

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

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The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Eighth Legislature

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ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
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ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
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CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
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JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
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MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
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OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
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STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
Vacant	Fort Whyte	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 16, 2005

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYER

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 11—The Winter Heating Cost Control Act

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that Bill 11, The Winter Heating Cost Control Act; Loi sur la limitation des frais de chauffage en hiver, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, this bill prohibits any further increases in natural gas prices for customers at Centra Gas during the 2005-2006 winter heating season and allows the government to limit such price increases in 2006-2007. It also requires Manitoba Hydro to establish a stabilization and affordable energy fund.

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

PETITIONS

Coverage of Insulin Pumps

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

Insulin pumps cost over \$6,500.

The cost of diabetes to the Manitoba government in 2005 will be approximately \$214.4 million. Each day 16 Manitobans are diagnosed with the disease compared to the national average of 11 new cases daily.

Good blood sugar control reduces or eliminates kidney failure by 50 percent, blindness by 76 percent, nerve damage by 60 percent, cardiac disease by 35 percent and even amputations.

Diabetes is an epidemic in our province and will become an unprecedented drain on our struggling health care system if we do not take action now.

The benefit of having an insulin pump is it allows the person living with this life-altering disease to obtain good control of their blood sugar and become much healthier, complication-free individuals.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier (Mr. Doer) of Manitoba to consider covering the cost of insulin pumps that are prescribed by an endocrinologist or medical doctor under the Manitoba Health Insurance Plan.

Signed by Denise Veilfaure, Lorette Gallant, Gisèle Laflèche and many, many others.

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

Crocus Investment Fund

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Manitoba Government was made aware of serious problems involving the Crocus Fund back in 2001.

As a direct result of the government ignoring the red flags back in 2001, over 33 000 Crocus investors lost over \$60 million.

Manitoba's provincial auditor stated "We believe the department was aware of red flags at Crocus and failed to follow up on those in a timely way."

The relationship between some union leaders, the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the NDP seems to be the primary reason as for why the government ignored the red flags.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to consider the need to seek clarification on why the government did not act on fixing the Crocus Fund back in 2001.

Signed by Arthur Trachyk, Pam Sinclair and Raghbir Singh.

* (13:35)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Labour and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Ninth Annual Report of the Office of the Fire Commissioner for the year ended March 31, 2005.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Manitoba Hydro

Up-Front Charges for Business Expansions

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Businesses in Manitoba have been dealt another blow by this Doer, antibusiness NDP government. In the Throne Speech, the Premier said and announced that commercial and industrial businesses will pay sharply increased rates for natural gas with no protection as was afforded to residential customers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we learn that the Doer NDP government and Manitoba Hydro have developed a plan to impose an up-front charge to existing or new customers that add additional load to the hydro system even if there will be no infrastructure cost incurred by Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, why is this Doer NDP government continuing to punish the private sector and stifling growth and expansion in our province? Why are they doing that?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Thankfully, Manitoba Hydro is still owned by the people of Manitoba because if the Tory government ever got elected, God forbid, the Hydro would be gone.

It was interesting to observe the rebate that was introduced by the Public Utilities Board with Manitoba Public Insurance on Monday, Mr. Speaker. Have we ever had a rebate with the Manitoba Telephone System that was robbed from the people of Manitoba by the former Conservative government? No. Never. *[interjection]* Well, the member from Emerson again puts his foot in his mouth. Sask Telephone gave a rebate to everybody in Saskatchewan last year, not Manitoba Telephone System.

Mr. Murray: I would remind this Premier this is not an NDP convention. This is an issue that is important to all of Manitoba. It is a very serious question. I know how they like to rail at the NDP conventions about being antibusiness and they get applause for it, but, Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber, and for the future

of the province of Manitoba, this is an issue that I think this Premier should answer my question.

The proposed changes at Manitoba Hydro were developed by this Doer NDP government and Manitoba Hydro with no surprise, no consultation or input from the province's business community. As stated recently by Randy Brown, the president of the Brandon Chamber of Commerce and Bill Turner, the chairman of the Manitoba Industrial Power Users Group and also the manager of Brandon's Canexus, and I quote, Mr. Speaker, as they stated, "that changes proposed by Manitoba Hydro and the provincial government are disturbing and will have direct impacts on Manitoba business and Manitobans. If utility costs take these unjustified jumps that have just been announced, it will have dire consequences for business in Manitoba." That is the business community appealing to this NDP government.

Why is this NDP government continually asleep at the switch when it comes to supporting the private sector in Manitoba? Why are they asleep at the switch, Mr. Speaker?

* (13:40)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I believe the individual that was quoted by the member is working in an operation called Nexen that I think has doubled its workforce in the last few years since the NDP was elected, because we have the lowest hydro-electric rates in North America, and we will continue to have the lowest hydro-electric rates in North America. I am shocked that the Leader of the Opposition would be talking about political conventions. I did not think that was very appropriate on the floor of this Chamber.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the Premier would understand that Nexen is now Canexus, that he should be current with that business in Brandon, because when this Premier likes to talk about the lowest cost of energy he also notes that we have the lowest private sector job-creation record in Canada. That is his record. The last thing that this Premier and this NDP government should be doing is finding ways to stifle growth and development in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, ERCO Worldwide in Hargrave had plans to expand their plant by up to 50 percent. With this announcement for the plan developed by the Premier and Manitoba Hydro for an up-front charge, these expansion plans have been put on hold.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier today reverse his plans to levy an up-front charge on businesses seeking to build or expand their operations? Will he do the right thing and reverse that decision?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the company that the member opposite is quoting has a preferential hydro rate, as I recall it, because we are dealing with their expansion. It has a preferential hydro rate because of the interruptible conditions. Let me explain this. It has a preferential rate because they use power on off hours with Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite thinks he is smarter than Bob Brennan, in terms of dealing with the interruptible power, I am quite surprised because he is a very, very intelligent CEO that balances the needs of the public with the needs of corporations, corporations that have doubled their employment levels in Manitoba. There is a limit, though, because the interruptible power issues and the off-hour conditions have to not be exceeded where that condition of the rate would be changed.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out that members opposite were last week flailing away at the government about natural gas prices under the Manitoba Hydro, and, as I understand it, the Minister of Energy (Mr. Chomiak) is going to announce after Question Period a policy that I think, I am not exactly sure, but I think it will be consistent and in the interest of all Manitobans, consumers and corporations.

Manitoba Hydro

Up-Front Charges for Business Expansions

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Well, Mr. Speaker, industrial power users in Manitoba provide employment for thousands of Manitobans and nearly \$2 billion to Manitoba's economy annually, yet this NDP Doer government is forcing an expansion tax on these long-standing Manitoba businesses. Why is this Minister of Energy and his government promoting an up-front tax on expansion of these Manitoba home-based businesses?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): First off, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is one of the site locations for a lot of large industrial users because we have the lowest hydro-electric rates in North America.

Mr. Speaker, we have to weigh the cost of service against the rates across the revenue, and we have had both expansion but we cannot—*[interjection]* I remember members opposite wanting

to bring aluminium factories here by guaranteeing rates forever which would be to the detriment of all the ratepayers in the province of Manitoba, and if members opposite want to give away our power like they gave away MTS, I am glad they are on that side of the House.

* (13:45)

Mr. Maguire: Mr. Speaker, companies like ERCO Worldwide that has its business based in Hargrave, Manitoba, a large user of electric power in Manitoba, and companies like it, want to expand their operations in Manitoba but are being penalized with an up-front expenditure, a tax, to expand their businesses in Manitoba.

Why is this NDP government collecting these up-front charges even when no new infrastructure costs would be incurred by Manitoba Hydro?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, there is no place cheaper in North America to use hydro-electricity than in Manitoba. Secondly, I am surprised that members opposite have not said anything about the ethanol expansion that I believe the Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat) has panned in the press. I am surprised members opposite have not said anything about biodiesel expansion that is occurring in rural Manitoba that members opposite have not talked about. I am surprised that, with the exception of one Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan), members opposite are opposed to the expansion of wind power in Manitoba that they have not talked about. I think Manitobans know who supports Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Maguire: Manitobans agree that low cost electrical power is to Manitoba what oil is to Alberta. Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's major power users need the present cost-based system of power rates to overcome the other detrimental costs imposed for doing business in Manitoba by this government: the second highest manufacturing tax in Canada, highest personal income tax in Canada, crumbling infrastructure.

Why is this NDP government killing expansion plans of existing Manitoba power users with this up-front charge for doing business in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I cannot believe the audacity of the member opposite. Alcan located in Manitoba, not under a Conservative government but under an NDP government, and it located in Virden, Manitoba, right in the home town of the member opposite. I would point, you know, when all the

swaggering members opposite walk in the coffee shops and say, "we are really good for farmers," you know, they raised the taxes on farmers and farmland. You know what else? They had a proposal—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Yes, they had a proposal when they were in government to equalize Hydro rates that would give farmers and people in northern Manitoba equal rates. They said no to it. When that proposal came to us, we lowered the rates of electricity users. We had equal rates all across Manitoba so farmers and northerners could get equal rates to the city of Winnipeg. You did nothing.

Marijuana Trafficking to the U.S.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, while police in Manitoba are to be credited recently for busting up several massive gang-operated marijuana grow ops, it points to a bigger problem in Manitoba. The North Dakota Drug Threat Assessment for 2002 stated that marijuana was increasingly being transported into North Dakota from Manitoba and warned that criminal organizations are bringing back cocaine and bringing back weapons.

