

Fourth Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
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.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BLAIKIE, Bill, Hon.	Elmwood	N.D.P.
BOROTSIK, Rick	Brandon West	P.C.
BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
BRIESE, Stuart	Ste. Rose	P.C.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	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.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Wellington	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McFADYEN, Hugh	Fort Whyte	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Carman	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	N.D.P.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	N.D.P.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.
<i>Vacant</i>	Concordia	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, December 7, 2009

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may—we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom, know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): I stand on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, on a matter of privilege.

Mr. Hawranik: Mr. Speaker, I stand on a matter of privilege. It's a, of course, a very serious matter here in this House and always should be taken very seriously. There are a couple of tests. Number one, it should be raised at the earliest opportunity, and, of course, No. 2, there has to be a *prima facie* case of privilege established in order to be seen on a matter of privilege. And I quote, first of all, *Beauchesne's* citation 24, defining parliamentary privilege, as the rights of members: "without which they could not discharge their functions" and, also, Marleau and Montpetit, in the House of Commons practice and procedure, in chapter 3 is listed the individual privileges of members, and it includes freedom from obstruction and interference. I believe that the definitions in both *Beauchesne's* and Marleau and Montpetit apply here.

With regard to the first test in terms of whether it's raised at the earliest opportunity, this is the first question period since the weekend, and the comments to which this matter of privilege refers to, Mr. Speaker, was contained in the Saturday edition, the December 5th edition of the *Winnipeg Free Press*. Number 2, second—the second test, of course, is a *prima facie* case of privilege must be established in order for you to rule that the privilege—a breach of the privileges of this House and an—as an individual has occurred.

One of the responsibilities, Mr. Speaker, of House leaders is to negotiate the order of business in

this House. Most of the business in this House is negotiated without consultation by House leaders and without consultation with the leaders of their recognized political parties. It's also negotiated normally without even the consent and the knowledge, a lot of times, of caucus members, members of the caucus. Most times, what's negotiated in terms of the orders of business of this House is negotiated on the fly here, during the session, during question period sometimes but, certainly, while we're sitting in this Chamber.

As a result of that, Mr. Speaker, House leaders are open for criticism, and they're open for criticism from not only from the leaders of their political parties but also open to criticism from all members of their caucus, as well as members of the opposition. And the decisions by House leaders are not always the most popular decisions, but certainly they're made after negotiations are made, and those negotiations are given—are give and take. I may give something up in return for getting something back. Your own caucus may not understand frequently why a decision is made because they're not privy to the negotiations.

Decisions are made when House leaders give their word that certain things would happen. If I give my word to the other House leaders, Mr. Speaker, I always follow the decision and I defend the decision even in spite—even in spite of criticism from my own caucus members, and even if in hindsight the decision was clearly wrong. The result is, if you give your word, you always follow it, and that's the advice I've always followed.

My caucus colleagues know that I will follow whatever I've given my word on because that's how I operate, Mr. Speaker, and because my ultimate answer to them is: If you can do better, take my job. But I know I don't have a problem with that because nobody wants to be House speaker in our caucus and probably no one wants to be House leader on the government side as well.

So it's very distressing, Mr. Speaker, very distressing when I read the December 5th edition of the *Winnipeg Free Press* that the Government House Leader (Mr. Blaikie) had an agreement to end the session on December 10th, and he further stated that it's difficult to deal with people who don't keep their

word—very, very obviously implying that the Opposition House Leader and the House leader for the Liberals did not keep their word to end the session on December 10th with a vote on the Throne Speech on December 10th.

Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear: That assertion by the Government House Leader (Mr. Blaikie) is simply not true. Not a word is true. By making those comments, the Government House Leader is attacking the integrity of both myself, as Opposition House Leader, and, of course, the House leader from the Liberal Party here in this Legislature.

There was no agreement, Mr. Speaker. Let me make it perfectly clear; there was no agreement written or verbal or otherwise. I believe that the Government House Leader made this up. He was hoping to take attention away from the fact that he, as the Government House Leader, mismanaged the business of this House. Instead of taking responsibility—which he ought to do—instead of taking responsibility for his failure, he's looking to blame others in public while knowing full well that that is not the truth.

Mr. Speaker, the first day of this session—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order. I remind members again, a *prima facie*—when a member is up on privilege or a point of order, I need to be able to hear every word that's spoken because it's a very serious matter when a member rises and I do have to make a ruling. So I need to be able to hear every word. So I'm asking the co-operation of members, please.

Please continue.

Mr. Hawranik: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the first day of the session that did not count as a Throne Speech day of debate was last Wednesday, and the second day that did not count, of course, was last Friday.

Between Wednesday and Friday last week, that two-day period, I spoke to the Government House Leader privately in this House, in this Chamber, briefly on three occasions. Given the fact that Wednesday did not count as a Throne Speech day, Mr. Speaker—and this meant that the session would need to be extended by at least one day after December 10th—or one would think that during one of those three conversations the Government House

Leader would have said to me, we had an agreement, if, in fact, we did have an agreement.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader did not mention any reference in the agreement in those three conversations. The first I heard that he thought that there was an agreement was during the media scrum on Friday. There was no agreement. There was absolutely no agreement. The fact of the matter is that this is a management issue, and the Government House Leader, obviously, won't take responsibility for it.

* (13:40)

Going forward, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you it's going to be very difficult to deal with the Government House Leader on many issues of this House because the business of this House depends on trust between House leaders. I can say that in two and half years since I've been the House leader, while the member from Kildonan was the Government House Leader, we never had a problem. It didn't even come to this. Never ever came to this.

I can advise the House, Mr. Speaker, that during House leaders' meetings prior to the session there was agreement on two issues: one, the rules in question period, and No. 2, the passage of Bill No. 2. Perhaps the other House leaders can confirm this on the record, that there was an agreement on those two issues, but that's all there was an agreement on.

It also was interesting, reading the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the comment of the Government House Leader that every day we sit in this Legislature he feels we waste \$14,000. Well, personally, Mr. Speaker—personally, it's not a waste of money to keeping the government accountable. What is a waste of money is the government's decision to spend \$640 million to run the hydro line on the west side of Lake Winnipeg. What is a waste of money is the government's decision to spend \$14 million on enhanced ID cards that Manitobans don't even want. That's a waste of money.

Mr. Speaker, democracy is never a waste of money, never.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Hawranik: Mr. Speaker, it's for these reasons that my privileges have been breached, both as an individual member in this House and as the Leader of the—as the House Leader for the Official Opposition, and I look forward to hearing the

comments from both other House leaders. Thank you.

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I think the member said it well himself. He said the fact of the matter is that this is a matter having to do with how the House is managed. It's not a matter of—it's not a matter of privilege. I could go into the details and say why I thought there was an agreement, even the agreement which the member cited to pass—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Mr. Blaikie: —which the member cited with respect to passing the bill having to do with implementing the recommendations of the Auditor. This was an agreement. Did we have a written agreement? No, I never said that we did. We had an understanding of why we needed to come back—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Blaikie: —why we needed to come back on the 30th so that all members here could attend as fully as possible the Association of Manitoba Municipalities' meetings. That was something that we did discuss. It was the reason for coming back on the 30th. It was the reason that the government was willing to leave itself vulnerable to the kind of tactics which we're now experiencing so that we could actually attend the meetings in Brandon. And, you know, I stand—I stand by my view that there was an agreement, Mr. Speaker, and the member says otherwise, and that's just a dispute as to the facts, and that's not a matter of privilege.

And, you know, it would be very unusual indeed and probably not a great precedent for the House if every time House leaders disagreed with each other it became a matter of privilege or something you had to rule on, Mr. Speaker.

So I say to the honourable member, he's done many things that I wasn't able to predict because it went beyond understandings that I had with him, including discussions I had with him earlier today about how today would unfold. So, you know, life is full of surprises and sometimes they come about because people don't always behave in ways they've led you to think they might behave, and that's just the nature of parliamentary business and not a matter of privilege.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Inkster, on the same privilege.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the—on the same—on the same privilege.

Mr. Speaker, I think that, you know, there's a line that is drawn in terms of House negotiations and how critically important it is that House leaders are able to try to ensure that the agendas of both the government and opposition are being addressed through any given legislative session. I listened to what the Government House Leader had just finished saying very tentatively, and I think that the line has been crossed here, and I'll tell you why. It's because there's that fine line in terms of what happens amongst the House leaders, and then when you go to members of the media and you say something that's just not true, there is this opinion out there that whether it's the opposition or the Government House Leader, someone is in fact lying. Someone has been inferred to have said that there was an agreement, and now I'm telling you there are two House leaders that are saying that there was no agreement in terms of the session coming in and going out, Mr. Speaker, in terms of passing the Throne Speech.

The member—the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Hawranik) made a quick reference to two points that I picked up on, and there was—there was an agreement—and I'll comment on the AMM—there was an agreement that we would pass Bill 2 because collectively, as 57 MLAs, we wanted to act on what the provincial Auditor was saying, and I—and we all applauded that. That was an agreement. We knew—and there was a verbal agreement amongst the three of us that we would do what we can to pass it because we wanted to act on the Auditor's report.

The other agreement, Mr. Speaker, was an agreement in which you were involved in. You will recall that we had sat down and discussed, and we decided that we would move ahead in terms of question period. That was an agreement.

You even followed up, Mr. Speaker, by circulating a letter illustrating that that was the case. I don't know how I could be any more clearer on the issue that there was never any other agreement dealing with the session, the Throne Speech, or anything of that nature.

When we talk about AMM, you know, the House has actually sat in the past. I've had to accommodate my own leader in terms of him going out to Brandon. We have sat during the period of AMM, Mr. Speaker. Where the Government House Leader has crossed the line is because he went public by saying there was an agreement, thereby implying

that the opposition, whether it's myself or the official opposition, have reneged on something that just didn't exist. And I think it—there's an issue and there's a responsibility as House leaders that we have that sense of respect for one another so that we're better able to do the things that need to be done inside this Legislature.

It's posed in terms of, well, where do we go from here, Mr. Speaker? You know, we have advocated in the past—and this is why the government never would've gotten an agreement from the Liberal Party on this issue—that we should be sitting 80 days a year. That's something in which we firmly believe in. If we wanna get out of the current situation, I believe that what we need is a fixed calendar. Then we would be able to avoid situations of this nature.

There is always room for discussions, but what we have to avoid, Mr. Speaker, is when you have someone, in this particular case, it's the Government House Leader (Mr. Blaikie), saying something that's just not true, and it reflects on the integrity of not only myself but also the Opposition House Leader, in fact all parliamentarians, because there was no agreement, yet the one media outlet has reported on the fact that there was.

Mr. Speaker, I trust and hope you'll take this matter under advisement and maybe meet with the House leaders so that we could try to discuss some sort of an outcome or rule in terms of how important it is that this issue be dealt with as quickly as possible so we can resolve outstanding issues that have to be resolved. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: On the matter of privilege raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Hawranik), I'd like to inform the House that it has been ruled a number of times by Manitoba Speakers that comments made outside the House cannot form the basis for a prima facie case of privilege.

Beauchesne's citation 31(1) advises that statements made outside the House by a member may not be used as a basis for a question of privilege. On page 522 of the House of Commons practice and procedures states that the Speaker has no authority to rule on statements made outside of the House by one Member against another.

And, also, I'd like to remind members that a motion was not moved and *Beauchesne's* citation 118 says a complaint of privilege must be—must conclude with a motion providing the House an

opportunity to take some form of action. That was not—that was not done, so therefore I must respectfully rule that the—that the honourable member does not have a matter of privilege.

* (13:50)

Mr. Hawranik: I challenge the ruling, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, the ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of sustaining the ruling of the Chair, say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the sustaining of the ruling of the Chair, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Formal Vote

Mr. Hawranik: A recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

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

Order. The question before the House is shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained.

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Blaikie, Braun, Brick, Chomiak, Dewar, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Marcelino, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Whitehead, Wowchuk.

Nays

Borotsik, Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurshou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Hawranik, Lamoureux, Maguire, Mitchelson, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 29, Nays 19.

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 6—The Manitoba Association of School Trustees Amendment Act

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade (Mr. Bjornson), that Bill No. 6, The Manitoba Association of School Trustees Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Association des commissionnaires d'écoles du Manitoba, be now read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Minister of Education, seconded by the honourable Minister for Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade, that Bill No. 6, The Manitoba Association of School Trustees Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Ms. Allan: This bill changes the name of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees to the Manitoba School Boards Association. It also stipulates that the executive of the association must include two vice-presidents, one from a school division or district with 6,000 or more pupils and the other from a division or district with fewer than 6,000 pupils.

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

Bill 214—The Jordan's Principle Implementation Act

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that Bill No. 214, The Jordan's Principle Implementation Act; Loi sur la mise en œuvre du principe de Jordan, be now read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable member for River Heights, seconded by the honourable member for Inkster, that Bill No. 214, The Jordan's Principle Implementation Act, be now read a first time.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, it's come to our attention that the agreement between the federal and provincial government on Jordan's Principle is not working all that well and that we need this legislation to make sure that Jordan's Principle is properly implemented, and that is, in fact, what I'm doing today, is introducing this bill.

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

Bill 213—The Milk Prices Review Amendment Act

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member from River Heights, that Bill 213, The Milk Prices Review Amendment Act, be now read for the—a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, this bill requires the Manitoba Milk Prices Review Commission to establish a fixed price for at least one type of fluid milk that is to be charged by retailers throughout the province of Manitoba. Thank you.

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

Bill 216—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Bicycle Helmets)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member from River Heights, that Bill 216, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Bicycle Helmets), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Speaker, whether it's medical doctors, safety groups, other provinces throughout our country have all recognized the value of making bicycle helmets mandatory. This bill will, in fact, make it mandatory for individuals 16 and under, and we ask the government to get on board and on this particular board—on this particular bill, sorry.

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

PETITIONS

PTH 15

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:

In August 2008, the Minister of Transportation stated that traffic volumes at the intersection of PTH 15 and Highway 206 in Dugald exceed those needed to warrant the installation of traffic signals.

Every school day, up to a thousand students travel through this intersection in Dugald where the lack of traffic signals puts their safety at risk.

Thousands of vehicles travel daily through this intersection in Dugald where the lack of traffic signals puts at risk the safety of these citizens.

In 2008, there was a 300 percent increase in accidents at this intersection.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Ashton) consider the immediate installation of traffic signals at the intersection of PTH 15 and Highway 206 in Dugald.

To request that the Minister of Transportation recognize the value of the lives and well-being of the students and citizens of Manitoba.

Signed by Ray Lambert, Leonard Wiebe, Charlie Swayze and many, many other Manitobans.

*(14:00)

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

Ophthalmology Services—Swan River

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Swan Valley region has a high population of seniors and a very high incidence of diabetes. Every year, hundreds of patients from the Swan Valley region must travel to distant communities for cataract surgery and additional pre-operative and post-operative appointments.

These patients, many of whom are sent as far away as Saskatchewan, need to travel with an escort who must take time off work to drive the patient to his or her appointments without any compensation. Patients who cannot endure this expense and hardship are unable to have the necessary treatment

The community has located an ophthalmologist who would like to practise in Swan River. The local Lions Club has provided funds for the necessary equipment, and the Swan River Valley hospital has space to accommodate this service.

The Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) has told the Town of Swan River that it has insufficient infrastructure and patient volumes to support a

cataract surgery program; however, residents of the region strongly disagree.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Health to consider rethinking her refusal to allow an ophthalmologist to practise in Swan River and to consider working with the community to provide this service without further delay.

This is signed by Gordon Cowan, Gust Robert, Joan Kuby and many, many others, Mr. Speaker.

Whiteshell Provincial Park—Lagoons

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

Manitoba's provincial parks were established to protect our natural resources and the environment for future generations.

In July 2009 the lagoons in the vicinity of Dorothy Lake and Otter Falls in the Whiteshell Provincial Park overflowed, creating concerns that untreated sewage made its way into the Winnipeg River system and ultimately into Lake Winnipeg.

In addition, emergency discharges had to be undertaken at lagoons in the Whiteshell Provincial Park four times in 2005, once in 2007 and once in April 2009.

Concerned stakeholders in the Whiteshell Provincial Park have repeatedly asked the provincial government to develop plans to address the shortcomings with the park's lagoons and to ensure the environment is protected, but the plans have not materialized.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Blaikie) to consider acknowledging that more timely action should have been taken to address the shortcomings with the lagoons in the Whiteshell Provincial Park in order to protect the environment.

