts, we are not going to speak about any specifics, obviously, of the trial, but we obviously know that there have been difficulties for the Hell Angels associates' trial that is currently before these courts. The Government has come forward on a number of different positions in terms of how they are going to provide legal representation for those particular associates. Finally, a result was mediated, I understand, but, there again, some of the details that I do not think would necessarily violate the case or provide any kind of privileged information that would affect the case have been held in secrecy. It is difficult, I think, for any Manitoban to look at any particular law within that kind of isolation without looking at how they have handled a case such as the Hells Angels, one that is so particularly important.

The Minister of Justice has embarked on a review of Legal Aid. I am not going to criticize, generally, the fact that the minister has decided to embark on that Legal Aid review. It is a review, I think, that probably needed to happen, of course, but, there again, Mr. Speaker, we see that the review is done in isolation. A recent report suggested the minister has had the recommendations from the Legal Aid review sitting on his desk for six, seven

weeks. The public did not have any input into those recommendations. The public was not consulted in terms of what type of legal aid system is useful, because when we talk about Legal Aid, we are talking more than about the most high profile cases like the Hells Angels cases. We are talking more than about high-profile criminal cases. We are talking about people who are looking on family issues. We are talking about people who are using Legal Aid for a relatively small matter. The review of such a system, the intention, of course, comes on those high profile cases when we are discussing Legal Aid, but that does not mean that there are not a number of other Manitobans who are affected by how that Legal Aid system works.

I mean, and I have said it publicly, that I think it would have been worthwhile for the Government to seek public input into that review, whether it was through the establishment before the recommendations came forward to have some kind of public input, or to release the report now, Mr. Speaker, to provide input for the public on those particular recommendations. Of course, the minister does not seem to want to do that. He suggests publicly that perhaps the review would be released before the Budget came down, so we have a precious few days left to see if that report will actually be released to the public. Even then, we are not sure if it will be released similar to what happened, of course, with the negotiations, or seems to be happening with the negotiations on labour on the floodway.

Was there any kind of consultation with the industry? It bothers me, you know. I look here at Bill 41. One wonders if there was broad consultation on this one. If there was not, that is great, but why does not that get applied to other areas? I specifically have mentioned that regarding the issue of the floodway. What negotiation took place there, Mr. Speaker? It does not seem like there was any. The industry officials basically had to plead in the public to meet with the minister. I mean, is that not ridiculous that in a province like Manitoba where you have the construction industry which employs thousands and thousands of Manitobans, tax-paying Manitobans, hardworking Manitobans, that officials of those industries would have to go hat in hand looking for a meeting?

I suspect that I hear my friend, I will say from Selkirk, saying, well, where is the relevancy for this? I will tell him where the relevancy is on this. You

cannot look at a particular piece of legislation, whether it is Bill 41 which we are debating now, or whether it is the relation of how the floodway is negotiated, without seeing how the Government operates. I am going to look at Bill 41. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that how the Government will apply this bill needs to be viewed in the context of how they have handled other situations.

I brought that forward. Clearly, this is a sensitive issue for members on the government side of the House, and they should be sensitive. They should be sensitive about it because hundreds of petitions are coming into my office and faxes are coming into my office. The Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) wants to see them, and I can tell you he is going to see them day after day after day in this House. He is going to see those petitions until the Government backs off its wrong-headed decision to enforce unionization or to enforce union dues on labourers on the floodway.

On the issue, Mr. Speaker, with Bill 41, we have stated as a caucus that we will support the principle of this bill. We believe that criminals should not profit from their act. But I also think that what needs to be considered in this particular legislation is the issue of where the money for the fines go that get levelled on this particular act. I noted that they are fairly significant, that they are in the thousands of dollars, I believe \$50,000 is the fine for violation of the act, that simply will flow into the general coffers of the Government. It is no secret in this House, it is no secret in Manitoba and we heard it today in Question Period again, that this is a government that is struggling for cash. This is a government that has simply bottomed-out the piggy bank. They have spent beyond their means for three, four years running. They are looking in every closet, they are looking in every cookie jar, they are going to every source they can possibly find to get additional revenue.