Can the minister indicate how much of the Manitoba marijuana being grown in our large gang-operated grow ops is going to North Dakota and what is coming back in return, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the strategy in Manitoba with regard to drugs is one, of course, that has to be developed in co-operation with our law enforcement partners and the federal government.

Perhaps the member opposite did not know that one of the major initiatives of this government, Mr. Speaker, is multifaceted, multi-approach on dealing with the challenge of methamphetamine, a most serious drug. We have to ensure that this insidious drug, Mr. Speaker, does not undermine the communities and the families of Manitoba.

* (13:50)

Mr. Goertzen: The minister does the dance of the seven veils over there, but he is not getting to the fact of the issue.

I want to table for the minister the 2005, this year's Drug Enforcement Agency report for North

Dakota, and it states in it, and I quote, "The presence of marijuana cultivated in Canada has increased dramatically. Canadian drug organizations from Vancouver and Manitoba use the wide North Dakota border with Canada to bring both B.C. bud and hydroponically generated marijuana into the United States."

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Justice indicate, I asked him before, he did not answer, I will ask again. How much of the marijuana being grown here in Manitoba by the gangs is going to North Dakota, and what is coming back in return; meth, cocaine and guns?

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member raises concerns about the effectiveness, obviously, of U.S. customs and the drug interdiction policies of the United States and the DEA. I can assure the member opposite that law enforcement agencies in Manitoba work co-operatively with law enforcement agencies on the other side of the border and, indeed, one of the most successful busts with regard to methamphetamine was a result of those co-operative efforts. I say hats off to law enforcement on both sides of the border.

Mr. Goertzen: The problem is that on this side of the border we do not have a Minister of Justice who is doing his job. It seems like the new motto is Manitoba, this bud's for you. We have got the B.C. bud coming in from British Columbia to Manitoba, then it is going south to North Dakota. We have the Asian gangs who are producing the marijuana grow ops throughout Manitoba that is being used in our communities and going to North Dakota.

I want to ask the Minister of Justice is he not taking this issue seriously because those drugs are going across the border to the United States, or does he just simply not want to know what is coming back in return.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, if the member has concerns about the U.S. Customs and Immigration service, he certainly can directly raise that with the U.S. authorities. What is important here for Manitoba authorities is that we work co-operatively, we work across the different police jurisdictions and across the international border.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is happening, and I can also tell the member opposite that, when it comes to North Dakota, the Attorney General of North Dakota has come to Manitoba as late as two weeks ago to remind Manitobans how important it is that we all

take action, individually and collectively, to deal with the serious challenge of meth. We say to every young person in Manitoba do not try this drug, not even once. It is a serious, serious concern that is coming this way, and we have to make sure we take preventive efforts.

**Leaf Rapids Education Centre
Principal's Resignation**

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, the principal of Leaf Rapids Education Centre quit abruptly recently because he was tired of crisis management. This northern school is experiencing serious problems, and the principal felt that they were not getting the adequate supports to function effectively. I would like to ask the Minister of Education why were these supports not provided, and why was the principal left in such frustration that he felt he had to quit.

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth): Well, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, their entire support for the education system over five years is the investment of \$1.6 million for the entire system. Members opposite abandoned the public school system. This is a government that has said that education is important to Manitobans. This is a government that has been investing in education at the rate of economic growth since we have been in office, \$129.8 million, and the money that is used is providing the resources that are necessary to provide effective education for the students of Manitoba.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, we have another northern school in crisis here in Manitoba, and I would like to table this letter from the principal. This principal has said that there is a lot of bullying and discipline problems going on in this northern school. With the escalating concern in bullying in this province, I would like to ask the minister why this principal's concerns were not addressed.

* (13:55)

Mr. Bjornson: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member opposite of a letter that I had sent her outlining all the initiatives that we have brought forward to address bullying and the issues that we have addressed through Safe Schools Manitoba, through the Safe Schools Charter, a few programs such as the Triple P Positive Parenting, through Families and Schools Together, the FAST program, a multi-family group intervention, through the Early Behaviour Intervention learning and

behaviour initiative, through base-support funding for counselling, through categorical grants for students at risk, through a number of different organizations that we have worked with, whether it is RespectEd through the Red Cross, whether it is Operation Respect, the Virtues Project, all programs that have been supported by this government.

We did not bury our head in the sand around issues of bullying as members opposite chose to do, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, with all that hot air, you would wonder then why his policies are not working. We have got a school that is in trouble. Teachers in this school are stressed out. Class sizes are ranging from 45 to 50 students. No wonder there is bullying and discipline problems in this school. The principal has said that teachers are going to jump ship or they are going to go out on stress leave—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Driedger: I would like to ask this Minister—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Driedger: —of Education why is he not addressing what appears to be a very serious crisis in this northern school. Why is he not doing his job?

Mr. Bjornson: Mr. Speaker, when we came to office we addressed a very serious crisis in the entire public school system which was neglected by members opposite for 11 years. On the issue of bullying, members opposite chose to do nothing. They put their head in the sand. We stood up and provided leadership to support the students, the teachers, the communities and will continue to do so.

Yes, there are challenges in various communities. We continue to work with those communities and provide the staff support through the department to assist in areas of crisis and will continue to do so. Members opposite abandoned the public school system. We are there for the public school system, all members on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**Hog Processing Plant
OlyWest Proposal**

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, livestock production is a significant contributor to our economy in Manitoba and offers

huge tax revenue and financial benefit to the entire province. A new hog processing plant in Winnipeg will require significant infrastructure upgrades.

My question for the Minister of Conservation is what commitment has the Province made to the City of Winnipeg to upgrade the water, sewage and transportation infrastructure, or are city of Winnipeg taxpayers going to be on the hook for all of these costs?

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Conservation): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to be absolutely clear with the Member for River East that the full transparent open public hearing will be held by the Clean Environment Commission to talk about the exact things that she has been bringing forward here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, we have yet to receive an application for an environmental licence. The members opposite are quite aware of the process that is undertaken. If they are asking me to short circuit that process, then I reject that out of hand.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Water and waste, water quantity and quality are intertwined with social, economic and environmental concerns. This government has already committed \$27.5 million to this project when it has not seen a proposal and has not done its due diligence.

What guarantee has the government made to the City of Winnipeg and to all Manitobans that their water will be protected and that no contaminated water will be released into Manitoba's lakes and rivers?

Mr. Struthers: Mr. Speaker, all over this province, this government and local municipalities and the federal government have been working hard on sewage and water projects through the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure Program. Members opposite know that.

Members opposite also know that we have not received an environmental licence application from the proponent in this proposal. So, when we get that application brought forward to us, we will know then exactly what kind of a proposal we are dealing with so that we can give it the due diligence that I have committed to, the due diligence that we have committed to as a government and also the due diligence of public hearings by the Clean Environment Commission.

* (14:00)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Speaker, a \$27.5-million commitment by this government when they have not received any proposal to this point. We know that raw sewage already is being released by the City of Winnipeg into the Red River following heavy rains. This new hog processing plant will further tax Winnipeg's water treatment facilities.

What plans does this government have to upgrade the City of Winnipeg's water treatment infrastructure so that no contaminated water is released into our rivers and our lakes? What plan do they have?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I know today in light of the Isobord announcement that members opposite treat MIOP loans as losses. We actually have made money on MIOP loans, so forget that rhetoric, Mr. Speaker, Point No. 1.

Point No. 2: The \$7.5 million for infrastructure proposed for the plant is less than went into the Maple Leaf plant in Brandon under their watch.

Point No. 3: All plants require an environmental licence, Mr. Speaker, and, unlike members opposite, this will be a public process. If one looks at the Maple Leaf plant in Brandon, the standards have been upgraded for the second shift of Maple Leaf out of the Clean Environment Commission. I am surprised these members are opposed to farming here in Manitoba.

Hog Processing Plant OlyWest Proposal

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, the hog industry is one of the pillars of the Manitoba economy. The announced hog processing plant came with a commitment of \$20 million in MIOP funding. The funding announcement came without even receiving an application for environmental approval for the plant.

Why has the Minister of Industry not done his due diligence with respect to that MIOP loan? How could he possibly approve \$20 million without even receiving an application for environmental approval?

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Industry, Economic Development and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the member opposite. Under their watch the MIOP program lost millions. It cost the Manitoba government millions of dollars. They lost money, they cost the taxpayers millions and millions of dollars. You look at the Isobord program which lost \$15 million when they invested in Isobord.

What we have done is we have a proposal that will come forward. We will perform the due diligence and then we may look at how we are proceeding. We have not flowed any cash yet. We have not signed any deals yet. What we are doing is we received a proposal from the proponent and will do the due diligence and consider. We need no lessons from members opposite who lost millions of dollars under MIOP. Under our program and under our watch, the programs made money.

Mr. Hawranik: Mr. Speaker, I am quite surprised at the minister's response because all of those losses of Isobord were under their watch. This NDP government has never even received an application for environmental approval. No assessment has been done with respect to the infrastructure requirements to properly serve the plant. The minister stated yesterday, and I quote him, "the proposal has been not entirely fleshed out and that all the due diligence has not taken place."

I ask the Minister of Industry: How could he possibly approve \$20 million when he has not done his due diligence?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I have seven press releases. In fact, I do not think there is a former Cabinet minister sitting on the front bench that has not been named in one of these press releases prior to 1999 on the establishment of Isobord. Now, Mr. Speaker, there are some serious questions about Isobord. It is important for members opposite to deal with the facts of the matter because there is some legitimate issues about straw and straw residue here in Manitoba, but let it be clear the press releases are here. The history is here.