To request the Minister of Conservation to consider immediately developing short- and long-term strategies to address the shortcomings with lagoons in the Whiteshell Provincial Park and to consider implementing them as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by Samantha Johnson, Terry Thorarinson, Bonnie Malcolm and many, many others.

Community Police Offices

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

In the 2007 provincial election, the NDP clearly stated that making communities safer was a priority.

The NDP government did nothing to prevent the McPhillips Street community police office and other offices from closing.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Premier (Mr. Selinger) of Manitoba to consider the important role that community police offices can play in making our communities safer.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by D. Agsalud, R. Santos and A. Torres, and many, many other fine Manitobans. Thank you.

Long-Term Care Facilities—Morden and Winkler

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

These are the reasons for this petition.

Many seniors from the Morden and Winkler area are currently patients in the Boundary Trails Health Centre while they wait for placement in local personal care homes.

There are presently no beds available for these patients in Salem Home and Tabor Home. To make more beds in the hospital available, the regional health authority is planning to move these patients to personal care homes in outlying regions.

These patients have lived, worked and raised their families in this area for most of their lives. They receive care and support from their family and friends who live in the community, and they will lose this support if they are forced to move to distant communities.

These seniors and their families should not have to bear the consequences of the provincial government's failure to ensure there are adequate personal care home beds in the region.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) to ensure that patients who are awaiting placement in a personal care home are not moved to distant communities.

To urge the Minister of Health to consider working with the RHA and the community to speed construction and expansion of long-term care facilities in the region.

This is signed by Shelley Crawford, Maryanne Dyck, Sharon Hovey and many, many others.

Rapid City Reservoir and Catwalk

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition.

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Province of Manitoba has a role in providing maintenance to artificial water reservoirs.

The purposes of the Rapid City reservoir are: water conservation, recreation, stock watering as well as maintaining water levels in wells.

Due to the low water level and the amount of vegetation in the reservoir, it is no longer useful for recreation activities such as canoeing or swimming.

Due to the amount of silt buildup and vegetation in the reservoir, the use of the Rapid City Fish Ladder, needed for the natural upstream migration of fish, is inhibited, reducing the fish count from 2,300 in 1999 to 15 in 2008.

The catwalk structure spanning the Rapid City spillway used by children to get to and from the school was damaged when planks were incorrectly pulled from the spillway by the Department of Infrastructure and Transportation and has yet to be replaced.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Blaikie) to consider dredging the Rapid City reservoir as soon as possible.

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton) to consider replacing the Rapid City catwalk structure as soon as possible.

This petition signed by Sally Evans, Shirley Martin, Art Simpson and many, many others, Mr. Speaker.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Health-Care Services Age of Medical Equipment

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, two years ago the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority wrote a letter to the Minister of Health to address the issue of aging equipment and the inadequate funding received from Manitoba Health to address their needs.

Their concern was so serious they highlighted it in their annual report. A year after that, the WRHA board again had a serious discussion at a board meeting about funding for aging critical equipment.

As the Premier was the Finance Minister at the time, can he tell us the extent of the problem of aging critical equipment in Winnipeg, and would he ask the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) to table the letter sent to her raising the concerns around this issue by the WRHA?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, this government has made record investments in equipment in hospitals including MRIs, CAT scans, emergency-emergency equipment that's been purchased for people.

So I think if you take a look at our record in terms of dollars allocated to equipment and technologies, it would be probably historic, the amount of money that we put into those efforts.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the WRHA would be raising this issue if it wasn't a serious concern to them.

Mr. Speaker, I've been told—I've been told that Manitoba's mammogram machines are old. In fact, while Saskatchewan is getting a lot of new machines, I have been told that Manitoba is buying old machine parts from Saskatchewan for our old mammogram machines.

Can the Premier tell us: Is this true?

Mr. Selinger: Well, what is true is that we've doubled the amount of money in specialized equipment fund.

With respect—*[interjection]* With respect to the specifics on mammogram equipment, whether it's

used or new equipment, I would have to take that as notice and get back to the member on the specifics of that.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, as someone with a very strong interest in breast cancer, I was concerned to hear that our mammography machines were old and that Manitoba is buying old machine parts from Saskatchewan, so I sent a FIPPA to CancerCare, and I learned that Manitoba has 17 mammogram machines. Half of them are 10 years old or older, and one is actually 15 years old.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba women want to know that our mammography machines, that our equipment is safe and it's reliable; 220 women died last year in Manitoba from breast cancer and we want to know that this equipment that is out there is safe and reliable.

So can the Premier tell us: Why does Manitoba have so many old mammography machines?

* (14:10)

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, as I've said, we've doubled this specialized medical equipment money in the budget. We're building a new CancerCare treatment centre in Brandon. It will house a linear accelerator machine, which will be very modern technology to treat cancer.

And if the member has some specifics about equipment that she believes is not functioning properly, we'd be happy to receive that information and see what priority has been made to replace that equipment, so that we can ensure that these things—*[interjection]* I'd be happy to receive the letter and look into it for the member.

Wuskwatim Dam Employee Demographics

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, in May of this year, 38 percent of the workers on the Wuskwatim project were from outside of Manitoba. As of September 30th, that figure increased to 50 percent and, as of September, only 26 percent of the workers were of Aboriginal descent.

This project was touted as a huge opportunity for Aboriginal and northern and other Manitoba workers, Mr. Speaker, but like so many of the other government announcements, this reality is failing to live up to the press release.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Howard) explain to the House why

the people who were promised jobs from this project were left out while jobs go out of province?

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Hydro Act):

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of the record that we have with working with northern communities, with First Nations, to ensure that they are in partnership with the development of hydro dams. I would stand beside our record any day, with the records of the members opposite, because, you know, when the members opposite were in power, they mothballed any hydro project. When the members opposite were in power, they completely ignored the Aboriginal communities and did nothing to look at partnerships.

And when you look at what we've been doing with regard to training people, to having them share in the profits, Mr. Speaker, our record far outdoes anything the members in opposition ever did.

Mrs. Taillieu: Mr. Speaker, this government, with a \$60-million northern training initiative, failed to provide enough workers for the Wuskwatim project. Three and a half years later, there's only 150 people trained out of that initiative.

Mr. Speaker, last week—and last week we learned that \$160 million was spent on Hydro on consulting costs for the northern dam project. These dollars are flowing from the pockets of the ratepayers of Manitoba to consultants and lawyers.

Mr. Speaker, when are the benefits of dam projects and dam development in Manitoba going to accrue to Manitoba workers rather than to consultants and out-of-province companies? Why isn't this Minister of Labour (Ms. Howard) standing up for workers in Manitoba?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, we know—we know what the true agenda of the member opposite is. They really don't like Hydro and they really don't like the idea that we are working to put Aboriginal people on an equal footing so that they can be part of the negotiations and share in the profits. They really don't care about the Aboriginal people in the north. We know that, and that comes out loud and clear when they start to complain—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Ms. Wowchuk: —about consultants being hired to work with Aboriginal people in the north. Their true agenda comes out.

But, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you, yes, \$60 million has been spent between Manitoba,

Canada and Hydro on the northern Hydro pre-project training. Two thousand people have been trained, and 42 percent of the workers in Hydro are—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Taillieu: Well, Mr. Speaker, the project that the member's speaking of, only 150 of those people are working on the Wuskwatim project, and only 50 percent of people—of Aboriginal people are employed on the Wuskwatim project; others are out of province.

When we have out-of-province workers dominating construction projects in our province, the bulk of the income tax revenue and spending by these workers will benefit other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, when is the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Howard) going to ensure that the Aboriginal, northern and Manitoba workers who were promised jobs from the Wuskwatim project are actually going to see some of these jobs and benefits? When is that minister going to act?

Ms. Wowchuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, we know the true agenda of members opposite.

It's funny now, Mr. Speaker, they talk about hiring Aboriginal people, and when—but what did the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) say in 2007? He said, I don't think we should have set asides. I don't think we need them, frankly. The fact is we believe all government tendering should be based on who can do the job to the highest standards at the lowest cost to Manitoba taxpayers.

So, Mr. Speaker, they want to let the lowest cost—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Let's have a little decorum, please. Order. Order.

The honourable minister has the floor.

Ms. Wowchuk: So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask her to talk to her leader about what he really thinks about this, because their agenda is the cheapest, at the lowest cost; don't give anybody a job.

Our agenda is much different. We will train and Hydro will hire, and I remind the member, again, that over 42 percent of the employees at Manitoba Hydro are of Aboriginal descent—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

**Cattle Industry
Ranchers Choice Program Mismanagement**

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): The fallout mistakes made by the former Agriculture minister continues. When BSE hit Manitoba's cattle industry into its tailspin, producers looked to the NDP government for leadership, but they failed. The Province invested 4.5 million in proposed Rancher Choice slaughter plant, but it never got off the ground. It's going on seven years since BSE hit, and all we got is more debt per producer and fewer producers on the landscape.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Agriculture admit that his government bungled the Ranchers Choice file? Will he concede the delays in expanding slaughter capacity have damaged Manitoba's cattle industry?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): Well, Mr. Speaker, this is—this is sweet listening to this question come from this member from that side of the House who did everything they could—they tried everything they could to undermine the ranchers who were supporting Ranchers Choice in the Parkland area. Every time—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Come on, we don't need no shouting here. Let's have some decorum here. That's not gonna help—help anybody by shouting back and forth here. Let's have some decorum.

The honourable minister has the floor.

Mr. Struthers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand why they're very touchy about this.

I saw members from the opposition at meetings in Eddystone and at Brandon and in the Interlake talking to farmers, undermining the very, very project that the member now gets up and talks about in this House.

We're going to work towards building slaughter capacity, not like members across who tried to undermine it.

Mr. Eichler: Here's a minister that had an opportunity to build the hemp industry in his area. He had a chance to build a Ranchers Choice in his area, build the fishing industry in his area. He blew all three, Mr. Speaker.

Poor leadership is a hallmark of this NDP government. Manitoba taxpayers are on the hook for millions of dollars when it comes to Ranchers Choice. The Province invested \$4.5 million in this proposal, but, overall, this recovery of its mismanagement was \$15,000, enough to buy a used pickup, maybe, on a good market. Now that very minister is now in charge of Finance. Look out, Manitoba. With that kind of leadership we are in big trouble.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Agriculture assure this House he won't repeat the mistakes of his predecessor when it comes to future slaughter plant proposals?

Mr. Struthers: Unlike members opposite, my predecessor worked very hard to make sure that Ranchers Choice was given every reasonable chance to succeed. Unlike members opposite, the hemp facility in Dauphin still has a chance to succeed because of the work of my predecessor.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can't wait till Estimates when we get talking about fishing and hemp and Ranchers Choice and all the positive things that we're working on on this side compared to nothing from members across the way.

Mr. Eichler: Well, we're glad the minister's onside to be able to answer some questions when it comes to that particular point, Mr. Speaker.

North America's slaughter industry is extremely competitive. This NDP government did not do its homework and Ranchers Choice was unable to get off the ground. Taxpayers are out 4.5 million; that's 4.5 million, Mr. Speaker. Manitoba cattle producers are paying the price for this NDP mismanagement. Many have been forced from the industry, and others are struggling with their debt put on by this NDP government. They don't even feel like their government's in their radar screen.

Mr. Speaker, farm families deserve good government, and taxpayers deserve better. What is the new minister's plan of action? Is it first to apologize for the \$4.5-million loss or say sorry for the lack of action on Interlake and Westlake flooding? Where is he going to start?

* (14:20)

Mr. Struthers: Well, I'm gonna—I'm gonna start, Mr. Speaker, in a positive way, like I wish the opposition would have once in a while.

I'm going to start by talking about maybe encouraging the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Briese) to come forward in saying about the McCreary plant, where slaughter capacity was increased, or maybe I'll encourage the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) to step forward and say how in Beausejour slaughter capacity has increased, Mr. Speaker, instead of all the negative doom and gloom from some of the members across the way.

Mr. Speaker, if my predecessor didn't step in and help the Ranchers Choice Beef Co-op, there would have been—there would have been investors who would have taken a bath on that. This Province stepped forward and made sure that that didn't happen because we want people to be confident and want to invest in Manitoba, whether it's beef slaughtering capacity or any other economic development idea that we have, 'cause we think Manitoba's worth fighting for.

Standing Committee on Agriculture Meeting Request

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): Mr. Speaker, the new Minister of Agriculture, by his own admission, has very little experience and knowledge of modern agriculture. The minister can recite the agricultural support programs such as AgriStability, AgriRecovery, et cetera, but I doubt he has any working knowledge of the shortfalls of these programs.

Given the fact that the Standing Committee on Agriculture has not convened since 2001, will the Agriculture Minister convene the Ag Committee this winter to seek—to seek input directly from the—
from the agriculture community?

And, by the way, Mr. Speaker, I bought shares in Ranchers Choice. Did the Minister of Agriculture buy shares?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): Well, Mr. Speaker, unlike the hobby farmers across the way who think they have all the answers when it comes to agriculture, I'm one of the first to say that nobody has all the answers when it comes to agriculture.

But, I'll tell you what, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what. My door is open to whoever wants to come through it and talk to me about some good ideas in agriculture, something that you know that I do. That will continue.

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Speaker, in case the new Agriculture Minister didn't know, the livestock industry is facing severe challenges. Canola and Canola-meal products are facing non-tariff barriers. The grain industry as a whole is seeking some changes, modernization of plant breeders' regulations.

If the new Ag minister is sincere about learning about modern agriculture, helping to move Manitoba agriculture into the future, the Ag Committee would be an excellent forum. Take the initiative. Convene the Ag Committee to hear from stakeholders in the agricultural industry.

What are you afraid of?

Mr. Struthers: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not afraid of sitting down with real farmers and talking with them about real issues. I'd much rather talk about real solutions than real politics, like members across the way.

Mr. Speaker, I—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Mr. Struthers: Mr. Speaker, the week before last, I met with the Canola growers and we talked about the things that the member has put on the table here today. He's a couple of weeks late in that, but I'd be glad to sit down and talk to him about what the Canola growers told me.

Mr. Pedersen: Mr. Speaker, convening the Ag Committee would be a chance for the new Agriculture Minister to redeem himself with the agricultural community.

As Conservation Minister, he ignored science and the rural economy with Bill 17, despite what the ag community told him. As Conservation Minister, he ignored science and due diligence when imposing a domestic waste water regulations, again.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, there is a great—a huge amount of animosity and scepticism towards the Agriculture Minister in—from the agriculture community. Why don't you show some leadership, make a commitment and recall the Standing Committee of Agriculture?

Mr. Struthers: Mr. Speaker, why don't you read the *Western Producer*, where Karl Kynoch said that he's more than willing to work with the new Agriculture Minister? Why don't you read the *Cattle Country* newsletter where the head of the Cattle Producers,

Joe Bouchard, says he's willing to work with the new Ag Minister?

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd much rather call a meeting of the cattle producers, of the hog producers, of Keystone Agricultural Producers, with the Canola growers, with the pulse growers, with everybody else, before I sit down with members opposite who simply want to play politics with a very important issue [*inaudible*]

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Gang Prosecutions Resources

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, police across a number of jurisdictions both in Manitoba and in Canada should be commended for their success in Project Divide last week which took a number of Hells Angels and Zig Zag Crew members off of the street.

In fact, it adds support to the comments made by the president of the Winnipeg Police Association which said there needed to be more officers in the gang unit so that it could operate full time because our gangs are operating full time. We saw more example of that this weekend.

But now the ball is in the court of the Attorney General when it comes to prosecutions. Can he tell Manitobans whether his department is expecting to budget additional resources for more sheriffs, more Legal Aid financial investigators, security and Legal Aid lawyers privately or within the department, as we go forward on the prosecutions on Project Divide?

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It's good to hear from my friend, the member for Steinbach, who once again has his hand on the incomplete information on exactly what we are doing to support crime prevention and justice in the province of Manitoba.

And, indeed, this government has committed—we've added 80 police officers. We are now funding 80 police officers since our election in 1999. That member and every other member has voted against every single one of those police officers.

And, Mr. Speaker, since 1999, we've more than doubled our investment in prosecutions in Manitoba. We've added Crown attorneys. We've committed to add Crown attorneys this year. We've committed to add Crown attorneys next year because, indeed, we

do support prosecution efforts to make this a safer province.

Mr. Goertzen: Like the former Minister of Justice, he completely avoided the question.

Following the failures of the past gang trials under this government, and as a result of millions of dollars being demanded for private defence lawyers, there was a report commissioned in 2004, and it found that there should be full investigations into the financial means of those who are applying for Legal Aid and that at least 10 lawyers should be hired within Legal Aid to handle complex criminal cases. This is the report that the former minister of Justice commandeered and that the former, former minister of Justice said that he supported.