But is this the bottom of the barrel, Mr. Speaker? Is this the bottom of the barrel, when we are taking fines that are coming from the pockets of somebody who has benefited from a crime that they have committed and putting it into general revenue? What is next? Where else would this Government turn to try to find money to stick into its general revenue?

I do not feel sorry for the members opposite, because this is something that has happened for four

years now. This is not something when you are talking about a budget, when you are talking about running a province. You do not spend like sailors for the first three years, and then when you hit the wall and you run out of money, you turn around and go, what do I do, where do I get the savings from, and go out and make public statements saying to the media and saying to the general public in Manitoba, well this is a desperate situation. We have never been in a harder situation. There is a crisis here or there is a crisis there.

That is what planning is for, Mr. Speaker. That is why governments need to plan. That is why governments embark on a long-term strategic plan in terms of the financing of their province. They do it because they know that there will be days when there are difficulties. They do it because they know that there will be days when there are shortages of finances and they simply cannot spend and spend and spend with the idea that there will never be a difficult day that needs to be addressed.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I was talking to some of my own constituents just a few days ago about the difficulties they have been having with flooding. They are waiting for this Government to respond with a disaster financial assistance package for them because they have had difficulties with record flooding in this spring. I have wanted to get a response from the Government in terms of where the program is, and I understand that some of these things will take a bit of time. But I am concerned and they are concerned. They are concerned that an appropriate package might not be put together and they are concerned because they realize that the Government is out of money. I had a constituent say to me: Do you think the fact that the NDP government has spent itself into a hole, the fact that the NDP government has spent virtually all of the rainy day fund that they have been running deficits for three years—

An Honourable Member: During good days.

Mr. Goertzen: During good days, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) brings up a good point. Those were good economic days and even then the Government could not balance the budget. Even then they could not bring in a proper budget.

You know the old adage that it takes a long time to turn around the Queen Mary was one that the

former premier used to say when relating to deficits, relating to the fact that it takes a long time to move an economic situation for a province from one position to the next. It does not happen overnight, and it also did not happen overnight that the current government of the day took a very good economic position of the Province and wiped it out in three years, and now constituents come to me and say "Do you think what the Government has done in the past three years will impact my ability to get flood compensation?"

It is a hard question to take, because these are people who have suffered a lot of damage in their homes. These are people who are not wealthy people. They are not people who have great means. They are not people who can just draw from another fund and take something to recover it. That is not the nature of some people. That is a harsh reality. So to go to their homes and to look at the damage and to say to them, I do not know if the Government has any money to do what they should do—is not that a responsibility of government, when there is a problem, whether it is BSE, whether it is forest fires or flooding, that they handle that situation and not turn around and evoke a clause that has never been used before, that has never been instituted before and it was never intended to be used until the rainy day fund was empty?

The way this particular government is going it will not be long until the rainy day fund is empty and they will be using the clause then, too, but it is a shame. It is a shame, Mr. Speaker, that I have to go to my constituents and suggest to them that either they might have to wait or that I am even uncertain. There should be no uncertainty when I go and talk to a constituent that has had flooding difficulty. There should be no uncertainty that the Government is going to be able to put in an adequate program for people.

* (17:10)

I turn to my colleague from Morris, who, I know, has a number of constituents who have had difficulties with flooding in the past and concerns with flooding, and we will at some point debate legislation relating to compensation in this House. There is a lot of distrust about this current government. There is a lot of concern about this current government, and it is concern about the

Government because they do not trust the Government to provide compensation.

I will say that, Mr. Speaker, on two fronts. It is more than just not trusting the Government to provide adequate compensation; it is because they are not sure about whether or not it cares about their situation because they might not live in the kind of constituencies that the members opposite value. But the other concern is that they do not know if they are going to have any money. They are not going to have any money to even put into the program, and that is their shame. That is their shame about overspending when you take revenue, \$1.2 billion, \$1.3 billion, \$1.4 billion of more revenue and you cannot account for it. You do not know what it has done and you do not know where it has gone, and you do not know who it has benefited. The roads are not any better. Health care is not any better. Is our education system any better? I do not think so.