I am surprised the member from eastern Manitoba where there are a lot of farmers in eastern Manitoba have wanted to have a finishing plant on the eastern side of Manitoba. I am shocked that the member opposite, the member from Lac du Bonnet, is opposed to it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hawranik: This NDP government has mismanaged MIOP time and time again. Time and time again this Minister of Industry has not done his homework. He gave \$10,000 to a company dealing in pornography. He was offered a film and sound stage for \$1, but he paid \$3 million and told them he was not prepared to pay a penny less.

Now he offers \$20 million of MIOP funding without an application for environmental approval and without an assessment with respect to

infrastructure. I ask the Minister of Industry why did he not do his homework before offering \$20 million in funding.

Mr. Doer: Every proposal, Mr. Speaker, including this proposal, is subject to a full, public, environmental assessment. I want to guarantee the House and the people of Manitoba that this will not be conducted behind closed doors. I would point out that the environmental assessment for Maple Leaf for the second shift required increased nutrient removal over the environmental licence that was issued behind closed doors by the former government.

In terms of Isobord: November 8, 1996, November 9, 1996, I can go on and on and on when members opposite promised to turn straw into gold. They turned straw into a \$30-million loss for Manitoba. It will not happen here, Mr. Speaker.

Lake Winnipeg Diking System

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): The Premier spent \$8 million on dikes around the south basin of Lake Winnipeg. In many places, these dikes are not even connected. There are many gaps. The dikes apparently are dissolving like sugar after a rain and many, many cottage owners are complaining about what happened. You blew it, Mr. Premier. I ask when will the Premier admit that there were major problems in the way the diking on Lake Winnipeg was handled.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Maybe the member opposite could help us with the federal Liberal government to—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: I am going to lock up my children then if that is the case, but, Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting case because there are two diking systems that we did build this year. One was at Ralls Island, an 11-kilometre dike dealing with the North Saskatchewan River, and now some dike work that built on the 1974 diking system on Lake Winnipeg, on the south basin, both of which are not covered because acts of prevention are not covered under federal disaster financial assistance. Now, that is the model used in the United States for New Orleans. I think Canada should use a much better system of prevention in terms of flooding.

Mr. Speaker, there are some temporary dikes. They do need to be made more permanent on the

south basin. They did provide a great deal of protection for some parts of the south basin on October 5. The lake level was at 719 yesterday. Some of those dikes protected people from 719, 723 and 724. We believe that those dikes should be seeded and more permanent for next year so that it will be less dissolvable. They were temporary dikes.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, it was recommended not only by our water engineers based on survey work, but it was also recommended by the mayor of Gimli, the mayor of Winnipeg Beach, the mayor of Dunnottar and other municipalities. If we have to take advice from people, we will take advice from the elected officials on the front line.

*(14:10)

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, let us stick with Lake Winnipeg. They are provincial dikes. I heard from one property owner, the earthen dike that was constructed in September of 2005 did not last for a month. The clay and mud that was washed into the yard will not wash away and disappear. The dikes appear to hold well so long as they do not get wet.

Now we are left with tons, literally, of filthy debris that has proven itself to be of no help during a minimal rainstorm and an eyesore that has reduced the amount of useable property. With the multitude of problems, will the Premier not admit he used a wrong approach, a dike like on the Red River instead of erosion control, which is what is needed for Lake Winnipeg?

Mr. Doer: The dikes did get wet and that is because the water level, the wave level and the wind level went up on October 5, and, thankfully, we had the dikes in place. Now there is a 200-kilometre permanent dike that was built by Ed Schreyer, Mr. Speaker, on the south basin. It did need work. It did need work in terms of the temporary conditions under which it was faced.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that there was temporary work that was conducted. It was done in consultation with the mayor of Gimli, Winnipeg Beach, Dunnottar and other communities. We believe that those dikes should be permanent. We also believe that communities like Pelican Point and other communities that were built below the 723 raised real questions of planning why some of those communities were approved below the Schreyer level of 724 established in 1974.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has spent \$8 million and many of these dollars have been spent in

questionable ways. The Province has now spent these \$8 million in six weeks for what they call three years of work. It has not provided the right sort of benefit. What we do not want now the property owners are saying is the reverse to occur, three years to rectify a situation that was created in six weeks.

Will the government guarantee to the homeowners and the cottage owners that the mess it created is cleaned up properly and that more appropriate measures will be taken in the future?

Mr. Doer: Well, the member from Emerson, you know, the member from Emerson, Mr. Speaker, said that Manitoba Hydro was part of the problem for the water levels on the lake. The water levels were flowing out of Lake Winnipeg from January 2005 on. He has never apologized to Hydro. He has never apologized to the people, and I would point out that it is very important that the Conservatives get their facts straight before they make outrageous comments.

In terms of the dike, Mr. Speaker, we do believe that some of the dikes should be made permanent. Permanent dikes will be less vulnerable to wave action, but if we had not put the dikes in place the waves would have gone right onto the cottages and homes.

I would point out that one resident stated on the radio on October 5 that we thought the dirt dike was not needed. Now we are being proven wrong today, but, yes, we should make them more permanent and more stable, and we are glad we did that, Mr. Speaker.

Manitoba Rocks! Music Mentorship Initiative

Ms. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, given the Minister of Education's philosophy of expanding opportunities for students to succeed, can the minister inform the House of the new initiative called Manitoba Rocks!?

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth): Well, yes, thank you for the question.

Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Rocks! initiative is a unique opportunity for aspiring rock artists, garage bands throughout the province of Manitoba, students from middle years and senior years schools to have an opportunity to submit a demo tape or CD with their original work. Then three of them will be selected by a panel of mentors and industry experts,

industry musicians, producers and whatnot who will mentor the three bands that are selected so they will have an opportunity to engage in song writing, in production and recording of a CD.

It is an excellent opportunity to promote the various genres of music that appeal to the young people in the province of Manitoba, and I am really proud of this initiative, Mr. Speaker.

Vehicle Registrations Access to Services in Rural Manitoba

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Due to recent changes made to the licensing of highway tractors International Registration Program, it has become difficult to add, delete and transfer vehicle registrations. Why has the Minister responsible for MPI allowed these changes to take place forcing people from rural Manitoba to come to Winnipeg to make these required changes?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice.

Mr. Dyck: Shed some light onto this subject here. These transfers can take from four to six hours and travelling time is another four hours. So would the minister allow the local MPI agencies to make the needed changes? That is the issue.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, if the member is raising concerns and issues around the licensing system in Manitoba, he should be aware that what is being ushered in is a new, state-of-the-art licensing system. New cameras will be phased in across this province. I think this is a step forward which will enhance customer service and the integrity of our driver licence system.

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

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Gladys Simpson

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Gladys Simpson. On Tuesday, October 25, 2005, Mrs. Simpson was awarded an honorary mention at a reception hosted by the Manitoba Council on Aging. She received the award for her continued commitments to both seniors and the community at large, and I would like to offer my congratulations to Mrs. Simpson for this honour.

Mrs. Simpson is a resident of the town of Rapid City, Manitoba, and is quite active in community organizations and activities. Among her activities are her work as the editor of the community newspaper, her membership on the local agricultural society, her continued efforts with the community fair, her organization of the annual community craft sales and many others.

On top of all of this, she has been a member of the Valleyview seniors group for 15 years during which time she has served in all offices including president of the organization. Mrs. Simpson is truly a valued member to the community and is instrumental in the production of a countless number of community events.

I would also like to highlight the fact that the award she received from the Manitoba Council on Aging is one that a person has to be nominated for. Three fellow citizens from Rapid City nominated her for this award, and this goes to show that not only does she work tirelessly for her community but the community truly appreciates her efforts and wants her to be recognized by the province at large as a valued citizen of Rapid City.

Mr. Speaker, I would once again like to congratulate Mrs. Gladys Simpson on her award from the Manitoba Council on Aging and wish her continued success in the countless community organizations and projects she is a part of in Rapid City. Thank you.

Seniors' Health Fair

Ms. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to inform this House about the Seniors' Health Fair that occurred in my constituency at the Fort Garry Community Club on Friday, October 14.

Sponsored by Age and Opportunity, a not-for-profit seniors group, and myself, this fair was dedicated to offering a link between health care providers and seniors. As seniors are one of the fastest-growing age groups in Canada, it is imperative that the promotion of healthy living for seniors be a part of this government's health care initiatives.

It is events such as the health fair that help seniors achieve the active participation and independence necessary for any vibrant community. Mr. Speaker, I need not remind this House that healthy living and healthy communities are bound by a common thread.

Consisting of presentations by such organizations as the Diabetes Education Centre and Manitoba Naturopathic Association, the health fair provided important information directly to seniors and gave them the chance to talk face to face with health care professionals. There were also one-hour sessions devoted to safety, fraud prevention and Tai Chi as well as free massages which were enjoyed by all.

In conjunction with this event, the Fort Garry Shuttle Bus was also launched on October 14, a service provided by my constituency to ensure seniors have a chance to access all the activities and services open to them. This free transportation service ensured that all who desired to attend the health fair could actually do so.