I want to ask whether or not all of the recommendations under the Legal Aid report have been put in place so they don't screw up another gang prosecution, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Swan: Unlike the member opposite and his party opposite, we respect the work of Crown attorneys here in the province of Manitoba and, although I can't comment to any particular case, we know that they will continue to do their job.

And it's interesting, talking about large gang trials, I seem to recall that there was a special courthouse built by the previous government, in Fort Garry, which was never used for any useful purposes.

And, indeed, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to prosecute gangs. We will take on organized crime and we will do that in an appropriate way to make sure there are appropriate sentences for those who go after our communities in a dangerous way. Thank you.

Mr. Goertzen: The gang courthouse wasn't used because you can never get any gang members into court because you kept screwing up the trials, sir. I wouldn't be proud of that, Mr. new Attorney General.

Mr. Speaker, the report clearly said that 10 additional Legal Aid lawyers should be hired so that these suspected gang members wouldn't be able to go out into the private bar and hold Manitoba taxpayers hostage for millions of dollars of funds for defence lawyers.

* (14:30)

I wanna know whether or not this minister has acted on those recommendations. These suspected

gang members should be able—if they qualify for Legal Aid at all, should be told, you take this lawyer within the department or you get nothing.

Is he prepared to stand up and be tough with this so that millions of taxpayers' dollars aren't again spun out to suspected gang members, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Swan: Mr. Speaker, I know I'll have a chance to sit down with the member for Steinbach, and when we do I will explain to him the need, the constitutional obligation of anyone charged with a crime to be given a legal defence. And that's done in Manitoba as it has been since the Legal Aid system was set up in 1971. It is indeed a hybrid.

We have—we have publicly funded Legal Aid lawyers who do a very good job. We also count on the private bar to supply those services as well, as the case may be. And, certainly, certainly, if the member opposite speaks about this case, we don't even know what the legal requirements will be at this point. There will be an obligation depending on, as it is in Manitoba, depending on the ability of the accused to pay. If they're eligible for Legal Aid coverage, there's an obligation to provide that.

We think that Legal Aid right now is doing a good job. They are coming to us with further recommendations on how they can strengthen the work they do, and certainly we support Legal Aid and we support our Crown prosecutors.

Brandon School Division Gymnasium Renovations Project Status

Mr. Rick Borotsik (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, the Brandon School Division has always been acknowledged as a very progressive school division providing an excellent educational programming for its students.

A recent decision to move to a single-track French immersion program has necessitated the construction of two new gymnasiums, one in George Fitton and one in Green Acres School. Application has been made to the Public Schools Finance Board, but no decision has been forthcoming.

Can the Minister of Education please tell me the status of that request?

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure, when I was at the AMM convention in Brandon, to have the opportunity to sit down with the Brandon School Division trustees and the superintendent, and we had a conversation about

a lot of issues in regards to the Brandon School Division.

I understand they had a meeting the day before with the MLA for Brandon and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen), and they discussed the gymnasium. I'm pleased to say that the PSFB had a conversation with them about the gymnasium renovations, and that is something that the Brandon School Division has prioritized in their capital budget, Mr. Speaker, and those decisions haven't come forward yet for final approval.

Mr. Borotsik: I understand the background, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly had discussions with the Brandon School Division.

I would like, again, to ask the minister exactly what the status of that report is or the status of the—of the Public Schools Finance Board. There are some decisions that have to be made immediately, Mr. Speaker. There is going to be a transition with the single-track French immersion which necessitates some serious construction projects at these two schools. They cannot be accommodated without having the gymnasiums changed.

I understand that the minister has spoken to the— to the board. However, can she tell me now if that's a priority and when will that decision be made? When will it be announced so the Brandon School Division can continue with its project?

Ms. Allan: Well, Mr. Speaker, I find this really quite interesting because he had his meeting with the Brandon School Division the day before I did, and they didn't raise that as a major, major, major priority with me when I was there meeting with them.

I find it interesting that he thinks it's a priority for the Brandon School Division. I can tell him once again that this matter is—that officials in my department had a conversation with officials in the Brandon School Division on the 17th of November, and those final decisions have not been made, but I can tell you that the capital budget for the Education Department was announced recently, \$310 million over four years, Mr. Speaker, and I would put our capital budget up against their capital budget any day, anytime, anywhere.

Mr. Borotsik: Well, Mr. Speaker, I honestly believe that my question was not antagonistic at all. It was simply a matter of asking for the status report on a request made by the Brandon School Division.

Even though she doesn't—the minister doesn't believe that this was a priority, I can assure you that when I met with the school division, this is a priority. It is a serious, major priority. They need this in order to transition the French immersion—or the single-track French immersion. Please, not antagonistic.

All I want to know is not how much capital is going to be spent over the next four years. Will the minister take this as a priority? It is a priority that's been identified by the school division. Don't—they don't make frivolous requests on a regular basis. The last time they got capital was six years ago. It's not a frivolous request. It is a priority.

Will she make sure that the announcement of these capital construction projects are made sooner than later?

Ms. Allan: Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly hope that the member opposite doesn't think that I would think any school division in this province would make any kind of a frivolous request when they put their priorities forward for the—to the Public Schools Finance Board for consideration for funding.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that every school division in this province—they have lots of priorities in their school division. They have identified this as a priority. The Public Schools Finance Board, there was a process in place. I have not made any decisions because I'm not purview to those decisions. Those decisions come forward from the PSFB, and I have not received any information on that particular item at this point.

But I can guarantee him that we will have money for school divisions all across this province, 'cause we believe that putting money into capital infrastructure is important to the education community.

Devils Lake Overflow Water Levels

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the Premier's predecessor knew that the water from Devils Lake and Stump Lake could overflow and go directly into the Sheyenne River and then into the Red River and Lake Winnipeg, and yet the Premier's predecessor proceeded to make decisions based on the hope that the water levels wouldn't rise.

With the rising water level this year, the chances of the overflow happening have increased significantly, and it could be a large overflow. It is in

Manitoba's best interests, I say to the Premier, that this not happen.

Is the Premier planning to meet with the governor of North Dakota anytime soon to discuss this issue?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as you know, we as a government have made an offer to the governor of North Dakota to do some rectification of structures in Manitoba which cause flooding in their jurisdiction in exchange for them addressing the overflow impacts on our watershed, and that discussion is ongoing, and we will follow up on it, and at the right moment we will have contact at the political level.

But this discussion has been going on for quite awhile. We've got a solid offer on the table. We hope it will be reciprocated by the government of North Dakota.

Mr. Gerrard: The problem, Mr. Speaker, is this: that with the height of Devils Lake currently, that it's very close to overflowing from Devils and Stump Lake directly into the Sheyenne River, pouring water with fish and biota and salts right into the Sheyenne River and then the Red River and Lake Winnipeg. There isn't an unlimited amount of time to wait; action is needed.

When is the Premier going to recognize this is an important issue, and when is he going to meet with the governor of North Dakota?

Mr. Selinger: As I've said, we are taking ongoing action with respect to this problem. I have been briefed on it, and at the time when we think that it can actually bear fruit, there will be political contact.

The officials are in discussion. We have a proactive, solid offer on the table which we believe will address some of their issues with respect to structures that we have in Manitoba that they believe negatively impact on them, and we also think that, in exchange for that, that there's some things they could do, long-standing requests we've made to control the outlet in such a way that foreign biota and other negative impacts on the Manitoba watershed do not occur. Our record is very clear on this.

We've also asked the national government in the United States to play a role in this and, at this stage of the game, we are not satisfied with what's being offered. We continue to work with them to find a constructive solution to their concerns and our concerns.

Waste-Water Treatment Facilities Nitrogen Removal

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, there are many needs for public funding. Weston-Brooklands needs a medical clinic, as an example. There are literally tens of millions of dollars of genuine need, and yet, on the other hand, we have a Premier that is going to allow a half-billion dollars in taxpayer money to be spent in terms of nitrogen removal, which is absolutely and totally unnecessary. It's a half-billion dollars.

Given the needs that Manitobans have, how does the Premier justify doing something that provides no purpose whatsoever and is totally and absolutely a complete waste of tax dollars, Mr. Speaker?

Will the Premier do the right thing and today say that he will not move forward on the removal of nitrogen in the waste-water treatment facilities?

* (14:40)

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Last week, the member asked me to put on the record a letter that his colleague, the Leader of the Liberal Party, had already put on the record. Now, today—now, today, we have the Leader of the Liberal Party—

An Honourable Member: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order, order, order, order.

Point of Order

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

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Premier is not sure exactly what it is he's talking about. If you read the *Hansard*, and you read what the Premier said on the question that he just finished raising, you will find—because I have reread *Hansard*—it is the Premier that was confused, and when I had stood up on the point of order back then—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order, order, order, order, order, order. I remind honourable members, when you're up on a point of order or a matter of privilege, it's to point out to the Speaker a breach of a rule or a departure of our practices and procedures in the House. Points of order should never be used for means of debating.

So the honourable member does not have a point of order, and it should—I remind members, please don't use points of order for matters of debate,

because—[*interjection*] Order, order—because matters of privilege and points of orders are very, very, very serious matters and they're there for a reason.

If there's a breach of a rule or a procedure in this House, that's to draw the attention to the Speaker so the Speaker can deal with it. So I ask the co-operation of members, please.

The honourable member does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Let's continue. The honourable First Minister has the floor.

Mr. Selinger: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was trying to make a point that last week there was an unco-ordinated set of questions from the members opposite. They didn't seem to know what they were doing.

I would like to make the similar point today. The leader—the member from River Heights has raised the question about foreign biota and other forms of pollution coming into the Manitoba waters. Similarly, the Clean Environment Commission, with respect to nitrogen removal and the issue of nitrogen in our watersheds, has made the point that nitrogen removal and getting the right relationship between nitrogen and phosphorus is critical to protecting biodiversity, particularly biodiversity with respect to marine life.

And the Clean Environment Commission points out there's only one outlet out of Lake Winnipeg and that outlet goes right into the Hudson Bay, and to have excess nitrogen there is a threat to beluga whales and other forms of marine life.

There is a reason to control nitrogen, Mr. Speaker, but the member opposite hasn't read the Clean Environment—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Crime Prevention and Safety (Brandon) Government Initiatives

Mr. Drew Caldwell (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, we all know there's good things happening in community safety in Brandon and around the province. Last week in Brandon, we saw the first-ever closure under The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act of a house that was engaging in illegal activities, the first-ever closure of such a house in the city of Brandon.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Justice if he can inform the House on some other measures that are helping advance safety in Brandon and in the province of Manitoba.

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for Brandon East for a question in this House on crime prevention. Thank you.

We've now shut down more than 400 homes and apartments across the province. These residences have been used as a base for illegal activities, including sexual exploitation, including drug trafficking. And I'm very proud of the efforts of the Public Safety Investigation Unit, which has taken steps—they've worked in Winnipeg, in the north, in rural areas and, as the member for Brandon East has said, now in Brandon to keep our communities safe.

The Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act allows people to make an anonymous complaint which then triggers an investigation by the PSI.

I should also mention, Mr. Speaker, work has now begun in the Wheat City on an 80-bed expansion to the Brandon Correctional Centre, which we believe is necessary to deal with the population.

I appreciate the work of the member for Brandon East and I look forward to working with him on many more crime prevention and safety issues.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Personal Care Home (Neepawa) Value Assessment

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, in anticipation of the new personal care home in Neepawa, the Town of Neepawa and the R.M.s of Langford, Lansdowne, Glenella and Rosedale entered a tax-sharing agreement on the new facility after having received assurances that tax revenues would offset the debenture costs of the 10 percent community contribution over 20 to 25 years.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister explain to the House today why a facility that costs \$29 million to build is assessed at \$13 million?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health): You know, indeed, we were very pleased to be present in the community for the opening of the beautiful personal care home in Neepawa, and at that opportunity we were able to talk to many of the people from the community and surrounding communities about opportunities that exist for

providing housing on the continuum of care, increasing home care, for example, providing more supportive housing, and there are many people in the surrounding area that have a number of proposals coming forward for a variety of housing situations.

There are a lot of conversations going on between people in my department and members of the community concerning funding and concerning tax and rebate and those kinds of issues, and those conversations will be ongoing, I can—I can assure the member.

Mr. Briese: Mr. Speaker, the minister never came anywhere close to the question that I asked. A \$29-million facility has been assessed at \$13 million.

Does the NDP government have a different set of rules for assessment on privately funded facilities than they have on publicly funded facilities? Is there a maximum assessment ordered by the government on public facilities?

Ms. Oswald: No.

Tabor Home (Morden) Project Status

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): About four months ago, the Minister of Health was in Morden indicating that she would initiate another study regarding Tabor Home which would be completed in two months. Now, four months later, the study still hasn't been completed.

I would like to have an update in the status of that report, please.

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health): We're very pleased to go to the community and commit to adding more personal care home beds to the community, and we did commit to have a business case and study developed.

The original idea of the people in the community turned out to be not what the community wanted. They have changed to requesting a single-floor facility, which does not fit on the footprint of their requested land. So the community has requested more time in order to find a suitable location, and we have accommodated the community's request for more time.

We're going to work together. They're looking at models, incidentally, like the one in Neepawa, Mr. Speaker, because they believe that single-floor model is very good.

So I can assure the member that we did what he asked us to, and that was listen to the people.

Mr. Dyck: This facility, as the minister knows, is 60 years old and was never designed to be a personal care home, and now another study was initiated. There were many studies out there, and, obviously, I don't agree with the minister's assessment of this, but I would ask her—and she had said numerous times that it does need to be replaced.

Would the minister indicate today as to the movement in replacing this facility?

Ms. Oswald: I know the member was on an extended summer vacation at the time that we made our visit to Tabor Home, and when I was there I committed to increase the number of beds in the community because that's what the community has asked for.

They had an initial proposal and, indeed, had land selected that they wished to use, but during the course of this business plan and this business review, it was decided by the community that they wanted to amend their original plan and go with a single-floor plan, and to maintain the number of beds that they are wishing for, they needed to find an alternate site and do some more work.

When the community asked to take more time to amend that plan, we didn't turn them down.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mulvey School Play Structure

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Today I rise to congratulate the students, staff and community of Mulvey School on their beautiful and brand-new play structure.

On a brisk day earlier this fall, I joined the entire Mulvey School community to celebrate this enormous accomplishment. The new Evos play structure features a futuristic, colourful design directed at children between the ages of four and 12.

In an effort to provide a safe, healthy outdoors experience for all Mulvey students and for other students and youth in the area, this structure has been placed on rubber pads so that children with special needs can freely access and use it. That way, students with wheelchairs can fully explore and enjoy the structure alongside all of their peers.

* (14:50)

At the—at the opening, we celebrated the enormous community effort that it took to make this fantastic addition to the neighbourhood possible. Many organizations and individuals dedicated their time and money to building this structure. The Mulvey School administration, the teachers, the parent council, along with the school's very entrepreneurial students, all worked very hard to fundraise for this initiative.

Ms. Marilyn Brick, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

I also want to pay special thanks to the Winnipeg School Division, West Broadway Development Corporation, the provincial Neighbourhoods Alive! program and the City of Winnipeg for their generous donations.

A special and particular thanks are due to the Laura Milner White Committee for its many fantastic partnerships with Mulvey School, the latest of which, with its generous contribution of \$45,000 towards this play structure.

I am certain this fantastic facility will see much use over the coming weeks and years. It is a welcome addition to my constituency and I applaud everyone for making it a reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Matt and Ryan Bialek

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): I'm pleased to have this opportunity to rise and acknowledge Matt and Ryan Bialek, owners of BLAST-OFF Fireworks for being named outstanding small business of the year at the Manitoba Business Awards. The annual awards are presented to companies and individuals across the province that demonstrate outstanding achievements in the business community.

The Bialeks operate three divisions of firework sales: BLAST-OFF Fireworks, Red Bomb and Campfire FX, each one providing fireworks to different clients, and each one is a success. While the company has its home in Selkirk, BLAST-OFF Fireworks, it is enjoyed throughout Manitoba, but in addition to that, Madam Deputy Speaker, their products are shipped across the country. Clearly, this small-town business is a big success.

Working with fireworks was not always the career Matt and Ryan had in mind. Even though they grew up watching their father, who sold commercial fireworks, Matt started towards a career in finance. However, when he realized that he wasn't happy

working in an office, he and his brother followed in their father's footsteps and opened their own fireworks company.