Where has the money gone? This is a question that is being asked federally. Where has the money gone? I tell you, I know that it is a different context. I know that it is a different context, but the question is as relevant in Manitoba as it is in Ottawa. Where has the money gone? It is not my money, and it is not your money, Mr. Speaker, I say respectfully, and it is not the money of the members opposite. It is Manitobans' money, and they deserve to know. They deserve to know whether or not they are getting improved access to health care, and they are not; whether or not the roads are improving, and they are not; whether or not more money is going into capital funds for education, and it is not. The money has gone, and it has not gone to benefit Manitobans.

So I ask, when we talk about the fines in Bill 41 that are going into general revenue, is this the final position of the Government? Is this the bottom? Have we found the bottom about how low the Government can go? Were they going to take fines from—*[interjection]* You know, the Member for Springfield brings up a good point: This is money that should be going to victims. They are victimizing the victims. I mean, really, if anybody should be getting this money, it should be those who have suffered at the hands of the criminals that we are trying to act on, whether it is counselling, whether it is money for restitution, whether it is to put them back into the position that they were before, not into the Government's coffers. To do what? It may be one thing if we had some faith that the money that the

Government was taking and putting into general revenue might go to benefit Manitobans more broadly, but we have seen over four years increased revenues and increased spending on the side of this Government do not equate to increased services, to better health care, to better education, to better infrastructure. There is not equation there.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my pleasure to put a few words on the record regarding Bill 41. Again, I want to commend my colleague from Lac du Bonnet for the hard work that he has done, because I know he puts a great deal of time and effort into every bill that he brings forward. Every private member's bill that he brings forward, he brings a lot of work into it. The Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) wants to say that it is his bill. Well, I will look forward to the day when it will be the Member for Lac du Bonnet's bill that he will be bringing forward. I say to you, I do not think that day is too far away.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Before recognizing the honourable Member for Fort Whyte, I would just like to draw the attention of honourable members to the loge to my right, where we have with us, Ms. Marianne Cerilli, who is the former Member for Radisson. On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here today.

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to follow my colleague from Steinbach on speaking to Bill 41. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the former member from Radisson as well. I think that if we were fortunate enough to still have that member in this House, she would probably be up speaking on this bill, unlike the current members of the Government who simply sit in their seats and refuse to discuss bills, refuse to put their opinions on the record. If there is one thing I have learned while the former member was in the House, she had no fear of putting her voice on the record.

I just wish that somehow she would find a way to convey some of her enthusiasm to the current members. I know, for example Mr. Speaker, that she would not allow the minister to muzzle her as these members have been muzzled. I think it is unfortunate that here we are, once again, speaking to a bill that the minister has brought before this House and, once again, the members, the minister who he discussed it

with at the Cabinet table, the members sitting in the back row who may have heard about it at caucus—although I have to say, that it is hard to tell whether they even have caucus meetings. I mean, we had the circumstance today with the Member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff). I mean, can you imagine this, the Member for Interlake rising on a request to ask the House leave to ask a question? I mean, a member of the Government asking leave to have time, you know, unheard of.

Mr. Speaker, it speaks to the double standard and hypocrisy of the Doer government in that we have, during question period, the Premier standing up and running on and wasting time, not answering questions, refusing to give direct answers to direct questions, and then one of his members has the gall to stand up and complain that he does not have enough time in two days to put his question. Well, I would suggest to him, take it to the caucus table. You know, if you have the courage to stand up in the House, which, obviously, they do not have the courage to stand up and speak, have the courage to go to the caucus table and ask the Premier to at least allow for some time if the question is that important.

Mr. Speaker, back to the matter at hand. Bill 41 is another bill that you know is ill conceived and not very well thought out. I think, once again, the Minister of Justice woke up in the middle of the night and thought, oh my goodness. I have not got a press conference scheduled for the next three days. What am I going to do? So I am sure he kind of scribbled on the back of a note pad, oh, yeah, here are a couple of ideas and, you know, marched into the office. I think, you know, I mean the minister, I have to tell you from people I am aware of in the department, is getting quite a reputation amongst the staff. I know it is unparliamentary to mention the minister by any other name than his title, which is the Minister of Justice, but I can tell you that his staff, certainly, have coined some interesting phrases to describe his penchant for getting out on the soap box and trying to draw attention to himself when (a) he has had no real conversations with this staff about what he is talking about and (b) what he is going to bring forward really has no basis in fact.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that, well intentioned as it may be, and I must admit that the member from Lac du Bonnet had already, before the minister went out on his soapbox, broached this subject with our caucus. In fact, we had had some serious discussion

at caucus regarding the pros and cons and such a bill. How far it should go. What the consequences would be of such a bill. A discussion that I do not think, I am sure from reading this bill that the minister never had the courtesy to have with his caucus.