* (14:20)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who helped organize the event and the various community organizations who attended the Health Fair. Without their efforts this event would not have been such a great success.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Canadian Cancer Society Awards

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the attention of the House to the achievement of our colleague, the honourable member from Carman. Today, the Manitoba Division of the Canadian Cancer Society honoured him with an award at the Magic of People Volunteer Awards Luncheon. He was given the Silver Alliance Award and that was presented to him for helping to make Manitoba a smoke-free province and forming a link between the Canadian Cancer Society and other groups, organizations, businesses and associations.

Mr. Speaker, I think this award is very important because it sends a message to all Manitobans that we in this Legislature, as individuals when you come to represent a particular constituency, as the honourable member does from Carman, I think it sends a signal that one person can make a difference. I think we all rallied in this Legislature behind the honourable member from Carman because we all believe that it was the right thing for us to do for Manitoba.

So, I think, on behalf of all Manitobans, all members of this Legislature, families, relatives that have had some impact in their lives on cancer, we

owe our debt of gratitude to the honourable Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan) for standing up as an individual and making a difference in Manitoba.

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Mr. Speaker, would I have leave, Sir, to make a very small statement to the House?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Rocan: Mr. Speaker, I would also ask leave, if you would not mind, Sir, because I would like the record to show, as much as I appreciate the fine words that were just put on the record, I would like to put the names of certain other individuals who were on that committee. If it had not been for the all-party task force that was put together by the Premier (Mr. Doer), indeed, the working relationship that I have with the Minister of Health (Mr. Sale), all Manitobans are indeed grateful for the fact that we had an all-party task force voted on by 57 members in this Legislature trying to make Manitoba a better place for all Manitobans. So, indeed, I wish the record to show that each and every one of the task force members had an integral part in helping make Manitoba a better place for all our citizens.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

M.O.D.E.L House Project

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Mr. Speaker, the increasing population of the province of Manitoba, and particularly the city of Winnipeg, is fostering a demand for housing which is calling upon the creativity and innovation of our citizens for solutions. I am pleased to tell this House about the M.O.D.E.L house project which is taking shape in Minto.

M.O.D.E.L stands for Mark of Designed Ecological Living. It is being undertaken by Anna Weier, a Master's student in the Faculty of Environment, Earth and Resources at the University of Manitoba, with the assistance of the Faculty of Architecture and the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation.

The project involves renovating a derelict house on Spence Street in the West End. This project will create a sustainable home and, in the process, chart some of the difficulties in, and hopefully provide some solutions to, renovating sustainable homes in this province.

All renovation decisions in the M.O.D.E.L project will keep the environment in mind. The

Spence Street house will feature radiant floor heating powered primarily by solar thermal panels to be installed on the roof, a composting toilet, high performance windows and doors and salvaged building materials.

As a component of her Master's thesis, Ms. Weier will document the barriers to incorporating sustainable house building practices in mainstream construction and renovation. Ms. Weier hopes to demonstrate what can be done to make the renovation of homes both sustainable and affordable.

I would like to congratulate Anna Weier on this interesting and important initiative and the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation and the University of Manitoba for their support. I would also like to recognize the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative and the Spence Neighbourhood Association for the support they have provided to this project as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Canadian Cancer Society Awards

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to all of the awardees of the Canadian Cancer Society Magic of People Awards, and these include: Jeannette Vouriot, who received the Citation of Merit, a national award; Norm Oman, who received the Medal of Courage, a national award; Shaw TV which received the Media Award; Great-West Life Assurance Company which received the Corporate Award; Barbara Tascona who received the Daffodil Award; Dr. Jack Armstrong who received the Special Volunteer Award; Dustin Dyck and Steinbach's Youth Relay for Life Team, which received The Youth Leadership Award; The All-Party Task Force on Environmental Tobacco Smoke, and the members including Denis Rocan, Stan Struthers, John Loewen, Scott Smith, Jim Rondeau and Greg Dewar as well as myself; the Canadian Fellowship of Pediatric Palliative Care, Dr. Mike Harlos; and The Gold Award to Carol and Jim Martin.

Let me just make one brief comment on the award to Barbara Tascona. This was an award which was given for her effort to ban smoking on school property. It is an initiative which remains uncompleted. We should ban smoking on school property province-wide, and it is one of the jobs that this Legislature still needs to take up and complete of the work of the All-Party Task Force on Environmental Tobacco Smoke.

Mr. Speaker: Before we move on, I would just like to remind all honourable members, when making reference to other members in the House, it is by constituencies and not by names, a reminder to all members.

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you please refer to debate on second readings beginning with Bill 7, and the remainder of the bills in the order they appear on the Order Paper.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 7—The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended)

Mr. Speaker: Resume debate on second reading, Bill 7, The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended), standing in the name of the honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler).

What is the will of the House?

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Remain standing?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: It has been denied. For clarification purposes, the honourable Member for Springfield, because the name of the bill is standing in the honourable member's name, he speaks now or loses his right to speak in the future. The honourable member will speak to the bill now?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: It is standing in the name of the honourable Member for Springfield.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put some comments on the record in regard to Bill 7, the bill titled The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended). This comes out of a court ruling on September 16, 2005, that frankly caught, I think, most individuals by surprise. I think it did not really become an issue until the Sunday when people started to realize that this court case had actually come forward.

* (14:30)

But it really does have its roots back in time. There have been difficulties between various groups in Winnipeg and Manitoba. They have had difficulties with settling professional territory and disputes between them. So this is an issue that has been building for many years, and was at a point where the architects went to court to get a clarification, and that was the ruling we got on September 16.

However, what did happen is the ruling laid out that legislation from a considerable amount of time ago would take precedence and created a lot of concern in the building trades and amongst individuals trying to get projects going in Manitoba.

If you were following newspapers of the time, you would have heard headlines like "Ruling could bump building costs," "Building their arguments," "A level playing field needed," "New rules aimed at engineers and architects," and on and on, Mr. Speaker. There are even some talking about "Developers say court order will slow boom," "Court puts big chill on developers." So, clearly, there had to be some kind of resolution to this.

One of the most sought-after solutions was an agreement between the various groups that would precipitate some kind of legislation that would have settled this. From what I understand, that was not going to happen, was not going to be the case. The lobbying and the meetings and the negotiations went from there.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

I know that over the weeks of the initial opening of the House, we had a petition put forward which asked for the Premier (Mr. Doer) to consider amending The Architects Act to provide engineers an exemption similar to that enjoyed by the architects under The Engineering and Geoscientific Professions Act. What we saw come forward was Bill 7, and I would like to thank the minister's staff, the staff from the Department of Labour, certainly the deputy minister, Jeff Parr, and, in particular, Nancy Anderson, who had a hand in drafting the legislation, and all of those individuals that were part of the negotiations who worked hard to come to some kind of legislation.

Though I understand we are not allowed to go into details of the legislation, we understand from the briefings and from what we have heard from the various groups that we have spoken with that it probably does not please anybody and, in the end,

might just be the saw that basically is necessary to get construction back on track and not slow down the building construction that is going on in the city and the province. I will not go into the details line by line. That is, of course, better for third reading.

I have, however, after the briefing with the minister, had the opportunity to meet with various groups. I have also had some feedback, and I would like to put some comments on the record. We received one from an interior designer that said, "We as a profession are not even named in any of the literature I have read concerning the dispute between the architects and the engineers. Yet, if they are including the planning of the building interiors in Bill 7, or the amendment to the Building Code, our profession in being wiped out with one stroke of the pen, my livelihood is definitely being threatened."

What we understand is that this was not the case. The interior decorators are covered, and I have spoken to the minister on this on numerous occasions. So we know that that has been taken care of. The interior designers, many of whom have 20, 30 projects on the go, have basically had their projects stopped at this point in time and have no livelihood. Clearly, their comments were that they wanted to make sure that they were protected under this legislation.

We also had a comment from some of the engineers who support the new legislation contained in Bill 7. "We appreciate your support over the past month as this process played out. I need to make it a priority to support the PC Party to help empower the party that will actually make decisions to support private business in the province to the betterment of our overall economic position in the country and globally." It goes on to state that it is time to move this legislation forward.

We also had someone from the construction industry saying, "Thank you for your continued pressure on the Department of Labour regarding the architects and engineers debate. As a design builder, this bill will allow us to continue to serve our customers as we have previously served them since 1978. I will also be able to maintain the employment of my in-house design draft department which is comprised of three people. Thank you for your assistance and support during this process."

Basically, the letter went on indicating that individuals wanted to see this legislation go forward.

I would like to say that we have pushed the government for some time to bring forward this legislation. Clearly, what we wanted to see was some kind of a level playing field and that, as we worked through this process and understood the severity of it, we came to the realization that something had to be done and had to be done quickly.

Bill 7, we would like to see it go to committee, pass second reading today, and move on to committee. It does have quite a bit involved with it and we want to hear what the communities have to say. I understand that there are approximately 120-some presenters and climbing. We think that it is important that we hear them all. I know from the minister's perspective and for myself as critic, we want to facilitate the opportunity for anybody and everybody to have their say to this legislation and then would like it to come back to this House.

I do have some verbal agreement from the minister that, once it goes through third reading, this legislation get Royal Assent and be proclaimed right away. We would like to see it done the day that it moves through third reading, that it then get Royal Assent and be proclaimed. We feel that this is important. We feel that it is important to have a proper legislative process look at it, and that we have done. We have taken the last week to consult all of those individuals who have a vested interest in and are being affected by this legislation.