Now the brothers work long days, but they are doing a job they love and also contributing to the community around them. One thing that Matt and Ryan love about their job is the chance they have to interact with and build relationships with their customers. They're constantly communicating with their clients, which makes BLAST-OFF Fireworks a truly integrated part of the community.

The company also gives back by providing jobs to those around them. With a full-time staff of 10, and up to 25 staff during busy times, the brothers are able to support individuals in their city.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to congratulate Matt and Ryan Bialek for winning outstanding small business of the year in Manitoba. They put years of hard work into their company and have built a very strong and successful company and fully deserve this exciting recognition. Thank you.

Guru Teg Bahadur Ji

Mr. Mohinder Saran (The Maples): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of a special anniversary for Manitoba's Sikh community. For all Canadians, November 11th is a day to honour the sacrifices, past and present, made by members of our country's Armed Forces. But for Sikhs, the day is also a time when we reflect on the sacrifice made by Guru Teg Bahadur ji, ninth Guru of Sikhism.

Teg Bahadur ji was born in Amritsar in northern India in April, 1621. He was the youngest son of the sixth guru of Sikhism, Guru Har Gobind ji. The early years of his life were devoted to his schooling. He excelled in the arts of archery and horsemanship and became well versed in the classic texts of his time. After marrying his wife, Gujri, the couple moved to a small village named Bakala, where Teg Bahadur ji spent many of his days in deep meditation. Upon the death of the reigning Guru in 1664, Teg Bahadur ji was identified as the ninth Guru of Sikhs. As he travelled throughout the country, his moral guidance and esteemed holy example inspired countless Sikhs.

The defining events of Guru Teg Bahadur ji's life, however, would be those leading up to his being martyred on November 11th, 1675. Recognizing the persecution of Hindus by the Delhi Emperor Aurangzeb, Guru Teg Bahadur ji devoted himself to their cause and in the process became perhaps the only religious leader to have been persecuted in the

defence of a religion other than his own. This noble defence of the rights of others, long before human rights even existed as a defined concept, earned the ninth Guru an eternal place among the most respected and beloved figures in Indian history.

The life and death of Guru Teg Bahadur ji, ninth Guru of Sikhism, is an early example of the broad-minded religious tolerance that is vital—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order. Order. The honourable member's time has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave has been requested. Is there—is leave granted? [*Agreed*]

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Mr. Saran: —time for Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike to reflect on the ways in which their own lives honour Guru Teg Bahadur ji's legacy of selfless sacrifice and tolerance. Thank you, Madam—Mr. Speaker.

Tupendane AfriCana

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise this afternoon to commend the Canadian and Manitoba charity Tupendane Africana, which tonight is having a dinner in support of the work that they do in helping the people of Uganda. And even though they've only been in existence as a charity for a short period of time, they've been able to achieve a great many things. In addition to purchasing mosquito nets, textbooks for students, many of them who are orphaned, they've also purchased a water harvesting system for schools and an orphanage, and purchased food for the schools and an orphanage. Despite this short period of time, they've been guided as a result of the work of Alex Mitala, who for years has been working with the people of Uganda and of Kenya in support of food and resources to those individuals. Mr. Mitala has travelled extensively, speaking on the plight of children and especially the orphan child soldiers of northern Uganda.

Indeed, Mr. Mitala has also been active in setting up medical facilities in Uganda to provide medical care to orphans and students attending the Good Samaritan School. A medical facility is also located nearby, allowing many of the small, surrounding communities the ability to receive medical care and medicine from trained doctors. He's also been active with setting up occasional training initiatives, including a sewing machine project, a welding project and tailoring, so that those who are

in need can also earn a trade and then, in the future, earn a living.

I am proud to say that Mr. Mitala will be joining us from Uganda at the dinner tonight in Steinbach, and we'll be able to hear of the many other things that he has planned to try to help the people of his country in partnership with Tupendane Africana and the many generous Manitobans who are donating to the cause.

Also, special recognition to the board of directors of the charity, Mr. Joe Waldner, Bob Brant, Henry Braun, John Fehr, Els Fenton, Dr. Curtis Krahn, Eunice McAllister and Jennifer Waldner, who have helped to spearhead the charity with a compassionate heart for those who are living in Africa. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Luther Home

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines): I rise today to celebrate an institution that has been providing outstanding care for 40 years to Winnipeg senior citizens and younger people with higher needs. Located in the constituency of Kildonan, Luther Home is a symbol of the area's longevity and historical importance. Founded in 1969 by Christ Lutheran Church, Luther Home started as a single care home with 81 beds. Through a continued commitment to the community, Luther Home has expanded to include two apartment complexes for the elderly, a group home for physically and intellectually challenged adults and an adult day program.

Great love and compassion for its clients and their varying needs permeate all the services offered, and I can speak to that personally, from many years of contact with both the home and the residents, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing that everyone is unique, Luther Home has tailored individual programs to provide care that embodies the spiritual, physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs of their residents.

There have been a number of anniversary activities that took place last week, including an open house, a church service and a limited edition DVD featuring the history of Luther Home. Thank you to the board of directors, staff, volunteers and residents of Luther Home for adding so much to our community in the northern part of Winnipeg. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), that under rule 36(1), the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the urgent need for a medical clinic to be located in the communities of Brooklands and Weston, and that this clinic primarily serves the communities of Brooklands and Weston.

* (15:00)

Mr. Speaker: Before recognizing the honourable member for Inkster, I believe I should remind all members that under rule 36(2) the mover of a motion on a matter of urgent public importance, and one member from the other parties in the House, is allowed not more than 10 minutes to explain their urgency of debating the matter immediately.

As stated in *Beauchesne's*, citation 390, urgency in this context means urgency of immediate debate, not of the subject matter of the motion. In their remarks, members should focus exclusively on whether or not there is urgency of debate and whether or not the ordinary opportunities for debate will enable the House to consider the matter early enough to ensure that the public interests will not suffer.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I bring this issue to the Chamber today because I do believe it is of an urgent matter, and that this Legislature needs to give immediate attention to it.

The Brooklands—or Westbrook clinic, as members would be aware, has, in fact, closed its doors. That clinic has served many communities over the years, but primarily in Weston and Brooklands there is a great need, Mr. Speaker, for a clinic. And with the closure of this particular medical clinic, it's really put into jeopardy a great deal of concerns related to accessibility, community-based health delivery in two very important communities.

Weston and Brooklands for many years, for decades, Mr. Speaker, has evolved into one of Manitoba's finest communities. There are 6,000-plus people that live in those two communities; a good number of them are impacted by this closure.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that the—with what little time we have left, in terms of the session in December, and given the very nature of

Throne Speech debate, that I believe that we need to spend some specific time on the needs of Weston and Brooklands.

Mr. Speaker, I am very much interested in hearing from, for example, the current member from Wellington as to what she feels should be done in regards to Weston and Brooklands.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is a public expectation that we need to rise to the challenge and ensure that the—a clinic is operational in those two wonderful communities. Here we are, at a time of the holiday season, and for many seniors that live in those two communities, they are very dependent on its—on its location, on the availability of having that clinic as open as much as possible. And, by its closure, it is going to greatly diminish the issue of accessibility to health-care services to a large number of people. And some of those individuals, whether they're those fixed-income seniors that live by the clinic, to our more recent immigrants, and some of the lower-economic demographics of the area, are all going to be negatively impacted by what's taken place.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that there needs to be a debate inside this Chamber as to ideas, as to what can be done to return a medical clinic to those—to the communities of Weston and Brooklands, and, ultimately, believe setting aside a couple of hours so that we can hear from the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald), so that we can hear from the member from Wellington and the Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) and possibly the Premier (Mr. Selinger), to address this very important issue that is affecting so many people that live in Weston and Brooklands would be time well spent by this Chamber.

I, and the Liberal Party, believe passionately about community health care and delivery of health care in our communities, and, personally, I would love to see a salaried doctor, a doctor on salary, working out of a clinic, whether it's a private or public. I believe that we need to be open to making it happen and, to me, that's what this debate is—should be all about: How do we ensure that we get the clinic back and operational?

It's secondary at this juncture whether or not it is private or public. All I know is that we need to ensure that those two communities have a clinic, Mr. Speaker, that is indeed accessible and has a medical doctor and other health-care professionals.

I think that there is other organizations such as, for example, NorWest Health that could play a critical and vital role in what's taking place out of that current location. I know in the past that that organization has had some interest in developing a clinic.

We talk about the NorWest Health Access office. Maybe the government could be bold enough to acquire and move forward in an urgent fashion to be able to provide those services to the community virtually effective immediately, Mr. Speaker, as an interim measure until we can make the adjustments necessary to incorporate the new NorWest Access, whenever that gets up and off the ground.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that I and others do have something that we can contribute to the debate inside this Legislature. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on health care every year in this province, and that spending comes from the mandate of this Legislature. And I believe, ultimately, that if the will of this government could be to establish that clinic this month, that it could be done.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's the type of issue that if the government was to recognize the value of the debate, I believe the residents of both Weston and Brooklands and others would very much appreciate it. It's the type of issue that I can assure the government that if they do not act upon I will continue to lobby and ultimately bring it to the people of Weston and Brooklands because, as I did in regards to the Seven Oaks Hospital when there were changes that were occurring there that were not in the best interests of Manitobans, I did, whether it was petitions or raising the issue in question period and so forth.

There's other ways in which we can raise the profile of the issue, and this is such an important issue to so many thousands of people, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that I hope and I trust that the government, in particular the member from Wellington, the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald), will say to their House Leader to allow the debate to occur this afternoon because what we want is answers, and I believe that's what the residents of Weston and Brooklands wants. They want answers. They want to have a medical clinic in their own community, and I hope and trust the government will do the right thing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) raises a very legitimate concern

about the future of health care in his particular community but that, unfortunately, is not the question that we have before the House.

What we have before the House is whether or not this is a matter of urgent and pressing public importance, so much so that the debate on the Throne Speech should be set aside. And, of course, you know, Mr. Speaker, as I do, and as probably the member for Inkster knows, that the Throne Speech is not a time when MUIPs are normally entertained. And the reason for that is quite simple, because the Throne Speech is a time when we can debate the very thing that the member is seeking to set aside time in the House to debate.

If we were preoccupied with some other bill or some other motion, then, of course, the attempt by the honourable member to have the House set aside a particular time to debate something that wouldn't otherwise be debated would be perfectly in order and understandable, but as it stands, Mr. Speaker, it's an opportunity for the member to make his point but not the point that this is a matter that should be accepted as a matter of urgent public importance.

So I would—I would say we have the Throne Speech. We wanna get to the Throne Speech. There's been occasions on which we could've got to the Throne Speech, but the honourable member himself had some part to play in not getting there, and if we haven't had the opportunity to discuss the things that he wants to discuss, perhaps he should consider that. We look forward to hearing his reply to the Speech from the Throne in which I'm sure that he'll concentrate on the matter that he now wants the House to concentrate on, but in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I would urge you to rule accordingly.

*(15:10)

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Well, Mr. Speaker, I do rise in support of the request for a debate here, and I think there is some degree of urgency around this issue, and I'm sure if something like this had—you know, was happening in the backyard for the Government House Leader (Mr. Blaikie), I think he might feel the same way. The clinic that closed in the area has created I think a very, very significant challenge in the area, and, you know, there are a lot of local concerns in that area.

The Brooklands and Weston area I think relied a lot on this one particular clinic and, you know, as the member from Inkster said that 6,000 people live in that area and, when you have, you know, several

doctors that are now out of a facility and aren't there to offer their services, I think—I imagine there's quite a bit of fear created in the area because it isn't that easy for people just to find another family doctor.

We know that, according to CIHI, Manitoba—there are 150,000 Manitobans that do not have their own family doctor. So what's going to happen in this instance without these people having access to family doctors is going to be a huge impact on the emergency room at the Seven Oaks Hospital and at the Health Sciences Centre, and that is going to—and could have a very, very serious impact on what is going on in our local ERs. We know that there's a chronic nursing shortage in these ERs, and this is only going to enhance the challenges for the people in the ERs.

And, you know, I note that the—I note that there's some laughter on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and I really don't think it's a laughing matter. The latest FIPPAs we have show a very, very serious and chronic nursing shortage in our ERs, as well as in our intensive care units, and it is very, very significant. And, instead of the laughter from across the way, I think this government, who's had 10 years to address this problem and has really dropped the ball on it, you know, should pay a little bit of attention to the kind of effect that closure of this clinic is going to have.

You know, the former minister of Health is the one sitting there chirping in his seat, and this government has had 10 years to address the issue, and they haven't done a lot of the things that they said that they were going to do, and one of the impacts of this clinic closure is certainly going to be an impact on nurses who are already stressed out in local ERs that are going to have to pick up that service.

What about the seniors in the area, Mr. Speaker? I've talked to a number of seniors and we're getting calls every day from people that are having trouble accessing health care, and when you hear them crying on the phone, when you hear their challenges in accessing health care, it is really disturbing to hear some of the flippant comments coming from the former deputy—or from the former minister of Health and the laughter there, because I don't think this is a laughing matter. There are seniors there that are gonna be challenged by the closure of this clinic. The immigrants, local immigrants there that—many who are probably struggling to find local doctors. For the low-income individuals, that is a major challenge,

and I don't think this is something that this government should treat so lightly. Everybody in that area will be impacted by this because it has a significant impact on the area.

We know that this government isn't moving very quickly on the whole issue of innovation and improvements in primary health care and, you know, here is a great opportunity to have a debate and perhaps get some, you know, interesting ideas out on the table around what we can do to improve primary health care in Manitoba because, you know, I mean, a lot of the people will tell you that that is where there is some of the biggest struggles is, you know, accessing a family doctor or accessing primary health care, and here would be a great opportunity for, you know, the government to play a leadership role and it certainly would be a good time for some government leadership.

We know with this government that 1,500 doctors have left Manitoba in the last 10 years, and now are we going to see more added to this list if, you know, if some of these doctors from that clinic aren't able to find a job, are they gonna be part of the 1,500 that have fled Manitoba? We wouldn't have a doctor shortage if this province didn't have a revolving door around doctors coming and going. So, Mr. Speaker, I think there is some degree of urgency to this—to this issue, and it is, I think, a little bit bigger than what the Government House Leader (Mr. Blaikie) tried to portray and the heckling from the former minister of Health.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do support the matter being discussed with some degree of urgency, and I do support the member from Inkster in bringing it forward.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, I thank the honourable members for their advice to the Chair on whether the motion proposed by the honourable member for Inkster should be debated today. The notice required by rule 36(1) was provided.

Under our rules and practices, the subject matter requiring urgent consideration must be so pressing that the public interest will suffer if the matter is not given immediate attention. There must also be no other reasonable opportunities to raise the matter.

I have listened very carefully to the arguments put forward. However, I was not persuaded that the ordinary business of the House should be set aside to deal with this issue today. Although this is an issue that some members may have a concern about, I do

not believe that the public interest will be harmed if the business of the House is not set aside to debate the motion today.

Additionally, I would like to note that other avenues exist for members to raise this issue, including question period, members' statements, and the Throne Speech debate.

Therefore, with the greatest of respect, I must rule that this matter does not meet the criteria set by our rules and precedents, and I rule the motion out of order as a matter of urgent public importance.

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS THRONE SPEECH (Third Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Resume adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Whitehead), that the following address be presented to His Honour Lieutenant-Governor: We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba thank Your Honour for the gracious speech addressed to us at this Fourth Session of the Thirty-Ninth Legislature of Manitoba, and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) in amendment thereto, and the proposed motion of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) in amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire), who has 14 minutes remaining.

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a few more words to the comments that I finished up with last Thursday in this House in regards to the Throne Speech of this government, and why I can't support it.

I certainly believe that the amendments brought forward by our leader, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. McFadyen), would form a much better balance of the—of a Throne Speech, and I also indicated that the supplemental comments of our two colleagues from the city of Winnipeg and independent members would add to that as well.

I think that the big concern that I have here, in summary, is that we've got now a—as I represent mainly a rural constituency, Mr. Speaker, we have a concern about the Ag Minister. Farmers are telling me every time I get back home since—that—since the new minister from Dauphin was appointed Agriculture Minister from Conservation is that they

hope he makes better decisions here than he did in Conservation in regards to development of rural areas. And the reference is always to Bill 17, the lack of expansion of hog operations in the province and the manner it was done more than anything, and that of the sewage-ejector process for their waste water on their farming operations and residential areas of a certain size.