He may have taken it to Cabinet, where I am sure he is considered somewhat of a hero to the rest of his Cabinet colleagues because of his ability to bring forth legislation out of the blue. I am sure his colleagues at the Cabinet table just sit in amazement at the bills that come out of this minister's department.

* (17:20)

But, Mr. Speaker, this bill, however well-intentioned, will not, I believe, stand the test of time. Certainly, it is a shame, and it is something that we should make sure that we do have a means by which criminals are not allowed to profit from their crimes. It is a very stressful time for the families and for the victims of those crimes, just dealing with those crimes. They should not be faced with a situation where a criminal is allowed through any means to make a profit from his criminal activities.

But, having said that, we do also have to recognize in this Chamber that these laws are at some point going to have to stand up to constitutional challenge. I believe this law in particular will not stand the test of time. It is unfortunate that the minister did not put a little more thought into this bill before he got out on his soapbox because, however well intentioned he thought it might have been, he has certainly taken it over the top with the piece of legislation that he has brought before this House.

I should also mention this, Mr. Speaker, that with regard to precedents for this bill there has never been a case in Manitoba's history where this bill would have applied. So again, I wonder on what basis the minister felt it was important to bring this law in, or this bill before the House in such a quick fashion. But then, when I think back to March of last year, it all starts to come together. I do believe the minister was probably under a fair bit of pressure from his Premier to get out there and make some noise on crime prior to the Premier (Mr. Doer) calling the snap election in June, because as the minister knew at the time and as the Premier knew, the numbers on crime were not good.

Manitobans more and more have raised concerns about criminal activity all across this province, not only in the inner city but in the suburbs and in the rural areas as well. Under this minister's watch, the Hells Angels have set up and established themselves as a concern in Manitoba. This Government has done nothing about it other than to have this minister once again stand up on his soapbox and issue press announcements, issue proclamations that sometimes he follows up with legislation in this House that just does not work.

A perfect example would be the bill that this minister brought before this House that he claimed would shut down the Hells Angels' operation just a couple of blocks down the street from his constituency office. Well, it is a year and a half later and that shop is still going strong. So that legislation, basically, was nothing more than once again the minister up on a soapbox. It was not worth the time that he took to deliver it to this House. It was not worth the time that this House spent debating it.

Again, it shows a definite lack of knowledge from the minister in terms of what he and his department and what the police are capable of. I think he would serve the people of Manitoba in a much better fashion if he would give more thought to the bills that he brings before this House before he brings them; if he would give more thought to the real causes of crime and to some of the real solutions, for example, if he would work closer with his department, if his Crowns would ask for stiffer sentences, maybe we would not be faced with as much rampant crime in the city of Winnipeg and particularly on the basis of organized crime that we are seeing in the province of Manitoba and particularly in the city of Winnipeg.

The minister would do well to pay a little more attention to what else is going on around the country. I mean, just this fall, I think it was Québec that carried out a successful prosecution of organized criminals in their province; I think a very successful prosecution when compared to what is going on in the rest of Canada.

So the minister instead of bringing some of these frivolous bills before the House, he should spend his time maybe working with some of his colleagues across Canada. Although, Mr. Speaker, to be perfectly frank, I can understand why some of his colleagues may not be so open to working with him, because every time there is a ministerial conference

called of the Justice ministers across Canada, once again, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) for Manitoba adds very little to the dialogue at the conference but spends most of his efforts trying to get out in the public eye and getting up on the soapbox again.

So there is no doubt that it would wear thin on ministers across the country, and maybe that is why he is having so much trouble getting co-operation from his colleagues across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this bill purports to prevent criminals from exploiting the victims and the families of the victims of their criminal activity; prevents criminals from gaining any pecuniary advantage from the crime from what he describes in terms of writing of the crime, stories of the crime, in terms of creating and selling merchandise.