So we have certainly done due diligence on it. We now would see this going to committee and getting a thorough discussion at committee. From the little time I have spent in this House, 120 people is very thorough, and we are encouraged that individuals find this legislation and this issue warranting their attention and the desire to come forward and speak to it. Again, I want to say to this House we would like to see it go through committee, come back through third reading, going through a proper legislative process and then get Royal Assent and proclamation.

I have also spoken to the minister and I know there have been concerns in regard to the regulations. The minister has assured us that the regulations are being drafted, and that they would be brought forward imminently, because a lot of the individuals, in particular the interior design, are affected and would not be able to practise in the full scope until the regulations are done. So what we want to make sure is that nobody's livelihood is put at risk. We want to make sure that this is done in such a fashion

that the safety and security of all Manitobans are protected, and that commerce, the building that we have in our province, proceed in an orderly fashion.

I know from having travelled to other countries I appreciate the building codes that we have. They are very important, because they protect us from ourselves. That is very important. So I do not want to spend too much time at this point in time speaking to the legislation as it is important that it does get to committee and we hear from the over 100 presenters that want to speak. We would like to see this moved today on to the committee stage. Let us hear what the public of Manitoba have to say in regard to the bill.

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to support this Bill 7, which, I believe, is very important, and I commend the minister and her staff who have worked very hard over the last few months to get this bill through. I think it is a situation that I would say is a win-win for all, and, as the member from Springfield said, this is overdue in terms of the priority for the construction industry that had a little bit of a setback, and they are holding some projects because of that battle.

* (14:40)

I had an opportunity to speak at the award dinner of the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists, and they did make the concern that they would want to make it work between engineers and architects. I think both professions are very important. Both are very, very professional associations, and I think it is very important for us to see that this legislation is going to bring the issues for settlement and give the priorities, which, I think, we see from the government perspective, that it is to protect the public interest and ensure that construction delays and cost increases do not happen as a result of the recent court ruling.

The government has been consulting with members of these professions and other stakeholders, such as the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, the City of Winnipeg and the representatives of the construction industry in order to find a practical solution which respects these professions as well as meets the needs of the permit-granting authorities. These amendments will ensure that both professions continue to have a role in building design and construction.

I think it is the professional approach that we should take, and I think this particular legislation has addressed that. The ownership of the project would

perhaps be the most logical institution to decide what type of engagement they want to have. The legislation clearly states certain requirements, and it defines when there is a conflict how they will be able to resolve it. I do have some appreciation for the work which has been done with the main thinking to protect the public interest, and I think the amendments to the architectural act will provide that the act does not limit the ability of a professional engineer to practise professional engineering, even within the scope of his or her governing legislation or may be required by the Manitoba Building Code.

Individual professional engineers currently planning certain buildings will be grandfathered under the act to allow them to continue their practice. This affects, Mr. Deputy Speaker, approximately one dozen engineers. The bill will also permit engineering firms to employ architects and offer both architectural engineering services. What will this mean to the architects? Architects will continue to be responsible for design, plan and review of the buildings as set out in their professional act.

The Manitoba Building Code will provide direction as to when an architect must be involved in the design of the building. For an example, residential office buildings and retail outlets over 600 square metres, approximately 6000 square feet, would require an architect, as would hospitals, prisons and places where people gather such as churches, libraries, community centres or restaurants. Industrial buildings, farm buildings, arenas and fixed-seating capacities of less than 1000 people and residential office or retail buildings less than 600 square metres would not require an architect. It is clearly defined, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of when an architect has to be retained and when engineers can do it without the help of architects, so this is a win-win situation.

I think this particular legislation is something that both professions will honour, and I think that my personal endorsement of this bill comes very strongly about who gets to act as prime consultant on a project. This is very clear. This legislation will provide that nothing in the respective legislation will prevent an architect or an engineering firm from serving as the prime consultant on a project. These provisions will not limit any other person from serving in that capacity. These amendments will remove any uncertainty or dispute as to the consumer's right to choose the prime consultant of the project. Actually, this gives the rights to the consumer to hire an architect or an engineer to be the

prime consultant, and then after that, either the engineer or the architect can hire the other depending on the need of the project.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

How will the disputes be settled is a question that is very clearly defined, that this will be a joint architect-engineering board that will deal with the disputes in a timely manner and make a joint recommendation to the board binding on both professions.

So I believe that this particular bill gives that kind of confidence in our government's ability to solve the problem that had created delays in the business of construction industry. I do believe that the minister worked very, very hard on this particular legislation, knowing that both architects and engineers were trying to really put their points across and make sure that their points are heard. I am certain that, after the hearings which will go on in the standing committee, with the 120 or more presenters, at the end this will be very good legislation that will keep Manitoba moving in the construction and building industries, and both architects and engineers will be happy to work together in a win-win situation.

I always take the approach whether it is engineering or technical or non-technical, the best way is to work together. On that night, on the award night, Mr. Speaker, I said, "Take a Gandhian approach. Try to work together." I think this legislation does that.

So I commend the minister for this. I think this will eventually work out to be very good. Also, I thank the member from Springfield for supporting this. I think this will be a great thing for Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to put a few words on the record on this legislation which deals with the practice of architects and engineers.

I think it is important to understand where this problem comes from. This is a dispute, a problem in terms of the activities of architects and engineers, which dates back many, many years. There was an opportunity to resolve this under the former Tory government, but the Conservative government at that point chose not to resolve it. The NDP have had six years, right, to resolve this without it reaching a head, and they have done essentially nothing in six years. So this fall we had a court order. That court

order essentially brought things to a head where there had to be a long-run resolution to this important subject which is the relative mandates of architects and engineers, the relative scope of practice of architects and engineers in Manitoba.

I think it is important to acknowledge the contributions of both architects and of engineers. Engineers have contributed in a major way to buildings, dams, to all sorts of economic infrastructure activities throughout Manitoba. Engineers, through, for example, the network of centre of excellency ISIS program, have been at the forefront, leading change and advances in design, of intelligent design of structures, and it is to be acknowledged, the important role that engineers have played.

* (14:50)

Architects similarly have played a very important role in Manitoba. Architects have contributed in many, many ways to the building of buildings and various other infrastructure. It is important to recognize that architects have been very important in contributing to the beauty of structures in Manitoba, but they have also been very important in contributing to the energy efficiency of structures, to the design of structures using advanced approaches which puts Manitoba in the forefront in terms of how buildings are designed here in Manitoba. So let us acknowledge the important contributions of both engineers and architects to our province.

This particular issue that we are dealing with is a complex and a long-standing one. Clearly, there needs to be a clear definition of the scope of practice of architects and engineers in Manitoba, and that, of course, is the reason for this bill. We need to be guided by principles which relate to recognizing the importance of public safety, the importance of public good in its varied aspects in terms of beauty and design as well as functionality and safety, and we need to respect the particular backgrounds and training and expertise of architects and engineers in coming to a resolution of this dispute between the two professions.

So I welcome the move of this bill to committee stage. I welcome the contributions of many architects, engineers and others who may come to the committee stage to provide input to us as legislators in making decisions with respect to what is in this bill and any potential changes to it. So I am glad to hear that we have got agreement to move this on, and

I look forward to this bill moving forward, hearing the various deliberations and comments and discussion at committee stage and then coming to a conclusion and being implemented. But I do think it is important that we listen carefully to the comments and contributions of everybody at committee stage, and we are ready to consider those carefully before making final decisions.

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 7, The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended).

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

Bill 2—The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 2, The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach). What is the will of the House?

Some Honourable Members: Pass.

Some Honourable Members: Denied.

Mr. Speaker: Denied?

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand?

Some Honourable Members: Denied.

Mr. Speaker: Denied. It has been denied.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I rise to put just a few words on the record regarding Bill 2, The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act. Certainly, I know that there has been some concern expressed throughout Manitoba regarding in-house security and those who provide it for businesses or provide it for special events. We have heard in the media over the course of, I think it is fair to say, the last number of years, isolated, and I think they are isolated, Mr. Speaker, but incidents of violence against individuals at events where there was some question about the actions of individuals who were providing security at that event. While I think that those cases are few and far between and that certainly are not reflective of the security industry by any means, they do still warrant

addressing in some way and the issue needs to be looked at.

I have had the opportunity to have a briefing with the minister regarding this bill and indicated that while we might have some questions about the regulations that we put in place, the training, the type of training that will happen, the registration and the cost for that, all those kinds of mechanics of the bill, I know that those will be brought forward at a later time. Some of that probably could have been built into legislation. Not everything would have been appropriate, obviously. Some of it would be better left for regulation, but I do know, Mr. Speaker, that after talking to the minister, I have some assurance in talking to the staff from the department that it has been looked at, that there has been some consultation with the industry.

I suspect also, and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that during our committee time there will be people who will come forward from the security industry but also those who hold events on a regular basis to talk about what they might like to see in terms of the regulation as it goes forward or possible amendments to the act. I suspect because there has been consultation, I am going on the good faith of the word of the minister on that, that there would not be significant amendments that would come forward from presenters at committee. But, to the extent that there are, we will deal with those issues. We will look at them in a responsible fashion. So the legislation, I think, will ensure that there is some sort of training that is put in place, some sort of mechanism to attract those who are working within the industry. I hope that it will give some assurance to those who are attending events where there is a need for in-house security, which is what the bill largely covers, that they will feel that they have some assurance that their safety is not in jeopardy, that they have people who are professional and responsible looking after this particular area.