And so I think those are the big issues. Two of them came—one of them, the sewage-ejector issue, came forward at AMM's meeting last week—the Association of Manitoba Municipalities. The second big issue there was the election disclosure and financing for most rural municipal officials. And, Mr. Speaker, the 920 members that were—over 920 that were registered at AMM's convention were very concerned, virtually unanimously, that the heavy hand of government had certainly come over the part of the decision at least—in the bill that was brought forward, and that being to, in the middle of a term, create new rules for election disclosure of elected members, and I find that repulsive to the integrity of the people who are running in those positions as well, and certainly not well thought out by the government of Manitoba today.

The—I want to close by saying that the economics of this government doesn't provide much vision for the province of Manitoba either. When you've got a Premier (Mr. Selinger) that thinks that the—everything's fine as long as the budget is flat, Mr. Speaker, or that the economy in Manitoba is flat as opposed to some growth, when we've just seen a small growth in the third quarter of Canada's finances, breaking the recession of technically two quarters in a row of minus numbers—well, albeit it's very, very small.

* (15:20)

We need to have a—Manitoba has always had this idea that we don't—we're in the middle of the field. We aren't high, we aren't low in regards to the harsh concerns that we see in other areas, and we don't have huge tremendous growth that some other areas do at times. We're not on the roller coaster of that effect, if you will, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to add that this is that—Manitobans remind me all the time that this is done at a time when this government has basically blown \$100 million—or, pardon me, not a hundred million; that seems like pocket change for this government, Mr. Speaker. They've blown a billion dollars in two

projects, and that being Bipole III going down the west side of the province costing \$650 million and the second one being the removal of nitrates in the Winnipeg water treatment facilities for \$350 million.

Smaller ones would now be, Mr. Speaker, the enhanced ID cards that they thought 100,000 people were gonna sign up for. This cost the province taxpayers \$14 million, and they've had 8,000 sign up, a dismal failure. And today we learn that even the rust bucket of equipment that they had sitting in Dauphin for the Ranchers Choice operation, that they paid—that \$4.5 million was paid for, has been sold for \$15,000. Surely, I thought, that must be a mistake from that member from Dauphin to have allowed this to happen and his—and it is probably—I don't know where he stored it while he was—while it was rusting that much. It must've been out in the rain for the last four years, but anyway, it couldn't possibly have deteriorated that much in that amount of time.

And I just want to say that Manitobans know full well that one of the economists the day of—prior to the Throne Speech, and I thought this was a very good analogy, something that I'll close with, Mr. Speaker, and that is that while the Premier (Mr. Selinger) thinks the economy is flat as being okay, he's been warned by economists in this province that while we move forward, that having a—that being 40 percent dependent on transfers and equalization from the federal government is not a bad thing as you move into a recession because it takes a while for the federal government to slow up the transfer process coming to those provinces that are have-not provinces, the ones that are most in need, and you can't get much more in need than Manitoba being 40 percent dependent on our budget from those areas. While it takes the federal government a while to slow down, therefore those transfers keep coming as you need them during those recessionary times.

Then, of course, we've seen hundreds of millions of dollars come from the federal government in regards to stimulus projects for roads, sewers and water and other facilities in Manitoba at a good time to stimulate the economy. But, Mr. Speaker, what these economists also warned is that, as you move out of that recession and the transfer payments do go down from—or equalization payments do go down from the federal government, as they withdraw some of their ability to be able to pay for those things as the recession catches up nationally, that Manitoba will suffer the most. And I think that's something that we need to watch very, very carefully, that the

economy that we've got today, that being flat in this province is not good.

We have to take steps to watch what happens when those equalization payments do change, and they will change, Mr. Speaker, given Alberta and Ontario's huge input into these dollars in the past from their deficits that they're going to have this year. Those dollars aren't gonna be available to them and so Manitoba will be one of those provinces that probably suffers the most out of this whole area.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to put a few words of commendation to the CentrePort project that's being developed as well, and had the opportunity of being at the open house the other night in regards to the new Canada CentrePort way-road that will be-highway that will be developed through the-joining Inkster to the Perimeter Highway, down the west side of the present James Richardson International Airport that we have here in Winnipeg.

It's a great project that I think will help develop the potential for tens of thousands of jobs in this province and create warehousing and processing that's much needed in this province, that we are the location to do this. We can't forget that there are other cities and provinces out there that would like to have this natural advantage, and we must work together to make sure, with industry and private sector people, that this project moves forward as well.

I just want to close by saying that government has forgot a number of the issues in rural Manitoba, southwest Manitoba that are important, one being the drought of '08, Mr. Speaker, when there was absolutely no rainfall measured for a 12-month period, including no snow in that area, and the government left these farmers of cattle ranchers basically, if you will use a term that I think they might be familiar with, high and dry.

And that's very concerning to myself as the MLA in that area, and even more so to the livelihoods of the individual farmers who have taken the brunt of carrying this lack of responsibility from the provincial government forward. Many of them had to sell off their herds to-because they had no water to feed cattle with in the-in the winter of '07-08 and throughout the '08 period, Mr. Speaker, and that was a big concern.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to close by saying that Manitoba needs to look at harmonizing some of its co-operating with other provinces. Some of them

in the area of highways. Unlike-not unlike the areas of economy where our western neighbours are going ahead and doing things without this government because they can't work with them. They can't come to a co-operative effort and our government doesn't recognize the seriousness of not being able to be a player in the prairie economy.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to close by saying that it was a privilege to bring forward, for CentrePort, the foreign trade zone private member's resolution in the House this fall and be able to see that move forward. I appreciate the co-operation of the government in making that happen and I appreciate the co-operation of the federal government in putting dollars on the table to make that a realistic possibility for Manitoba. I think it is a great opportunity and I'm glad that it's one that all levels of government have recognized as being important to the future of our province.

So, Mr. Speaker, just with those few words I'd like to close. I know there are many others who will put words of encouragement as to why Manitoba has a great future. It can have a great future. I believe it would come from the amendments to the Throne Speech that have been offered by the member from Fort Whyte and not from the Throne Speech itself.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to other's comments.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): It's my pleasure to rise today to respond to the Throne Speech. This is, I think, the 10th or 11th Throne Speech I've had the opportunity to respond to over the years and this is one of the-one of the best throne speeches, I'd have to say.

I want to congratulate our new Premier (Mr. Selinger), the member for St. Boniface, in his leadership in bringing us to this point, and I look forward to responding to another five, six or maybe even another 10 throne speeches from him and the NDP government.

Before I get into the crux of my speech, I do have to respond to some of the-one of the issues raised in question period today. The member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) had the audacity to ask the member-or the new Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) about Ranchers Choice. And that was-that was the absolute height of audacity, I would have to say, Mr. Speaker, because for them to put that question on the record today, it was pretty pathetic because I had the opportunity myself, in the midst of

this Ranchers Choice debate—I recall travelling the province with the former minister of Agriculture, the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) and we went to numerous locations. But I'll just raise the example of Grosse Isle, when we went to Grosse Isle. This was the very low point from members opposite's perspective to stand here today and pretend that they were in favour of that when successive Agriculture critics—I remember the member for Emerson—the former member for Emerson, Jack Penner, who rose in this House and was telling us how there was an excess of slaughter capacity in this province, in this country, and we didn't need any more slaughter capacity in Manitoba. Our friends in Alberta were going to take our cattle with open arms. Our continental friends to the south—there was no border.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we certainly saw different in May the 20th of 2003, the onset of BSE. The borders slam shut. Not only the border to the south but the border to Alberta as well. We were supposed to be guaranteed access to slaughter capacity under the original BSE Recovery Program, as I recall, and that never did come to pass, and never did it become more evident the need for slaughter capacity within this province.

So to hear members opposite today asking what happened. Well, I get back to Grosse Isle and I remember Howard Hilstrom, former member of Parliament for Selkirk-Interlake, a former RCMP officer I might add as well, and he went to the microphone and not only did he criticize the Ranchers Choice proposal to the nth degree, but he even went so far as to call on the ranchers themselves to practise civil disobedience.

*(15:30)

Here it was—here it was, Mr. Speaker, a former police officer—a former police officer inciting a riot, in essence, and a former lawmaker himself, as a member of Parliament, to encourage a revolution, I guess, was the absolute low point in this entire debate about Ranchers Choice. So to sit here today and to listen to members opposite bringing this topic forth when they did everything in their power over a period of years to scuttle this project was—and I know the word "hypocrisy" is not, is not parliamentary, so I will not use it, but it certainly comes to mind to hear them raise this issue today. Unbelievable. Unbelievable.

Now the Throne Speech, it does begin mentioning hard times that we have experienced in

this province with successive flooding and so forth, and I do have to say that my region, the Interlake, certainly no exception to this. In fact, we were hit particularly hard over the last couple of years—this spring, classic example of a wipeout. The member for Swan River, the former minister of Agriculture and I toured through the area early on in the spring, and I recall going into that Arborg area and to me it looked like a nuclear bomb had hit the area. No seeding whatsoever and it just reminds me of something that this government did back in 2000 right after we were elected, and it's something that the former government promised for the 10 years that they were in office. The former member for Lakeside, Harry Enns—they were going to do excess moisture insurance. They were going to cover that off. Oh, it was the next thing to do on their agenda, Mr. Speaker, the absolute next thing to do after they were re-elected in 1999.

Well, unfortunately—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. The honourable member for Interlake has the floor. If members wish to have a conversation, we have two empty loges here. You're more than welcome to use them. The honourable member for the Interlake has the floor.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Mr. Speaker, yes, the former member for Lakeside, a former minister of Agriculture himself, promising excess moisture insurance, it was this government that delivered on that program, and nothing is more critical to farmers—knowing beforehand going into a growing season what programs are available for them. This is absolutely critical so they don't have to worry and stress. They don't have to circle the Legislative Building with their tractors as they have in times past because they know that if they cannot seed by a certain date, that there is excess moisture insurance available to them, and that has been the saving grace throughout the last five or so years—the wet years, the wet cycle that we have experienced, and this spring was no exception. No exception, Mr. Speaker, this spring there was, I believe, over \$21 million in excess moisture insurance flowed to the grain sector in this province and 20 million of that went into the Interlake region. So in this regard, this government certainly stepped up to the plate.

We went to the feds last year because last year was no better than this year was, Mr. Speaker. I recall the fall, the heavy rainfalls, the farmers doing their absolute utmost to try and harvest by tracks to put on their combines, by four-wheel drives and so

forth—did everything possible, but, ultimately, a lot of damage was done to their fields. We went to Ottawa. We asked the feds, will you help our grain producers in the Interlake? Will you give us some money for field restoration? What did they say? No, sorry. We applied through it—through AgriRecovery, they said no.

We then went to them, and we said, well, if you won't do it through AgriRecovery, then maybe you'll do it through excess moisture insurance—

An Honourable Member: That's not, that's not what Bezan said.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Did they say, did they agree to that? No, they didn't and ultimately this government—I want to thank the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) when he was responsible for Emergency Measures and is again I might add, for personally stepping up to the plate, coming out to Arborg in the spring and promising the people not \$670,000, but \$3 million to deal with damages, to—well, damages in general but specifically to deal with the ruts.

And then the feds came back and say, well, we would help but why don't you ask for it through an AgriRecovery program again, Mr. Speaker. It boggles the mind. We did that. We asked them initially. We asked them a second time through EMO—denied on both fronts. That's why we went—that's why we went it alone and that's just typical.

And I might add, when it comes to—when it comes to these agricultural programs, if there's one thing that I have heard out in the field listening to producers, talking to farmers, it's the whole topic of AgriStability, and I know that we lobby hard when it comes to structuring these programs, but the reality is they're structured in Ottawa. We have 3 percent of the population of this country and that's about as much influence as we have when it comes to structuring these, and AgriStability was supposed to be the panacea. That's what the Conservative government in Ottawa promised us.

They were gonna fix CAIS, that was their election campaign. Did they? Did they fix CAIS, Mr. Speaker? No, they did not. AgriStability, frankly, no better than CAIS, just as complex to access. So, you know, to vaunt the federal conservatives as having stepped up to the plate for our farmers, I have to say that I'm very disappointed as the member for the Interlake, a representative of many farmers, with the inaction and the poor performance at that level.

But we will continue. We will do what we can. One of the things that we as a government do have control over in this province is infrastructure, and when it comes to highways, when it comes to drainages and so forth, we are there for the people, and for the people of the Interlake I can speak in particular.

I just had the opportunity to drive through The Narrows just this past fall and looked at the—the last stages of the work that is going into Highway 68—classic example of this government stepping up to the plate.

An Honourable Member: That's the federal government. What about the Prairie Grain Roads, Tom?

Mr. Nevakshonoff: Well, I will acknowledge that—

An Honourable Member: They got rid of 'em.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: The feds—

An Honourable Member: They got rid of 'em.

Mr. Nevakshonoff: —in the Prairie Grain Roads, which is now long gone, is history. You would have to go back to the 37th Legislature in order to even remember the Prairie Grain Roads Program because it was a flash in the pan, and I don't think it was a Conservative government that rolled that out. I stand to be corrected; I think that was probably the former Liberal government, but, you know, maybe we could see a little bit more co-operation on this front on infrastructure.

I know that I was very happy to read in the speech mention made of a number of major drainage projects in the Interlake. These are projects that I have been working on for years, and they're not—when I say the Interlake I don't mean the Interlake constituency. I mean the Interlake region because this government—as we did with Gary Doer as our premier, we governed for all Manitoba, not just catered to our particular constituencies. These drains straddle all borders. They go into—they go into Lakeside. They go into Selkirk. They go into Gimli, and so forth.

So this is a strategic plan for the entire region, which is absolutely necessary because when members opposite were in charge of drainage, I remember—I remember what they did, they slashed the budget—slashed the budget. They laid off 70 percent of the staff. There's planning for you. There's—that's how much they care for rural Manitoba—fired 70 percent of the staff of the

drainage—of the Water Resources branch. Unbelievable.

In fact, things were so bad, Mr. Speaker, when we came to office—when we came to office things had gone to such a bad state that there was a man called Hildebrand who took the provincial government to court over The Water Rights Act, and the judge ruled that the former government, the Filmon government, was so incompetent, so uncaring, so irresponsible that he didn't even think they should have jurisdiction over water resources in this province, and the judge threw The Water Rights Act out the window. He did. That was one of the first acts that we passed through this House when we came to office. We did a ban on union and corporate donations to political parties. We amended The Wildlife Act. The second act was the amendment to The Wildlife Act to ban panned hunting, a despicable practice, and the third thing we did was amended The Water Rights Act to reconstitute provincial jurisdiction over drainage in this province. That's where we began.

* (15:40)

It was utter chaos and anarchy when you guys were in power and that's why you were thrown out of office, to be frank, among other things. You know, the Monnin inquiry comes to mind and, you know, the corruption in the Interlake. What else is new? It's not the first time it was tried there, is it? It's not the first time. In fact, it was tried again in the subsequent election, when I ran in 1999—a most despicable act that was, but I won't go into that because, you know, I've discussed that before. But typical behaviour of members opposite. Put them in the doghouse where they've been for the past decade and they're going to be for another decade as well, I'm sure, if they continue on as they have done.

I've got a couple of new roles myself, Mr. Speaker. I'm working with the member of Thompson on Infrastructure and Transportation but I'm also—and that is truly an honour. It's something that's near and dear to my heart, building roads, digging drains, and now I can hopefully play a greater role in that, but I'm also working with the new member for Elmwood (Mr. Blaikie), the Minister of Conservation. That, too, is a pleasure because wildlife issues are very important to me.

I make note in the Throne Speech there was mention that the parks in 2010 will have their 50th anniversary and we're all gearing up for that, but I do want to put on the record that the following

year to that, 2011, is the 50th anniversary of the constitution of the wildlife management association program—or areas program—in this province, as well, and that's something that is very important to me. I think having an excess of Crown land in our province is the very essence of freedom for us as people, Mr. Speaker. To be able to leave the town, to get out of your vehicle and walk through the ditch into Crown land is what defines us as Canadians, as Manitobans.

I travel south of the border. Once you cross the 49th parallel, then—once you cross the 49th, that's it. You're locked on that Interstate because they don't have the benefit of Crown lands, and to have wildlife management areas, 27 wildlife management areas in the Interlake, is our true resource, and I'll tell you what members opposite would do. They would chop them up and sell them off. People of Manitoba should be aware that these people have no interest in maintaining resources, Crown resources such as that. We know what they do with Crown corporations, don't we, Mr. Speaker?