While the idea itself is laudable, I think the minister should have spent a little more time examining the situation in Ontario, and perhaps drafted his law a little closer to the law that was brought into being in Ontario which was there specifically to prevent the Bernardo or Homolka criminals from profiting from their crimes.

What this minister seems to forget is that some of that pain and suffering, if the crime is notorious enough, it will be caused anyway. I mean, an example would be I just finished reading over Christmas and New Year's the book written on the murder of Constable Strongquill, and a devastating story and, I am sure, devastating to the family.

I just want to again reiterate for the record that good common sense, as it does in most cases, prevailed. Robert Sand, the criminal convicted of that heinous crime, was trying to somehow coerce the writer into paying him to tell his story. The writer stood his ground and said no. He said it was wrong. It would be wrong for him to pay Mr. Sand for his version of what took place at that horrible night and the following day.

It did not stop the story from being written. It did not stop the story from being published, and in some cases, the publishing of those events can be, although they may be painful and they are painful to the victims and to their families, they can also help society and they can also help the family get closure to some of those events.

So while we want to make sure that the criminals themselves do not prosper, there would have been ways for the minister to do that without taking it so far over the line as he has with this bill. The unfortunate part to that is that, quite likely, this bill will only be used in extreme circumstances. Quite likely, when those extreme circumstances present themselves, the criminals behind the activities will already have had legal advice that this bill likely will not stand up to a constitutional challenge.

As a result of that, there will be more pain, more suffering, more agony by the victims and the families of the victims of the particular crime where the minister tries to apply this bill. Mr. Speaker, this bill is also full of a number of holes in terms of enforcement. It would be very very difficult for the Crown or anybody to establish if a criminal tells his story to an author and an author makes an under-the-table payment to the criminal; you know, it will be very, very difficult for the Crown to follow that trail and, in fact, force a conviction. So, once again, the

families will not be helped, the victims of the crime will not be helped. All it will do will push the writers and the criminals farther and farther underground in order to arrive at the same conclusion.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to this minister, and I realize we are coming to the end of the day, but I would suggest to the minister that he perhaps take this bill back, withdraw it from the House and look at it again, and see if he cannot come back to the House with a bill that will stand the test of time and that he can satisfy people will stand up to a constitutional challenge. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5:30 p.m., when this matter is again before the House, the debate will remain open.

The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 15, 2004

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
		Murray; Ashton	920
		Lamoureux; Allan	920
Petitions		Members' Statements	
Proposed PLA–Floodway		Racism Stop It! Video Competition	
Murray	901	Irvin-Ross	922
Goertzen	901	Jeffrey Collins	
Cummings	902	Loewen	923
Driedger	903	University of Manitoba–Capital Campaign	
Derkach	903	Brick	923
Dyck	904	Odeon Drive-In	
Eichler	905	Taillieu	924
Hawranik	906	Captain Marvin Nordman	
Loewen	906	Caldwell	924
Maguire	907	Grievances	
Mitchelson	908	Tweed	924
Penner	908		
Rocan	909		
Schuler	910		
Stefanson	910		
Taillieu	911		
		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Minimum Sitting Days for Legislative Assembly		GOVERNMENT BUSINESS	
Lamoureux	912	Second Readings	
Tabling of Reports		Bill 5–The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Claimant Advisors)	
Auditor General's Report–Attributes of Managing and Reporting Results: A Survey of Senior Management dated March 2004		Brick	926
Hickes	912	Maloway	927
Introduction of Bills		Bill 9–The Manitoba Immigration Council Act	
Bill 43–The Personal Health Information Amendment Act (Spiritual Health)		Jha	928
Chomiak	912	Maloway	929
Bill 44–The Colleges Amendment Act		Bill 11–The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Protection of Crown Assets)	
McGifford	913	Brick	931
Oral Questions		Jha	932
Balanced Budget		Cummings	933
Murray; Doer	913	Oswald	933
Loewen; Selinger	915	Maloway	933
Red River Floodway Expansion		Bill 41–The Profits of Criminal Notoriety Act	
Murray; Doer	915, 919	Penner	936
Goertzen; Ashton	918	Goertzen	939
Schuler; Ashton	919	Loewen	945