So there are times, Mr. Speaker, when we have great differences on legislation before the Legislature. There are other times when we can sit down as people from all political parties and say, "Well, this may be something that needs to be looked at." Certainly, we can work together with the government in a bi-partisan way, a co-operative way, to find the proper mechanism to ensure that individuals who are attending specific events will have that security and be assured that the individuals who are there are professional, are responsible, who have had some base level of training and that they do

have the proper qualifications to be operating in a responsible position.

We know that these particular positions are not judicial in a sense that they do not operate like peace officers in our country, but they are operating in a way that people are relying upon their service for safety. So I look forward to the bill going towards committee, hearing any presentations that come forward. Maybe there are some positive suggestions for change to the legislation. I think we should always, as legislators, be open to those suggestions, always be open to the comments that come forward from the public and those working, particularly in the industry.

In my conversation with the minister and my briefing with the minister, I do not think he is of a closed mind on the issue. I think he is probably willing to hear suggestions that might come forward to the committee, I think that that reflects well on all of us here in the Legislature to do that, to hear what changes might be appropriate.

So, with those few words, I look forward to hearing any comments that other members of this elected body may want to put on the record regarding the legislation. I also look forward to hearing what the public has to say, those with a vested interest, those simply with an interest in the issue will have to say when it comes before committee at some point in the future. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I, too, wanted to put a few words on the record before Bill 2 goes to the committee stage. It is a bill, again, in principle, that we support going to committee to see if, in fact, there is any sort of public representation as to what people, in particular, potential security guards—it would be interesting to see what they might have to say about the bill. I think that it would appear to be something that is a step forward.

Security is a very important issue, Mr. Speaker. I think, more and more we are seeing, and I ultimately argue, sadly, the need for having security guards. It seems to be on the increase. One has to ask the question why is that. Why is there a growing demand for security guards? This is just one component now. This is a relatively new component. I think in the past it has been done somewhat informally without any assurances of individuals being trained. It might be an individual that is designated at a particular plant that, "Look, we want you to hang around and watch for security," as informal as something of that

nature. But, as time has progressed, what we have seen is that there is more of a need to formalize because we are seeing more problems in our communities. The employers of large and small businesses are feeling that there is a greater need to designate, literally designate an individual to do nothing but security.

* (15:00)

Mr. Speaker, as I say, for me, when I look at it, the concern that comes to my mind is why is that happening today. I think it says a lot in terms of some of the other problems that we have in our society and the way in which our society, in particular, the province of Manitoba, is moving in regard to crime in general.

I think that we need to do more to address some of the causes that are ultimately causing employers and other businesses, whether they are hiring security or now they are looking at having in-house security, why is that happening. We need to be more aggressive at dealing with those types of causes, Mr. Speaker.

I think that, all in all, by having this particular piece of legislation, we will have a better sense in terms of what is actually out there in terms of in-house security, a better way of gauging the actual size of a potential problem or a potential demand.

It also allows for the employee, Mr. Speaker, to be given some sort of training because of a designation which we would see as a positive thing, because we do not want someone just to be told, well, you are the security person and that person has had absolutely no training whatsoever being provided. I think that this, in part, will go a long way in ensuring that there is a safer working environment, and it addresses unfortunately what seems to be a growing need for security guards. But I really do wish that we would be more aggressive on the issue of the causes of why the need is there.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, as I say, we are prepared to see the bill go to committee and hope and trust that there will be some other feedback from members of the public.

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to follow the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) and the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). We tend to sometimes be rather strident when we debate each other—

An Honourable Member: Now hold on.

Mr. Swan: I say "we," I say we tend to be strident when we go on the radio airwaves. I am certainly glad to see that for today, today at least, the Member for Steinbach and the Member for Inkster have toned down their volume a bit and have indicated their agreement to send this bill forward to committee.

So, certainly, I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to have the chance to speak to The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act. This is a bill which came about after extensive province-wide consultation with various stakeholders in the security guard industry, and it is with this wide level of consultation that we are now moving ahead to amend the act.

The main effect of this act, Mr. Speaker, is to ensure that previously exempt security guards are now included to at least meet some minimum standards for licensing and security guard training. The act is being amended so that it will apply to security guards who work for a single employer or in-house security guards, as well as members of the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires who also act as security guards from time to time.

What this bill will require is these individuals to be licensed under the act and again to demonstrate that they have received some appropriate level of training. These requirements are going to include submitting an application, providing or allowing or authorizing a criminal record check to take place and successfully completing a mandatory training program and paying a prescribed fee.

The Corps of Commissionaires, which provide a number of other services, will be required to obtain a licence as a provider of security guards in the province of Manitoba. Now, the result of this is that employers of in-house security guards will be required to be registered under the act, and they must only employ licensed security guards. So there will be some control over the individuals who are working as security guards for those employers. It will also be the responsibility of registered employers to report information respecting the names and information of those security guards hired or terminated, so, again, there will be some greater controls within our system of those who act as security guards.

Now, one of the other important features in this proposed act is that employers of private investigators and security guards will be required to maintain adequate liability insurance. At the present time, employers are required only to be bonded,

which really does not address the issues respecting the actions of private investigators or security guards.

We hope that incidents involving security guards will be few and far between, but where an unfortunate event does happen, it is necessary for the public to know that the employers of those individuals will have adequate liability insurance to cover any of the acts of their employees.

Now, expanding the scope of the act, as I have indicated, ensures that all licensed security guards will be compliant with the requirements of the act and they will meet minimum training standards. It has been a long process to make sure that security guards get to this level. I think everyone in this House can agree that it is important that those who hold themselves out as security guards have attained a minimum level of training.

As I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, there have been extensive consultations including those exempt security guards and training standards. These have been conducted on a province-wide basis and the word from the industry has been positive. Certainly, we have heard from some private companies which are now seeing other security guards being covered by this bill being happy, saying now there is a level playing field, that security guards whether they work in-house or for an outside firm will now have the same licensing standards.

We have also heard from the Manitoba security guards association, which is certainly in favour of this bill and the proposed regulations. They are very happy about this because the training will promote safety because it includes non-physical intervention, giving security guards some additional skills and some additional tools to try and diffuse incidents without the need for a physical confrontation.

There are some training opportunities. The University College of the North is prepared to offer a training course. I understand as well that Assiniboine Community College out in Brandon is also offering a course, so it will not be a problem for individuals who wish to work as security guards and employers who wish to employ them to make sure that people are properly trained.

I am glad to hear from my friends on the other caucuses that they are prepared to move this bill to committee. I am certainly pleased to have the chance to speak to this bill which is another step forward for our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 2, The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act. I am always honoured to be able to add some contribution to the debate in this House. I want to congratulate our Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) for bringing forward another important piece of legislation that will make Manitoba a better place to live. *[interjection]*

I hear from my colleague the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen). I do not know why. He should be out there signing up delegates for his leadership convention. I hear that his colleagues are running out there, Mr. Speaker, his colleagues are out there signing up members. *[interjection]* He claims he is already their leader. He claims that he has enough members right now and does not need to do any more work.

This is an interesting piece of legislation. In a past life I used to co-own and manage a hotel in the city of Selkirk, Mr. Speaker. We, of course, had a beverage room and, as members know, sometimes it is required by the owner or the manager to sometimes deal with troublesome clientele and I had that opportunity. Actually the Member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson) in another life, too, was a security person, and I would not want to tangle with him.

At that time, of course, we were not licensed. We were not required to license any of our employees. We had no training at the time on how to deal with individuals who may be causing problems in those types of licensed premises or any premise.

I am pleased that this act is going to apply to security guards who work for a single employer or members of the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires who are security guards, Mr. Speaker. My father, when he was alive, in the latter part of his life, served as a member of the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires and was a commissionaire at Lower Fort Garry, just outside of Selkirk, for many years, a job that he was very, very fond of and was very proud to do. As I have mentioned, both in-house and corps commissionaire security guards were required to meet licensing criteria under this act.

* (15:10)

Mr. Speaker, the requirements also include submitting an application, a criminal record check, and, as well, successfully completing a mandatory training program and paying a fee. As the Member for Minto (Mr. Swan) has said, the course will be

offered here in the city of Winnipeg as well and, of course, the Assiniboine Community College in Brandon and as well will be offered in the University College of the North, which I am very proud that our government is moving forward. Regrettably, the members of the Conservative Party voted against it. But, anyway, we are proud of the University College of the North. We are proud of enhancing and improving educational opportunities for all of Manitobans including northerners.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, there will be an extensive training for individuals. It is my understanding that some of the training will include professionalism, public relations, legal authority, traffic control, bomb threats, personal safety at work, fire detection and prevention.

An Honourable Member: Sounds like an NDP convention.

Mr. Dewar: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the members of the Conservative Party could have used one of these security guards at their recent convention. I believe the leader of the party over here requires a guard. He could have used some extra security recently as he had a bit of a falling out with some of his colleagues.

Getting back to the very important topic of the private investigators and security guards, it is my understanding that there will be a 40-hour security guard training program, and the new standard is based upon the Canadian General Standards Board basic security guard training program.

Mr. Speaker, I am once again very pleased to be part of a government that is doing many things out there to improve security. I know this is probably based upon a regrettable incident here in Manitoba recently, but, as I said, sometimes under those circumstances it is difficult. If I had to deal with these matters on my own in a past life, as I know the Member for Gimli had to, it would have been appreciated at that time. Legislation similar to this would have given us the opportunity to train ourselves and to train our staff to be better equipped to deal with some of these individuals under very stressful circumstances. I once again will applaud the minister and I commend this to the House. Thank you.

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 2, The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act.