And if you want to talk about MTS, for example, and I have put my words on the record regarding MTS in times past, how what they did was equivalent to the Russian mafia taking over the oil industry in Russia. That's exactly what they did with MTS in this province. The quick, two-stage flip where you could buy 1,500 shares and then there was no limit. I remember those days. Their little shills were out there selling shares, saying, okay, you buy—I'll sell you this many shares this week; next week we'll give you an extra \$1,000 for it. It was a coup d'état, and we lost one of our Crown corporations, so we know how members opposite, how much respect they have for Crown corporations, and I would suggest that their respect for Crown land is equivalent to that. So we will celebrate both those anniversaries, parks and wildlife management areas, in the years subsequent to that.

There's been some mention of CentrePort, something that interests me in particular from a transportation perspective. Of course, we all look to the south, largest market on the face of the earth, but we also have to look over the Pole. This is something that this government has started. We've made the commitment to establish the CentrePort area, but we're also working on establishing trade lines into other countries such as India and China. We had the Russian ambassador here on several occasions, because if you're going to travel over the Pole, then you're going to be travelling over the Russian

federation to a large degree and having relations with them working positively toward the enhancement and expansion of trade is absolutely fundamental. So I look forward to seeing that initiative as well play out over the years.

I look to education, Mr. Speaker, something that—absolutely critical. These are government's primary responsibilities: infrastructures, such as drain, roads, but it's also schools. It's also hospitals, clinics and so forth, and I'm glad that both former ministers of Education are in the Chamber today, the member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson), the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Lemieux), because I look to my schools across the Interlake and absolutely every one of those schools has been treated and dealt with by these two former ministers.

Every one of them has worked, whether it's—*[interjection]*—three former ministers of Education, excuse me. All three of these men worked very diligently toward building new schools, such as the new school in Inwood, fixing up new schools such as in Fisher Branch. And, oh, by the way, when I think of Fisher Branch, I do want to pay particular tribute to the member for Gimli, because he passed legislation banning the closure of small schools across this province, and that's pretty important, Mr. Speaker, because schools are the very centre, the very lifeblood of our communities. And members opposite, conservative-minded people in general, just want to slam the doors on these things, cut their taxes, cut their own personal payments to municipal governments and school boards, and this government put a stop to that. So I take my hat off to the member of Gimli for taking that initiative.

In terms of First Nations, we have also taken great strides, Mr. Speaker. One of the sad realities of Canada is that a great number of our Aboriginal people are unemployed and, as a result, cannot participate in the economy and training, and education is fundamental to their growth and involvement in our economy. And this is something that we have worked on hard over the years, and I look to the community of Peguis as an example where not too long ago we established the first library. We're working with them on adult ed and literacy and so forth, and there's a lot of potential, I think, in days to come in regard to vocational training and so forth so that we can accelerate at an exponential rate their integration fully into the economy as it should be.

I look, too—I mention Peguis, and I noticed in the Throne Speech as well, there was a commitment to a dialysis unit in Peguis, not just in Peguis, but in Gimli as well, Berens River and, sticking with our theme that we represent all of Manitoba, there's a dialysis unit going into Russell as well. And that's certainly not one of our seats. That matters not to us because, if people in Russell need dialysis, then we'll be there for them.

On the health-care front a community just to the west of where I live, the community of Eriksdale, the E.M. Crowe hospital is currently going, undergoing renovations. And just across the street from that is a spanking, brand new wellness centre, just put up and ready to go into operation in the days to come.

And that reminds me of another thing that is available. In that wellness centre is the delivery of cancer care services, Mr. Speaker, critical services such as this. When members opposite were in charge, everybody had to come to Winnipeg, despite the fact that they have quite a few rural seats. They never made those bold steps forward to start delivering services out to the rural areas. So we have made those steps.

It's an honour to be a member of this government, of the New Democratic Party, because it's a can-do government. Right from the very beginning we focussed on rebuilding the public assets of this province. Right from the beginning we started with highways and so forth, and it wasn't until the country, the world, in fact, was hit with a major recession that other governments across this land woke up to the realization that maybe they should be investing in their infrastructure as well.

* (15:50)

And now we see governments across the land—around the world taking this course of action that we began back in 1999, which is why Manitoba is as well positioned as it is to weather this recession. And I think statistics would support me in that—in that regard. So I think I'll close on that—on that note, Mr. Speaker.

It's been a—it's been a pleasure to put my thoughts on the record. Thank you very much.

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech debate continues, and, of course, I will be speaking for the amendment brought forward by our leader, and against this visionless Throne Speech that was just introduced this past week. *[interjection]* And I'm not going to enter into debate

across the way here, but I just—all I will say is that if the Throne Speech had spent as much time on agriculture as the previous member, the member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff), who really does want to be the Ag Minister, I think agriculture maybe would of got some recognition in this province, but apparently we know that from the Throne Speech, agriculture got very short shrift out of it and so we'll go on.

But a Throne Speech should be—a Throne Speech should actually spend a small time in review of what's happened over the past year, or in this case, in the past 10 years that they've been in government, a small amount, and they should be spending a lot of time in speaking about their goals, about legislation they want to bring forward, and we didn't hear that. And it didn't come out in that Throne Speech because they spent basically all of the Throne Speech, the vast majority of the Throne Speech, telling us about all the things that they feel that they've accomplished over the past number of years.

They missed a couple of things about taking us into \$22-billion worth of debt. Somehow that got missed in the Throne Speech but—in the review—but the Throne Speech was actually filled with many ironies. There was references made in the Throne Speech that Manitobans should be tightening their belts, should be expressing some fiscal constraint, and yet the Premier (Mr. Selinger), the former Finance minister and now the Premier, is telling us that the flat is the new up in terms of the economy, that negative growth is the new goal. And in our everyday lives, in our businesses, in our personal lives, anytime that you remain flat, stationary, you're going down—you're going backwards.

You cannot progress if you don't keep moving forward, and yet this Premier is telling us now that flat is the new up. So—and at the same time that they're telling us to tighten our belts, collectively, as Manitobans, in turn we see them spending—wasting \$640 million in a hydro line around the western detour of Manitoba. And I tell the Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) and the Hydro minister right now that there is hearings going on and it's in my home community today and I will be taking in that hearing. And we, as a community, we're telling him but thanks, but no thanks. We don't want this hydro line through it. We will not have this hydro line through us. You will not disrupt our agriculture, our irrigation and there is no way you can run a hydro line through irrigation pipes. So if you think that—the question becomes—you said that—

[interjection]—you said that in debate that you've asked—you've asked the eastside residents—you used to ask the eastside communities whether they wanted this hydro line. When did we get asked? When did you come to us and ask us if we wanted this hydro line through prime agricultural land?

You're going to send this hydro line through a flood plain the long way around. You're going to spend six—and this is the estimate right now, \$640 million, and you haven't even started this process yet in terms of construction. And we all know what their record is if they can take a Hydro building that was—started out at \$75 million and ended up at \$300 million. So we're going to take \$640 million. At that rate then we should be what, 2, 3 billion dollars? Like what the heck's the difference? You're already at \$22 billion in debt. Why not another 3 or 4 or 5 billion dollars just to build a hydro line the long way around, never mind the operating losses that you will receive from this?

You're going to waste \$350 million on nitrogen removal out of city waste water, and we were just talking here previously—speaking of waste water, the Province is sharing the costs of upgrading wastewater treatment in the city, and yet you're asking us, as rural residences, under domestic waste water, to foot 100 percent of the bill. Why is it—are we second-class citizens in the country, in the rural areas or what? Why is this?

You spend \$14 million on an enhanced driver's licence that nobody wants—\$1,700 each—you could have bought—you could have put, what, 20 bucks into everybody's pocket to put a passport—to get a passport and you would have accomplished more and spent less.

And then you turn around and you tell us we should be tightening our belts. We know the debt has grown in the last 10 years. We're up to \$22 billion including our Crown corporations. We have—we know that equalization payments will drop to Manitoba in the coming year. The number that's being thrown around is \$400 million. We don't know. The Finance Minister refuses to give us a fiscal update for the current year, a fiscal update. We know that as a Christmas present promised—Christmas present promised for the second quarter, perhaps will be under the Christmas tree, but we'll wait and see there. But what we want to know is where are we going to be by the end of the fiscal year, by March 31st, 2010. Every other province, the federal government, have all put out fiscal updates as

to where their deficit will be. How big is our deficit going to be this year? They don't tell us. They won't tell us and I think they're ashamed to tell us.

An Honourable Member: They don't know how big it is.

Mr. Pedersen: I believe they do know. I believe the Finance Department does know. There's over 500 employees, correct? There's over 500 employees in the Finance Department. You can't tell me that they don't know how big the deficit's going to be, but they're not willing to tell Manitobans.

Hydro was not even mentioned in the Throne Speech. You didn't even mention Hydro once. Is it because of the whistle-blower scandal that you've got going on? Is it because of the refusal to deal with the Public Utilities Board to provide information that Hydro's not—or is it this daffy detour that you don't even want to talk about? If you would of—if you really believed this west side daffy detour was the thing to do, you would have put it in the Throne Speech, said, this is progressive, this will help lose Hydro more money. Oh no, I guess you shouldn't say that it's going to lose more money and you wouldn't want to put that in a Throne Speech, but you know that's where it's going to be.

You talk about HST. It's not going to—you're not going to bring—at this time—at this time, we have said that we're not going to introduce HST ever. But this government continues to talk about weasel words, not at this time. They wouldn't introduce the HST because it's only offering \$400 million. It's not enough. So what, is \$401 million enough? Tell us what is enough for you to introduce HST. You don't want to talk about it.

And instead of HST, if you would go to payroll tax, if you would address the payroll tax, which is the tax on succession in business, but you won't drop the payroll—you won't even discuss the payroll tax, getting rid of the payroll tax.

You won't talk about personal basic exemptions. You talk about raising minimum wages. You raise minimum wages and then you take more from them in taxes because you refuse to raise the basic personal exemption. If anyone of you had ever written a paycheque, if you've ever done any deductions, you would know that, but no, you're not interested in doing that.

Mr. Speaker, there's—we're so uncompetitive in so many ways in this province, but I want to quote—and this is a quote coming from Vic Schroeder, this

is June of 2009. It's his minority report to the Judicial Compensation Committee. And in his report, in this minority report, the Vic Schroeder, the former Finance minister, the Chairman of Manitoba Hydro says, and I quote: As a province established for 2007, we were last in dwelling starts. Only two provinces had lower average weekly earnings. Three had lower per capita retail sales, and et cetera, et cetera, he goes on to quote.

* (16:00)

And I'll quote another part from his minority report, and this is Vic Schroeder, and I'll quote this one in—to put it another way, assuming we're in a race, assuming Manitoba's in a race, even if we're moving faster than the others, when we are further behind, running fastest doesn't mean we're in the lead or even in the middle. End of quote.

Manitoba is dead last and this is a former Finance minister from the NDP—[*interjection*]-and I can explain it. I can explain it to you if you really need it explained more.

Mr. Speaker, I, you know—I guess I'd like to talk about agriculture, but the member from Interlake pretty well covered it all in the past 10 years. Nothing about the future, where the livestock industry's going to go, where the grain industry's going to go, just talk about the problems that have been in the past 10 years and nothing about solutions, so.

And the—interesting to note that the food industry wasn't mentioned in the Throne Speech. The food industry is perhaps where the agriculture needs to go in Manitoba in order to progress, and yet this government, when it comes to agriculture, we know it wasn't mentioned in the Throne Speech is because they're not interested—[*interjection*]

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) calls me a hobby farmer. Fine, if that's the way he wants to be about it, that's—I'll remember that.

Under Conservation, it's—there's a long list in Conservation and this is the—the Agriculture Minister, his former portfolio. He's banned hogs. He's banned logs. He's banned domestic waste-water systems and yet at the same time we've got overflowing lagoons in campgrounds. Lake Winnipeg continues to deteriorate. The politics of this are great for this party but—for the NDP, because they don't have to deal with these problems. They only create the perception of wanting to deal with these problems. The politics work great; ban hogs,

win votes in Winnipeg. That's what it was all about.
[interjection]

They talk about recycling e-waste. That's great, but make it happen. Don't talk about the last 10 years that have been a failure on this. We've got e-waste piling up all over the province. They don't do anything about it.

In the municipal lagoon, in the R.M. of Thompson, which is in my constituency, it's a typical municipal lagoon; they have a pilot project going there where they've taken—working with a company, they have taken iron ore tailings, tailings from an iron ore—that's by-products, by the way—from an iron ore plant in northwestern—northern Ontario—and this is Agassiz Enviro-Systems. They've taken iron ore tailings and limestone; they're pumping the water out of the lagoon, out of the cell of the lagoon; they're running it through this; and it's clean water coming out of here. They're removing the nutrient load; they're destroying the pathogens in it; and they're even removing the heavy metals.

If this government was serious about nutrient removal, about cleaning up Lake Winnipeg, they would talk to companies like this and we would put on a test pilot—a pilot project going and we—I have enough lagoons in my constituency, we could more than have lots of pilot projects going here. But, no, they're not even interested in talking to companies like this. Much easier just to put bans on and let the lagoons overflow in the campgrounds.

Mr. Speaker, this—I noticed in the Throne Speech there was no mention of education or of improving in education, in improving graduation rates. There's no mention of making Manitoba more competitive with other provinces, about helping our universities become—progress and become much more competitive within the university field.

In housing, there's a commitment, another commitment—again and again, they've come out with this commitment to build more public housing. We've heard it every year. The concern is, on the public housing that they have managed to build in the last few years, there has been no tendering and no transparency about the companies getting the contracts that have built the public housing. And on top of it all, Manitoba government is the biggest slum landlord in this province. I have public housing in my constituency with mould, with ice on the inside—there's more ice on the inside of the door in that public housing than there is on the sidewalk outside, and yet they talk about building more. You

can't even look after what you got, and you talk about building more? That's disgusting.

In wind energy, we've got the St. Joseph project, which has now gone from 300 megawatts to 138, if it gets off the ground, 'cause it's—they—there are other projects out there that have the finances, that have the ability to go today, and yet there is no movement on them. Instead, they sit on this project and they won't even—they can't even get this one off the ground.

Let's compare costs of wind energy, new wind energy versus the new dams: \$1.5 million for Wuskwatim for 200 megawatts. We're producing 100 megawatts—99 megawatts at St. Leon right now, there is—and yet it didn't cost anywhere near—what's that, three quarters of a billion dollars to do half of that? There is no—let's find out what this new generation is costing. Wind energy may be competitive with this. Open it up. Let's see.

And, of course, they didn't want to talk about crime in their—in their Throne Speech. Another weekend in Winnipeg of slayings and gunshots, and it's got now where I was talking to a young mother this past weekend and she was talking about bringing her family in to shop in Winnipeg to the shopping malls, but, you know, she says I feel uncomfortable. I feel uncomfortable about letting our kids shop in the shopping malls. You've got a fear mentality out there. You have done nothing to address crime except to watch it get worse, and now what we have out there is a fear mentality. You announced your helicopter, great initiative, but will it happen or will we see it in next year's Throne Speech? That's still to come.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech—I just want to cover one more topic because I really do want to go to the—to the Hydro hearings to—because I know I have a group of farmers that are—and agricultural people that are very upset about this daffy detour, but in Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade, I'm hearing again that the minimum wage is about to increase or is being proposed to increase, and my question is, if Manitoba really has the cheapest cost of living in Canada, why do we need to have the highest minimum wage in Canada? There's something seriously out of—out of whack here because if you—if you do have cheap cost of living you shouldn't have to have the highest minimum wage, and if you would increase—*[interjection]* Yeah, but that's right. The difference is—the difference is between those who

have written a paycheque and those who haven't is that if you had raised the basic personal exemption, those people would be—on low wages—would be able to take home more money than what it is today because you've increased their wage and you've increased their tax load, and it's great for a government that doesn't know how to control their spending.

We have B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan meeting, their cabinets are meeting jointly, Manitoba is not even part of the mix here. Where are you? Are you not part of western Canada? Can you not see? Is there no vision there that you could be a part of a much larger picture here?

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to sum up that this Throne Speech really lacked vision. It failed to address where we're at today in real terms in Manitoba and it failed to address what we have the potential to be here in Manitoba, and that's why I'm supporting the amendment, because the amendment goes a long ways towards addressing what the potential we really have to—what we can accomplish—to warn Manitobans to tighten their belts and then throw away another billion dollars in goofy projects really shows how sincere this government is about fiscal management.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I will leave it at that, and this Throne Speech is an absolute disaster. Thank you very much.

* (16:10)

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, there's been discussions, and I think if you canvass the House, you might see that there is leave to temporarily set aside the Throne Speech debate to deal with second reading of Bill 2, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act, with the understanding that this is not to count as an interruption of, or affect the number of days of debate held on the Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to temporarily set aside the Throne Speech debate to deal with the second reading of Bill 2, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act, with the understanding that this is not to count as an interruption of, or affect the number of days debate held on the Throne Speech?

Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

Okay, there's agreement.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 2—The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Okay, so now I'm gonna—oh, good, the honourable—I'm now—I—okay, now I'm gonna be calling second reading of Bill No. 2, The Legislative Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act.

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik), that Bill No. 2, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative et la Loi sur la Commission de régie de l'Assemblée législative, be now read a second time and referred to a—to a committee of this House.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has been advised of the bill and I tabled the message.

Mr. Speaker: It's been moved by the honourable Government House Leader, seconded by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, that Bill No. 2, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Amendment—Commission Amendment Act, be now read a second time, be referred to a committee of this House.

His Honour Lieutenant-Governor has been advised of this bill and the message has been tabled.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to speak to this important bill that has been developed in collaboration with members from all parties in response to the Auditor General's recommendations in chapter 4 of the November 2009 report to the Legislative Assembly—Audits Of Government Operations. With the implementation of the Auditor's recommendations, Manitoba's Legislative Assembly will become one of the most transparent and accountable legislatures in Canada.

The Auditor General made several recommendations that can only be implemented by an independent allowances commissioner. The current provisions in The Legislative Assembly Act only allow for a commissioner to be appointed within six months after each general election. This bill is needed to appoint the last commissioner, Michael Werier, as an interim commissioner to make

changes to the regulations, to provide more clarity to members on what expenses are allowed and how they must be documented.

The interim commissioner will have the ability to consult with interested individuals and groups when conducting the review. Once this bill has received royal assent, the commissioner will have four months to review and revise the regulations to bring them into line with modern expectations and contemporary best practice. The commissioner's decisions are binding on the Assembly. This has been the case since amendments were made to The Legislative Assembly Act in 2004 to make the system more independent by removing the requirement for the Assembly to vote on the recommendations of the independent MLA pay and benefits commissioner.

This legislation also addresses other recommendations from the Auditor General, including moving responsibility for the oversight of members' allowances to the Clerk of the Assembly, clarifying that the rules regarding non-arm's length expenses apply to all printings and mailings done by members, bringing in a new legislative requirement for compliance audit to be conducted after each general election to ensure that public money is being used appropriately and according to the regulations, requiring that decision minutes of the Legislative Assembly Management Commission be posted on the Assembly web site, and requiring on-line detailed reports of members' expenses quarterly or more frequently.

Manitoba's already one of only two provinces that make all MLA expenses available to the public, including receipts and other supporting documentation. These changes will make our practices even more accountable to Manitobans and all parties, Mr. Speaker, think that's important. That's why we've already been able to implement many of the changes recommended by the Auditor and why we are moving quickly to implement the rest with this particular legislation. We are pleased that there has been strong, non-partisan co-operation among all parties to develop a fast and collaborative plan to implement the Auditor's recommendations, and I'd like to thank all members in this Chamber, but particularly, my colleagues, the House leaders from the other parties for their support, as we've worked together to make these important changes. Thank you.

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned, this is legislative-legislation that has been developed collaboratively with members of all parties so we, of course, support the legislation. All parties of the Assembly agree with the Auditor General's recommendations and we've been working together to implement those recommendations. The Auditor General did not find any inappropriate spending in the course of the audit. What the auditor found is that there is a need for Manitoba Legislative Assembly members to modernize their record keeping and improve accountability and transparency.

We agree that changes are necessary to bring the Assembly into line with modern standards of accountability and that's why, of course, as the Government House Leader has mentioned, we have already implemented most of those recommendations, and we're moving forward to implement the remaining recommendations with this legislation. We welcome these changes that will lead to Manitoba's Legislative Assembly becoming one of the most transparent and accountable legislatures in the country. It is important to note that Manitoba MLAs are prudent, having underspent our constituency budgets by over three-quarters of a million dollars in the audit period. I would also like to echo the words of the Government House Leader in also thanking all members of this Chamber for their support, as we've all worked together to make these important changes a reality. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would acknowledge and thank the Government House Leader, the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Hawranik), the member from Kildonan and Jen [*phonetic*], all of which have made this so much easier in terms of being able to proceed. It is important for me to also acknowledge the strong, non-partisanship co-operation among all parties in developing a rapid and collaborative response by the Assembly to the Auditor's report. We, too, will be supporting this legislation because we agree with the Auditor General's recommendations in chapter 4 of the November, 2009, report to the Legislative Assembly, Audits and—of Government Operations.

As has been noted, collectively we have worked to implement as many of the recommendations as possible, prior to the introduction of this legislation. Now, with this legislation, we are implementing the remaining recommendations. We are very pleased that by working together we have been able to act swiftly to improve the accountability and

transparency of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, bringing the Assembly into line with modern standards of accountability. I, too, would like to thank all members in this Chamber for their support as we have worked together to make these important changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill No. 2, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly—excuse me for a sec.

Second reading, Bill No. 2, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Hawranik: Yes, Mr. Speaker, let the record show that there was unanimous approval in the House for this bill.

Mr. Speaker: Let the record show there is unanimous consent of the House to pass this motion.

THRONE SPEECH (Third Day of Debate—Continued)

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, we will now revert to the Throne Speech, and the last speaker we had was from the opposition side. Now I will recognize, on the government side, I will now recognize the Minister for Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade.

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade): Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to the Throne Speech as presented a couple of weeks ago now, and it's indeed a pleasure to do so in my new capacity as Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade; in fact, the first opportunity I've had to stand in the House and do so because my opposition colleagues haven't asked me any questions yet. Even though I do have an economic portfolio and we have been talking about the economy, I've yet to hear from my opposition colleagues but that being said, we're looking forward to seeing this Throne Speech pass, as, once again, it has set the groundwork aside for moving Manitoba forward.

* (16:20)

And as we all know, we've been faring very well in light of the global economy and the realities that that has meant for many jurisdictions across Canada, and we know that Manitobans have the spirit and the energy and the industriousness to continue to face the challenges that may present themselves as we move forward addressing what may lay ahead with respect to the economic situation.

Now, I'll get to some of the issues as raised in the Throne Speech, but before I do, I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to acknowledge yourself, Mr. Speaker, and the pages and the table officers and the work that they do, and it's good to be back here in this session as we proceed with the business of the day, and I'm glad we finally had an opportunity to proceed with the business of the day and speak about the Throne Speech.

Before I get into some of the details of the Throne Speech, I'd like to reflect a bit on what we have seen in my constituency in the community of Gimli and the surrounding communities in the Gimli constituency, Mr. Speaker. You know, since 2003, when I've had the honour and privilege of serving in this Chamber as the MLA for Gimli, I've seen incredible changes throughout my constituency and that's because of the good work that this government has done in the past and continues to do in support of rural Manitobans. For example, I noticed during the leadership debate that was going on in our party, and as we were moving towards the selection of our leader, that the opposition leaders took the opportunity to finally get out and see what the community of Gimli was all about. In fact, the local press welcomed them to come out and see what was happening in our communities.

And I hope they noticed how good the highways were as they were driving up to my hometown now, as I believe we put almost \$50 million into that constituency and new highway construction and renovation, Mr. Speaker. And when they drove down that highway they could have turned left on the airport road where they would have seen a state-of-the-art waste-water treatment facility. That was a project supported by all three levels of government.

And if they turned right down 231, Mr. Speaker, and came into town, they would have seen over \$3.5 million, almost \$4 million invested in the renovation of the Gimli High School and as a alma mater, and as my former place of employment, I had the opportunity to tour and see what that meant.

Ms. Marilyn Brick, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

In fact, I did what I usually do when I go to Gimli High School, I stopped in to see my good friends in the cafeteria where they make the best chocolate chip muffins. You know, they tried to give me one for free; they were very appreciative of all the work we've done in government. But I did pay my dollar for that muffin as I always have, even though it was a \$4-million muffin. I did pay for that muffin for a dollar and enjoyed it very much. But they were really thrilled with what that's meant for our school, Mrs. Deputy Speaker, they were really thrilled with what that meant for our school and our community.

And if they would have gone a little further south of the Gimli High School, pardon me, a little further west of the Gimli High School, they would have seen the new Stefansson school which is actually about six years old almost because the ribbon was cut prior to my election in 2003.

And they could have gone down to Winnipeg Beach where construction is going to be starting soon on the brand new park and campground which will be the most accessible campground in Manitoba, which I think speaks to our commitment to persons with disabilities and I think it's wonderful that they'll have the opportunity to experience all that Winnipeg Beach has to offer. And, of course, Winnipeg Beach, there's a new stretch of seawall that we had constructed there. There's new pavement in Winnipeg Beach. The list goes on and on.

But you know, the members should visit again, they really should because since that last time where the Leader of the Opposition visited, if he goes up No. 9 highway, where there has been work on that highway as well, if he goes up No. 9 highway, he'll see the new ambulance garage being built in West St. Paul. And as he continues to drive pass my neighbour in Selkirk, where there's going to be a new hospital, there's going to be a new library, all these wonderful investments that we have forthcoming in support of the community of Selkirk. But they carry on past the investments that we've made in the Clandeboye recreation centre, St. Andrews recreation centre. And if they carry on past Winnipeg Beach, they'll see the new seniors housing which we've done co-operatively, the assisted-living complex which has been done co-operatively with the federal government as well. And as they drive up to Gimli, I'm sure they'll see a lot more that has been invested in rural Manitoba, supporting rural Manitobans. And,

again, as they come up to Gimli their next time, they'll see things well under way for the dialysis unit at Gimli Health Centre.

So, you know, it's nice that they visited once in six years since I've been elected, Madam Deputy Speaker, but there's a lot to see every time you drive up to Gimli. And that's part of their—our commitment as government, to making sure that rural Manitoba is—continues to be supported by this government that rural Manitoba continues to enjoys the benefit of the joint stimulus package with our federal partners, that rural Manitoba continues to become an option for the many people that are moving here to Manitoba.

In fact, there's very good news in that we've had one of the largest increases in our history of late with a very significant number of people having moved to Manitoba this year, the likes of which we haven't seen in several years, Madam Deputy Speaker. So we continue to celebrate the good work that is being done each and every day by Manitobans and we continue to partner each and every day with Manitobans to ensure that we enjoy the quality of life that we've come to expect in this province and the Manitoba way of getting the job done.

Now, the only blueprint that we have laid out for the future of this province, it speaks to our commitment to provide for the economic health and well-being of the citizens of Manitoba, and part of that economic well-being and economic health includes a continued commitment to infrastructure, Madam Deputy Speaker. In fact, \$545 million in roads and 28 bridges to be built in 2010, as part of the Province's plan to stimulate the economy and create public assets, has a significant amount of long-term benefits that are associated with that. And the government has invested in 1,500 stimulus projects creating more than 12,000 direct and 10,000 indirect jobs, which is why many people are continuing to make Manitoba home, when we have a global economy that is indeed—has indeed been challenged over the last year.

And we also know that we need to provide supports for the business community and, in my new role as Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade, I've enjoyed the opportunity to meet with several of the stakeholders and tour some of the incredible industries that exist here in the province of Manitoba, and I look forward to doing more of that in the not-so-distant future.

And every place I go I hear that one of the challenges might be training and the fact that they

need more employees, and this does not sound like something you would hear from an economy that is at risk. It is—it speaks to the innovation. It speaks to the industry. It speaks to the Manitoba way to address things head-on and there's a lot of optimism out there, Madam Deputy Speaker, an incredible amount of optimism where people are looking for skilled trades, skilled workers. And that has been a very big part of our commitment as a government, to ensure that we can increase apprenticeship programs, that we can increase more opportunities for tradespeople, and that goes back to my former department, working in collaboration with my colleague to my left, and we'll continue to do so to meet the needs of the trades and training in the apprenticeship needs here in the province of Manitoba.

And we also need to create a business environment that is conducive to growth and, of course, eliminating the corporation capital tax and the small-business tax in 2010 speaks to our commitment to do so. And, of course, there is the 2010 economic summit which will be led by the Premier (Mr. Selinger) that'll bring business, labour, Aboriginal and local government leaders together to deal with issues such as innovation, such as trades, such as skills development and investment.

Now, these are just a few of the things that we're doing to address the economic health and well-being of Manitobans. And, of course, many people who don't have pensions, who might have relied on their investment income as a means of security recognize that with the collapse of the stock market that that had a profound impact on many people who don't have the security of pensions. And, of course, the current economy also poses some challenges for pensions, so that's why our government's introducing new regulations under The Pensions Benefits Act, similar to those under consideration at the federal level, that will improve protection from Manitobans' pension plans.

And we need to ensure that Manitoba remains one of the most affordable places in Canada to live, work and raise a family. Of course, how do we do that? Well, through Manitoba Public Insurance.

I believe it was 11 of 12 years now when our MPI is looking at rate adjustments and rate adjustments that would include decreases, Madam Deputy Speaker. We look at having the lowest hydro rates in North America and, of course, as a rural individual, I remember having an opportunity but,

unfortunately, because of poor health that night, I wasn't able to come in and speak to the committee hearings on what it would mean for rural Manitobans to have our hydro rates equalized but, of course, that was an initiative that has brought more equality to rural Manitoba by the equalization of the hydro rates. And, of course, having the lowest hydro rates in the country are—is a tremendous benefit to make Manitoba an affordable option for many people to live.

*(16:30)

Now, I've already touched on this briefly about the notion that we have the need for education and training, and there are a lot of things that I will be doing in co-operation with my colleague to my left, the Minister of Education (Ms. Allan) and that will include the working with high school students, in extending the co-op tax credit. I think a lot of high school students'll certainly take advantage of this opportunity and that knowledge infrastructure beyond the capital investments that we make are going to be quite substantial and that's also a commitment not only to the universities here in the city of Winnipeg and Brandon University but also University College of the North.

It was curious listening to the members in question period today talk about northern training when I do recall members opposite did not support University College of the North, in fact, said that that was one of the commitments that we had made as a government that they would scrap. And we know that many of the job opportunities in northern Manitoba are resource based, and we know that resources and commodities can be vulnerable to markets, and we know that providing more opportunities for people for training and employment and upgrades in their skill sets and recognizing their prior learning assessment as well can be a tremendous benefit for people of northern Manitoba and providing the training at home of course increases the opportunity for them to enrol first and foremost but also increases the opportunity for them to succeed because providing the training at home reduces the cost of that training.

And we're committed to working with the federal government and First Nations leaders to assist students on First Nations as well. I think my colleague, the member opposite, spoke to that and said that it wasn't mentioned in the Throne Speech, but he should review that and see that indeed

working with First Nations to assist students on First Nations is indeed a priority for this government.

Now, physical health of the people of Manitoba of course is one of the things that our government has been and will continue to champion and that of course is public health care. And I was very impressed when the list had been expanded to anyone who wanted to have the H1N1 shot after all those who were priority for H1N1 shot, having gone to a clinic and promptly having received the shot for myself, my wife and all three of my children. And I know that this has been a gigantic effort on behalf of the people of Manitoba by the Health Department and by all those involved in this inoculation which, I believe, if I'm not mistaken has inoculated more people in one short time period than ever before in Manitoba history. So I think it's really, really important to keep those efforts in mind and congratulate everyone on the front line who put in many, many long hours to ensure that we had the opportunity to get in and get the H1N1 vaccine and have that shot.

Now, I've also—I've already mentioned that members opposite should come up to Gimli in the not-so-distant future and see that we are moving forward with the dialysis unit at the Gimli Health Centre. And, you know, during the election in 2007, I think it's worth putting on record, when we announced that there would be a dialysis unit in Gimli hospital, when we announced that and made that promise in 2007, the campaign manager from my opposition component ran up to me and said, why would you do that? We don't need to do that. That's a waste of money, and I've—this is the first opportunity I've had to put that on the record, and I'm surprised I hadn't done that sooner. But as we move forward with that commitment, I was really surprised to hear that that was their position because we believe, on this side of the House, that taking health care closer to home is a much more important investment in the future of Manitobans in rural Manitoba than to make rural Manitobans come to Winnipeg for the health-care services where we can provide reasonable services and provide affordable services and, indeed, this commitment to dialysis is a testament to that.

And I look at my community where people like to come out and retire in my community. It's a beautiful place to hang your hat and rest by the lake and enjoy all that Gimli has to offer as a community, and why should you not be afforded that opportunity because of your health restrictions? And certainly

people who are required to have dialysis as often as they are would have not have considered Gimli as an option for retirement in the absence of this dialysis unit.