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

Bill 3—The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 3, The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach).

What is the will of the House? Remain standing?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, it has been denied.

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand and talk about The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act. I think it is very apropos to make note of the fact that we now live in a society where people are able to move around very easily. They are able to move from province to province, and I think that this act, which allows people to move without having to take a look at whether or not their personal safety would still be at risk, is very important to Canadians and to Manitobans.

People move for a variety of reasons: sometimes family reasons, sometimes employment, sometimes business opportunities, and I think that this move that we are making is very favourable, particularly for women who have been in abusive situations.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, which is based on a model uniform act, was developed by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada, and it will provide recognition to Canadian monetary and non-monetary orders on a full faith and credit basis.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, people are very mobile now and, as a result of that, we do not want to have to have women go back to the court system to apply once again to have their civil judgments looked at. This law will, like other Canadian jurisdictions, have reciprocal enforcements of civil judgment legislation. It will allow for monetary judgments from reciprocating jurisdictions to be registered and enforced in Manitoba.

Many of us, Mr. Speaker, attended the Silent Witness program that went on here at the Legislature. I must admit it was very, very moving to see these 10 silhouettes of women who had been killed as a result of domestic violence. They still stand today in the Manitoba Legislature, downstairs

in the area by the main steps. I think many of us who were here to hear family members talk about the impact of losing loved ones can attest to just how very, very heart-wrenching it was to hear those stories. The Silent Witness display will travel across the province and it will demonstrate to all Manitobans the significance of domestic violence and it will remind us that we need to do as much as possible to prevent this problem from happening.

Our Province, Mr. Speaker, has been very forward-thinking. The Province has provided an additional \$315,400 for 34 community-based agencies dealing with domestic violence. Since 1999, funding for a comprehensive range of services has increased by over 50 percent and it now totals \$10.4 million per year. The Province has also provided \$17,400 for this month-long public awareness campaign on domestic violence. As I mentioned, it really was very heart-wrenching to hear children, mothers, brothers, uncles talk about the impact that family violence has had on them and the loss of a dear one to them.

It was also interesting to note that all the people who had suffered through domestic violence were women. I think that is something that our society needs to take a look at, that women are the ones who are being impacted by domestic violence and they are the ones who are actually having to suffer the impacts of this.

Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, November 5, I attended the 20th anniversary of Women In Second Stage Housing event at the Norwood Hotel. The Women In Second Stage Housing is an organization that is located in St. Norbert, although it prefers to be somewhat under the radar. It does not like to have its address publicized just due to the fact that there are women who are in that organization who are, in essence, trying to seek counselling and seek assistance but do not want their whereabouts known to their partners. The event brought together about 60 different people, and I have to say that the women and men at that event talked very favourably about this legislation. The Women In Second Stage Housing assists 11 women and their children with counselling and resource services to assist them in dealing with the long-term effects of domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, one of the important aspects of this bill is its provision respecting Canadian civil protection orders. When a person who has been subjected to domestic violence or stalking has

obtained a civil protection order from another province or territory in Canada and then has to relocate to Manitoba, their order will be deemed to be in effect here in Manitoba under this new legislation.

Mr. Speaker, some of the other things that this legislation will do is that it will provide protection to those who are victims of dating violence, which means that they do not have to cohabitate together, that even if they are partners and together in a relationship but not living together they could then seek some compensation through this legislation. It will also allow court orders to require a respondent to receive counselling or therapy which I think also is very important. We have to realize that there are two parties in these kinds of relationships and that often counselling and therapy can be of help to the partner who is precipitating the action.

* (15:20)

It will also allow designated people other than lawyers and police officers to assist victims to apply for protection. I think this is important, Mr. Speaker, because often it is a counsellor or a friend who could be of more assistance, and you could have the person look at the positive impacts of getting a restraining order. It will also better protect children by specifically allowing financial compensation for losses incurred by them due to violence, and it will establish a new child focus publication ban related to proceedings for orders of protection.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be on the government side who has introduced this legislation. I think that our strategy for the overall countering of domestic violence, which includes supporting A Woman's Place, a one-stop clinic that brings together lawyers, social workers and others who support victims of domestic violence, it speaks well to our government's commitment for families, for women and for the individuals who have perpetrated these kinds of crime.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I am very, very pleased to be able to stand and speak in favour of this bill. Thank you.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): It is a pleasure to rise to put just a few comments on regarding Bill 3, The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act.

Certainly, again, I have had the opportunity to speak to the minister regarding this particular piece of legislation. I have had the opportunity to meet with staff who are involved in the drafting of the

legislation. We recognize that there is an importance to ensure that, between jurisdictions in Canada, for orders that are put in place—I know that there is already a system for monetary judgments, civil judgments that are issued in one jurisdiction—there be a system in place to have enforcement of that in different provinces. I do think it is an important step to ensure that those protection orders that are brought forward in one area, whether it is a province like Alberta or Saskatchewan, can be enforced here in Manitoba where the person who is at risk, who has had the order issued on their benefit, can have it enforced in the province that they move to.

I know this is an issue that has come out of the uniform law commission, and I would hope that other provinces are actively looking at a reciprocal agreement, so that we can have this legislation in place really across Canada, so that if an order is issued here in Manitoba, then, in fact, it could also be applied and enforced in another jurisdiction in Canada.

I have raised that issue with the minister in our briefing. He has given me some assurance that he is working towards that, and in First Minister meetings or in Minister of Justice conferences, that he will raise those issues in terms of uniformity across jurisdictions. I do think that that is important because in the end it is about protecting individuals. It is about ensuring the safety of people, largely women in relationship issues, if they have that sort of protection, that they can move really freely throughout the country and know that that order will go with them and know that they will be able to get that protection.

It is not, though, enough, Mr. Speaker, simply to pass legislation that says you can enforce an order from one jurisdiction to another; it is also very important to ensure that the resources are there to ensure that the order is enforceable. We have heard of too many cases here in the province of Manitoba where somebody does have a protection order that has been granted to them by the courts, yet, when it is time for that, when they need that protection order, when they are in danger, there is not a quick response. There is no one to enforce that order. Whether it is the police in a particular jurisdiction or whoever is going to be there to enforce the order, there is concern that it is not acted upon soon enough.

We have heard of tragic situations where women did have protection orders, but they were not able to

ensure that the safety that they thought that they were getting from the protection order was brought to bear. In fact, in some ways it was almost giving a false sense of security because they thought that this piece of paper, in and of itself, would ensure that they would have proper protection, but, of course, when you do not have the resources in place, whether it is coming from a 911 system or coming from a law enforcement aspect, when you do not have those resources in place to ensure somebody is going to get a quick response when they are calling for help on the enforcement of a protection order, then, in fact, it is not particularly helpful.

The other issue I know which is specifically excluded from the act—it deals with maintenance enforcement, and there are other schemes in place, both here in Manitoba and across Canada, that deal with the issue of ensuring that spouses who have an order for maintenance support, when they move to another jurisdiction, they can, in fact, have that enforced in the other jurisdiction.

I continue to hear, however, that it is a cumbersome process, that it is difficult for spouses who are moving from one jurisdiction to the other to continue to have that enforcement of the monetary order. I also continue to hear that the Maintenance Enforcement Program is not operating in an efficient way and that it is difficult to get a response back at times from individuals. That is certainly no reflection on the individuals who are working in the Maintenance Enforcement Program. They simply do not have the resources to ensure that they can actually get responses back quickly to people who are having a difficult time receiving the funds that the court has instructed one particular spouse to pay to another as a result of a divorce or a settlement.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I remember well somebody who came to me and said that they had phoned into the Maintenance Enforcement Program, and the message on the machine from the officer whom they were phoning in, who their caseworker was, had said, "Leave a message and we will get back to you within seven days." That was shocking to me to hear that it would take at least a week for a response back, and that is, of course, if that person was quickly reachable. You know, they might have missed each other on that return call, and then the person phones in again. We see that that system is very much overburdened, and the ability to have those monetary orders enforced, on maintenance enforcement, is not working properly here in the province of Manitoba.

That is an issue I have raised with the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) in the past. I know it has been raised by other members of the Legislature to the minister. I am sure that the Minister of Family Services (Ms. Melnick), who has some parallel jurisdiction with the issue, has probably heard concerns as well about maintenance enforcement, about getting those orders in place.

So it is not a new concern that I raise here in the Legislature, and I know that this is a specific exclusion from this particular act. But I do think it is worth repeating, and it is worth making the point, that simply having legislation to bring forward protection orders, just like simply having legislation that brings forward the ability to have a maintenance enforcement, really does not do the trick if you do not have the resources behind the legislation. Women in the province may, in fact, be safer because of the legislation that allows for the transferability and the enforcement of these orders from other provinces. They may, in fact, be safer if there are those resources in place. But, if there are not the resources in place, then it is, again, simply false security that is being put forward for women, particularly women who are in danger or feel that they are in harm, and that is why they had the protection orders there.

So we are, in principle, supportive of the bill and the legislation because we do think it has the possibility of improving safety for those who are in a vulnerable situation or a dangerous relationship, but it is not going to do enough if there are not resources in place. So I would encourage the government, if this legislation goes forward, to also bring forward a plan that will ensure that the resources and the wherewithal are there to support the legislation, and that it will not be simply legislation that is on the books to give some sense of security that truly is not there. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Family Services and Housing): I rise in support of this legislation. I do work very closely, and my department works very closely, with the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh). What we are doing is putting together what we believe is a package of safety for women, as well as supports. So what I would like to do is speak about the bill in front of us today, as well as talk about the other supports that have been developed in this province since 1999.