So we are taking dialysis capability to rural Manitoba. We are taking it to First Nations, and I think this is a real testament to our government's commitment to improving public health services in rural and remote areas, Madam Deputy Speaker.

So another thing that I'm looking forward to—and I hope to take full advantage of this—and I know it's a, you know, politics can be unkind on the waistline, but, you know, phasing in an adult fitness credit, I hope to take full advantage of that in the next few years as we work towards that proactive approach to improving our own physical health and well-being. And it's a nice little carrot to hold in front of individuals who are, who are on the cusp, who aren't sure if they're, if they're committed to a, to a fitness regime, as my colleague the Minister of Healthy Living (Mr. Rondeau) has assured me I will be committed to, and I'm looking forward to that opportunity.

As you look at all the other things that are in this Throne Speech that speak to social health and well-being, building a new women's hospital at the Health Sciences Centre site, establishing a consumer protection action plan, establishing a new strategy to help older Manitobans re-enter the work force, increasing maximum fines for workplace, safety and health violations, these are all critical components, which I think will have meaningful impact on many Manitobans as we move forward with these initiatives.

Now, to talk about the health of our municipalities, the health of our municipalities, and it was great to be at AMM once again. It was great to be there and meet many of my former colleagues, as a former member of municipal government in the community of Gimli from '98 to 2002. It was great to be there and break bread with them and socialize with them and sit down and discuss the issues. And I was very pleased that that morning of the, quote unquote, bear pit session, the fact that we had 14 members of Cabinet at the table to hear their questions and provide the answers and to hear their concerns and take their advice.

Now, of course, the only way that could have been done, for us to be in Brandon that day, was with the decision to not have the House sit until after the AMM convention. And we heard a loud and clear

message from the people at AMM, from their executive directors, from the membership at large, that we should consider making sure that our House schedule does not conflict with their annual general meeting of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, because, as local government, they have a lot to say. They have a lot of questions to ask, and they have a lot of advice to give. So it's important that these opportunities present themselves through their annual general meeting to continue to dialogue with us.

Now, we dialogue with them on a regular basis. We do meet with municipalities when they have concerns, we do meet with individual mayors or reeves, and we continue to do so. But to have them all under roof where they've had the opportunity to debate a healthy debate, where they've had the opportunity to bring issues forward, where they've had the opportunity to have a number of different inputs from various communities on a particular issue, that's healthy, and it's important, and that's why I think it was great that we were able to work out that agreement where we could attend the AMM annual general meeting in Brandon and hear those concerns.

So if you look at what our commitments include for the health of our communities, capital projects at Brandon University and University College of the North—again, I have to repeat that members opposite said that they would cancel the University College of the North—a new cancer centre for Brandon and the Westman Lab in Brandon; the emergency medical service station that I already referenced in West St. Paul; a dialysis capability as I already mentioned Gimli and Berens River and Peguis, but, of course, in Russell.

Ensuring that Manitoba moves forward to train and recruit more doctors and nurses for northern health facilities—in fact, this morning I have had the opportunity when I sat down for lunch outside of the building, I was in a very busy spot where two young women asked if they could join me at the table. There were no tables available. I certainly welcomed that opportunity. They sat down, and they were talking about their graduation—both of these young women graduating from the school of nursing. Both these young women were really excited about the opportunity to start their careers here in Manitoba, both these young women very thankful for the fact that there is the college tuition rebate that this government introduced, because the costs of going to school has—it's taken all new meaning for them to

have gone through the school process, to have some—the school curriculum, to have their certification and to have a degree.

* (16:40)

But suddenly they did have a bit of, did have a bit of a student loan that they've accumulated over the course of their career, and they're very excited about the rebate that we've provided for them, and they're looking forward to starting their career.

So there's a number of things that are happening in this Throne Speech, and many, many more things that I could talk about, but I see that my light is flashing. But we are looking at a stronger Manitoba; we are looking at a stronger Brandon, a stronger Winnipeg. We are looking at working with our partners to ensure that this economy continues to grow, and we are looking at ways to do things the Manitoba way.

Yes, we have indeed had very difficult times, but Manitoba's weathered this storm very well. And it's a testament to the people of Manitoba for their innovation, their commitment and their dedication, and that is what makes Manitoba the place that it is to live. And I congratulate everyone who's weathered this storm and who will continue to work together with government to succeed as we move forward.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Turtle Mountain): Madam Acting Speaker—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order.

Just recognizing the honourable House leader.

House Business

Hon. Bill Blaikie (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker—Madam Deputy Speaker, I was just rising to put on the record with respect to the motion that was passed earlier, with respect to Bill 2 passing second reading and being referred to a committee, that it's the intention of the government to refer that particular bill to a Committee of the Whole House.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The House leader has reported that it is the intention to have the Bill 2 reported to the Committee of the Whole House.

Mr. Cullen: Madam Acting Speaker, certainly it's a privilege to rise in the House today to address the new Premier's (Mr. Selinger) Speech from the

Throne which was delivered here early last week. Certainly, I want to welcome the new House leader there over on the government side of things to his role here. Certainly, he, hopefully, will keep things running as they should and keep the bills and legislations on time as they should. We're certainly going to give him every opportunity to make those proper decisions and bring forward issues on a timely basis.

I do want to say, first of all, I want to acknowledge the table officers and certainly all the people that help make the Chamber run effectively on a daily basis. I also do want to acknowledge all the staff within the various caucus offices that do a lot of the background research and really keep us as MLAs on our toes and provide us the information and research that we need to move it forward.

In terms of the Speech from the Throne, I think many Manitobans were looking forward to having an idea of a vision and some forward thinking here in terms of where the province of Manitoba is headed. And we have an opportunity here with a new Premier in place to make his mark on Manitoba, and I really believe that's what Manitobans, and that's what we as opposition members were looking forward to—having a new Premier here to set a vision, set a goal for the province of Manitoba. As we know, we are probably the only have-not province here in western Canada. And our vision on this side of this House would be how do we move Manitoba forward so that we are no longer a have-not province. And those are the sort of visions that we would think would occur in the Speech from the Throne, especially from a new Premier who would want to make his mark.

Unfortunately, we didn't see that, and Manitobans are, I think rightly so, upset with that lack of vision that the Premier has shown. In fact, the Premier comes out with a statement that flat is the new up. Well, I don't think Manitobans share the pessimism that the new Premier has. We believe there's opportunity here in the province of Manitoba, and what Manitobans are looking for is some leadership so that we as Manitobans can recognize the opportunities that exist here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker—or Madam Acting Speaker, we were looking for a vision so that we as Manitobans can move forward and build a better province for our children, and that's what it's all about in terms of the Speech from the Throne, is to provide a framework, moving forward so we can develop the province of Manitoba. And, quite frankly, we didn't see that in

this particular Speech from the Throne, and that's why, at the end of the day, whenever we get through our eight days of debate, you will see the opposition parties voting against this Speech from the Throne.

We're certainly hoping that the House leader will be able to get us, you know, make sure those eight days of debate are there. I'm sure now that the mark has been made, the shot has been thrown across the bow, that the Government House Leader (Mr. Blaikie) will actually work with the opposition House leaders to make sure that things get done in a proper manner.

Madam Acting Speaker, I want to make a couple of references to the financial situation we're in here in the province, and I think it's really important that, you know, the Speech from the Throne did signal to us as Manitobans that there is some economic tough times ahead. And we've been warning the government for quite some time now that things aren't always going to be rosy, and, quite frankly, the government of the day has had a pretty good run in the last few years. The economy's been rolling along pretty well all across Canada. It's just unfortunate that our government has come to rely on the transfer payments from Ottawa to make things work here in Manitoba. In fact, we receive almost 40 percent of our entire \$10-billion budget from transfers from other provinces, and we were hoping that the government would signal that there'd be a change in attitude, that we are not going to be reliant, as Manitobans, on transfers from other provinces. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

And what the NDP government has done over the last 10 years has actually increased the budget here in the province of Manitoba. We now have a \$10-billion budget from a \$6-billion budget back in 1999. And also what they've done, increasing that budget, they've also increased the debt of the province to the tune of \$7.8 billion.

The Province of Manitoba, when we include the Crown corporations, we now have an increase in our debt that Manitobans are responsible for \$7.8 billion. This is in a news release put out by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. It's not just opposition members speaking. This is the Canadian Federation of Independent Business—indicates that we now have an increased debt of \$7.8 billion, we're in total debt of \$21.2 billion here in the province of Manitoba. That also includes the debt of Manitoba Hydro, that's for sure.

An Honourable Member: Is that right?

Mr. Cullen: Exactly right. Now, Mr. Speaker, when we have debt we also have to pay for that debt. We have service costs on that debt. Last year we paid \$830 million in interest costs—

An Honourable Member: How much?

Mr. Cullen: —in the province of Manitoba, \$830 million interest. We as Manitobans, including all Crown corporations, we as Manitobans are on the hook for \$830 million of interest costs alone, \$2.27 million a day servicing our debt. That's the kind of legacy the NDP party have left us with here in the province of Manitoba. And what we're looking for from the new Premier (Mr. Selinger) is a Speech from the Throne that would set some new directions for Manitoba and turn this, turn this financial issue around and make things better for us.

Mr. Speaker, we know the NDP can spend money, but what are we, what are we actually getting for—what kind of value are we getting for our dollars here? And I want to refer to an article that was in the, I believe it was in the *Winnipeg Free Press* here in the last few days, and it was an article from the Fraser Institute, and the Fraser Institute—and I know, I know the government of the day won't like the Fraser Institute because they do take a broad analysis of different things, and they evaluate different jurisdictions and different provinces, different governments. And the question was talked about, where is the best place to invest? If you're going to invest in Canada, which province is the best place to invest? Well, first off the gate was Alberta. They're the best place in Canada to invest. Manitoba was sixth in terms of its ranking, so that's not bad. We're kind of middle of the road, and that's really where the NDP want us. They're kind of a middle-of-the-road party that don't set the bar too high. Middle of the road's probably good. Don't set any expectations too high. We don't want Manitobans to have any high expectations here.

*(16:50)

Mr. Speaker, the province of Manitoba was ranked dead last in terms of personal income tax—dead last in terms of personal tax. That's, quite frankly, an embarrassment to Manitobans, and we know what the NDP's all about. It's all about taxing and spending. Unfortunately, they're not spending within their means because they've incurred an extra \$7.8 billion of debt over the last 10 years.

The other area that I found quite interesting that was quoted here in this particular report was in terms of labour market regulation, and, obviously, that's something the business community will look at when they look at investing in a province. We as Manitobans rank ninth in terms of labour market regulation, and we're also eighth in terms of corporatal—corporate capital tax. So the government can talk all it wants, but, when you look at the results, we're down at the bottom of the barrel, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to represent the good people of the constituency of Turtle Mountain in southwestern Manitoba for the last five years, and I think they would recognize that this particular Speech from the Throne failed to recognize the issues in rural Manitoba. And I want to talk specifically about agriculture today.

I had an opportunity this morning to speak to Karl Kynoch. Karl Kynoch is the president of Manitoba Pork Producers. He represents all the pork producers in Manitoba. And we know the pressure that the NDP government has put pork producers on here in the province of Manitoba. We also recognize there's tremendous financial stress out there in terms of the market and the hog market, and we know there's people getting out of the hog business on a daily basis. In fact, Manitoba Pork say we're losing people so fast that we can't even keep track of the real numbers are. So there's tremendous pressure in terms of the pork producers.

I look at the community of Cartwright, or, pardon me, of Killarney, where there's a number of hog barns in around that particular community. And there's going to be two hog barns—these are sow barns that are going to be closing there in the next few months, and that—those two hog barns alone represent 30 jobs in that particular community. So, when you take 30 jobs out of a community, it has a tremendous economic spinoff in that particular community. And I think it's something that the government has failed to recognize that agriculture and rural development can play a positive role in terms of the economy of all of Manitoba, and it's something that the provincial government has failed to recognize the important role that agriculture can play.

Mr. Speaker, I represent in my constituency a lot of cattle producers, and certainly they have felt the pressure in the cattle markets over the last number of years. It's been six years now since BSE came

forward, and the market has never really recovered since that time. And, unfortunately, the Speech from the Throne didn't recognize the real financial stress that our farm families are under in terms of rural Manitoba and in terms of this particular Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, we had a discussion today in question period about Ranchers Choice. We know the government put some money in terms of the program of Ranchers Choice. That particular business didn't work out and, unfortunately, we're getting just a very few cents back in return on our dollars there. And it's been very, very unfortunate. I hope now that the new Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Struthers) is in place that he will—he will certainly move forward and work with the industry, and I hope he will consider the bill that was introduced last week. I introduced a new soil bill to proclaim the Newdale soil. And I think what it would signal to agriculture producers if the minister does decide to support it is that agriculture does play an important role in the province of Manitoba. And I hope that he gives that particular legislation some serious consideration. And I think, based on the principle of it, I think the minister will give it some serious consideration.

Mr. Speaker, last week when I attended the AMM conference in Brandon, there was quite a bit of discussion about the waste-water ejectors in the province of Manitoba. And we know the minister, the previous minister of Conservation certainly brought forward some regulations, and it's going to have a very serious impact on rural Manitoba. And I don't think the minister, either the previous minister or the current minister, understand the ramifications associated with those regulations they have brought forward. Now, I know the Premier (Mr. Selinger) was on the hot seat last week in the bear pit session and how he said that their high-level government officials will be working with AMM to try to provide some kind of a reasonable solution on the ground to make this work.

Our constituents are facing challenges moving forward. They have to make decisions very soon in terms of their waste-water solutions going forward, and they need some direction from the Province of Manitoba. You know, we're tired of regulations coming down here on this and regulations on that, and, at the end of the day, Manitobans have a right to know why the government is making those regulations and putting those onus on individual constituents across the province. And I think the

government of the day should take a look at the big picture. What are we trying to accomplish? If the objective is really to protect the water quality in Manitoba, how is the best way to get that done?

Mr. Speaker, it's all about providing good public policy instead of just putting regulations forward in the name of politics. It's really about listening to what the scientists have to say, then bringing forward good common sense solutions that will work for all Manitobans. And we'll hope the government will listen to what the AMM is saying and what to constituents are saying to them in terms of these particular regulations they're bringing forward.

Mr. Speaker, we—you know, we hear the government talk about economic tough times coming down the road, and, quite frankly, they're here. I know the government is going to be facing some tough times. In fact, we'd like to see what the second-quarter financials look like here in the province of Manitoba, and I guess we're going to have to wait till Christmas Eve or maybe not till next year, even, until we see what those particular financials look like. But Manitobans deserve some answers in terms of where we are financially. The Premier (Mr. Selinger) said it's time for us to tighten our belts. Why doesn't the government take the lead in terms of tightening its belt?

You know, we have the \$640 million granddaddy decision of the NDP government. It was the Premier, in his capacity as the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro, that sent the letter over, the directive over to Manitoba Hydro, to build the hydro line on the west side of the province. Now, we know it's going to cost at least \$640 million. Some estimates are at least twice that high. Now we as Manitobans are on the hook for that amount of money, whatever it's going to be—640, 1.2 billion, who knows? But we are, as Manitobans, are going to be on the hook for that particular decision.

Yeah, they also talk about tightening their belts. On the other side of the equation, we talk about Manitoba Public Insurance. They brought forward their enhanced driver's licence; \$14 million they spent to date on that—\$1,700 for each licence that's been issued so far. Mr. Speaker, I would say that's not belt tightening. That's irrational spending on behalf of the NDP government.

And the other issue where we could save hundreds of millions of dollars—and if we listen to the scientists in the community—the decision taken

to remove nitrogen from waste-water facilities. Mr. Speaker, you know we're talking \$350 million at least. I know the City of Portage la Prairie, in fact, they could be on the hook for up to \$60 million on their waste-water treatment just because the government has ordered them to remove nitrogen from the waste water. At the same time the government is telling the cities to take nitrogen out of the waste water, we have raw sewage floating into the Red River. We ask, what is the government's priorities here? Where is it, why isn't there any good common sense, good public policy on getting things done, instead of just playing politics with decisions?

Manitoba Hydro—I want to talk a little bit about Manitoba Hydro, and it certainly is a, it is a—it has some potential to be a real crown jewel here in the

province of Manitoba. And it's all about how that particular corporation is going to be managed, Mr. Speaker. And we've seen some pretty bad management of that particular Crown corporation, and we've seen some blatant political interjections on how that Crown corporation is ran. And we know the rates in Manitoba Hydro have gone up 16 percent under the NDP government, and we know Manitoba Hydro's requested 2.9 percent over the—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order. When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member will have 12 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow afternoon.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, December 7, 2009

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