I think it is very important to note that The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act is the first of its kind in the country of Canada, and I congratulate the Attorney General for bringing this legislation in. This bill provides very key elements of support and of safety for women who may be feeling threatened, for people who may be feeling threatened. It provides a means by which monetary and non-monetary judgments from other Canadian provinces can be registered and then enforced in the same manner as a judgment from that province.

* (15:30)

This legislation also allows protection orders and other judgments from other provinces to be enforced. This is very key, Mr. Speaker, because if someone who has been through the trauma of having to survive whatever actions have been brought against them, and then to seek out protection orders, chooses to move to another jurisdiction, particularly chooses to move to Manitoba in this case, we believe it is very important that the protection follow her, and that she be surrounded by the protection that was achieved in other jurisdictions in Canada, and that she does not have to begin again for herself or for her children.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

It is also based on the model uniform Enforcement of Canadian Judgments and Decrees Act developed by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. So, again, I would like to congratulate our Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh) for this courageous move on behalf of women and children who need this protection.

It was only a short time ago that the Attorney General and I attended the silhouette project which was organized by the community here in Manitoba. The Province was very supportive of it. We contributed some \$17,000-plus for the silhouette witness project, and the heart of this project is the displaying of the life-sized silhouettes representing women who have been murdered by their partners and for whom their partners had been convicted of this murder. I am sure that we have all noticed the silhouettes in the foyer of our Legislature here. In fact, the ceremony was carried out in the Legislature, and it was that morning that the Attorney General had let Manitobans know that he would be bring this act forward and that we would be continuing to work for the protection of women.

I think it is very, very important to note that since 1999 there has been a focus on protection for people in family violence situations, and a comprehensive range of services has, in fact, doubled. Our total expenditure on an annual basis is now over \$10 million, Mr. Speaker. So we speak about the protection of women not only in the deeds that we do but also in the funding that we put behind the announcements that we have. This past year has seen the Province provide an additional \$315,000 to some 34 community-based agencies who are dealing on the front lines. Again, we put our money where our mouth is when we talk about the need to be protecting people in very critical situations.

I want to go into some of the other actions that we have taken since 1999 that complement the actions of bringing forward this bill today. In 1999, we began a public awareness campaign which is called "Promises aren't the only things that get broken," and this campaign happens annually during the month of November. It is a public education campaign with several different layers. The campaign lets people know what domestic violence is, that people do not have to suffer in silence, that there are a lot of supports for them throughout the province, and I will be talking specifically about rural women and the supports that are available to them a little later. But we believe that domestic violence is a societal issue, that it is not a women's problem, and that we as a society have to have the courage to speak the words and then to deal with what is happening; that is a lot of what one of the first steps that we took around domestic violence in 1999 was when we talked about rolling out the public awareness campaign.

It is also education around what little tolerance we must have as a society for this behaviour. Shortly after, we brought in the Victims First Cellular Program, which loans victims of domestic violence cell phones for times of extreme risk which will provide them with an added level of protection through quick access to emergency services.

Now we on this side of the House know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a woman is at highest risk during the first three months after which she has left a domestically violent and abusive situation. So we know that there has to be an awful lot of support during that time. Part of that support has to be her ability, for wherever she might find herself, to communicate about any dangerous situation that she believes is happening or that may happen and give her a way to communicate very quickly as to what

situation she is in, where she is, and then it is our job to make sure that she is helped out of that situation. That is the focus of the Victims First Cellular Program.

In November 2004, last year, during our Domestic Violence Month here in Manitoba, again I worked in partnership with the Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh) as we rolled out an announcement that had actually a seven-point strategy for the prevention of domestic violence. The key point in that announcement was the supporting of a new office in Winnipeg called A Woman's Place, and we provided \$40,000 in funding, as well as the services of Crown attorneys and victim support workers and Family Services workers. Again, this is a unique model in Canada. I do not know that it has been rolled out in any other jurisdiction but it is, again, a partnership between Family Services and Justice.

The focus of this is that it would provide women who, again, are leaving situations of domestic violence, perhaps with their children, information as to what is available to them legally through the justice support that is there. It also provides information that women may find helpful when they are having to start over and that could mean how to access low income or affordable housing, how to get child care if child care has not already been arranged and what services would be available to them through this government for Family Services, Housing and in some cases, Mr. Speaker, persons with disabilities. We wanted to create a one-stop shop, if you will, for women who may be needing all sorts of services as they take this very brave and courageous move to say no more. When a woman says no more, it is our job as legislators, as members of the Manitoba community, to work with our front-line people to ensure that we say to her, we agree with you and we are here to support you.

We have also specialized domestic violence victims services, expanding from five to some 28 communities throughout our province and this will allow for better access outside of urban centres.

I would like to focus for a few minutes on services on this point that are available to rural women. We provide funding to nine women's resource centres of which two have also a residential component. These are distributed throughout our province. There are three in Winnipeg; there is one in Brandon, one in Swan River, one in Flin Flon, one in Gimli, one in Ashern and one in Snow Lake. The funding for these services totals over \$1.3 million

annually and that is a very strong statement of how we believe that when we work with front-line workers, we can be part of the solution.

It was very interesting, a woman has recently moved here from another jurisdiction and has taken on a position within our women's resource centre and our women's shelter community here. We have 10 Manitoba women's shelters, 2 in Winnipeg, 8 in rural areas including The Pas, Winkler, Steinbach, Selkirk, Brandon, Portage, Thompson and Dauphin. The woman I am referring to is working in one of our shelters, and she could not believe that, first of all, the amount of funding that is available to shelters, but also that we provide services, provide funding for even janitorial services. She has never seen such a comprehensive financial support for women's shelters. So, again, that speaks to our commitment to women throughout the province.

Additionally, in rural areas, if there is a problem with a woman actually fleeing a situation, she may not have a car, she may not have a vehicle at her disposal, may not even be able to pay for public transportation or Greyhound to get to a shelter, we will cover that in Family Services and Housing through employment and income assistance. We want to make sure that women are able to leave difficult and dangerous situations and get into better situations.

* (15:40)

So how do women find out in rural Manitoba about our services? We do have a government-funded information/crisis line. It is a toll-free 1-877 number and this automatically links the caller to their nearest shelter, so a woman does not have to figure out on her own where the shelter is or how to get there. This is a 24-7 service that is available that will be providing any information that women may need at any time of the day or night, any day of the year.

I will just get back now to some more of our major initiatives. We have expanded the mandate of victim support service workers to help victims obtain civil protection orders either before or after charges are laid. This is very important that women are able to develop what we hope will be trusting relationships with front-line workers and relationships that allow women to learn of the services that are available to them as well as learn what their most pressing issues are, whether it is the laying of charges, whether it is finding an accommodation, whether it is making sure that where they are is secure and safe.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

So we know that very special relationships can be formed by front-line workers with people who have gone through domestic violence, and we wanted to ensure that the victim support service workers were able to deal with as many questions as might come forward during that very crucial time.

We have helped to establish a new Interlake Eastman Visitation Service to provide a safe, neutral place where divorced or separated parents can drop off children for visits to avoid confrontation and potential conflict. Again, Mr. Speaker, I do not know that this is being done in any other jurisdictions. But I know that it is very important to maintain safety and security for children and for members of the family, and we know that at times, actually, just seeing a person after you have experienced violence at their hand can be a traumatic and terrifying situation.

So we have tried to put together a model that is going to be successful in making sure the members of the family are safe and secure even when children are moving from one parent to another for whatever time period. My understanding is that this has proved to be quite successful, and certainly it is something that we are monitoring. I know that there is high demand for this service and we know that people are relying on this as a way to communicate in some very difficult situations.

We have built stronger prosecutions by establishing a one-prosecutor, one-case system on domestic violence so that cases are handled from beginning to end by the same Crown attorney. We know that cases of this nature can be very, very difficult, and it is very important that you have the same attorney from the beginning to the end. So, for continuity as well as for, again, the special relationships that can develop, we wanted to make sure that we recognized the difficulty of the situation and going through a legal action of this nature, but making sure it was as easy as possible. We believed that by establishing the one-prosecutor to the one-case system that we would help that along.

We have also invested \$131,000 in additional funding for the 34 community agencies that are dealing with domestic violence. We know that we have a tremendous support network here in Manitoba and we want to do everything that we can to work with our community. As legislators, we have answers, but, as front-line workers, so do they. We rely on their expertise and their judgment when we

are making what we believe will be improvements, but also making sure that they are getting what they need on the front lines.

Again, we have expanded our public awareness campaign in urban, rural and northern communities. We send out every year now, Mr. Speaker, over 10 000 packages. These packages go to—*[interjection]*—yes, to our shelters and to our women's resource centres, but they also go to public libraries. They go to recreational centres. They go to places where we believe the public will be coming by and where it would sometimes be safe for a woman to pick up a package to learn if she is experiencing a difficult situation, to learn about how to get out and how to stay out. We have found, again, across the province, a very, very positive response to our annual campaign and we are committed to doing this.

Now, I have spoken a lot about women. We have to recognize, too, that there are men who struggle with these issues, and so we are the second jurisdiction in Canada who has a men's resource centre, and this resource centre is run through the Elizabeth Hill organization.

I was very pleased when I was still a very new minister to be the one to have attended the official opening of this resource centre, and I have heard, again from the community but also from individual men who have attended the various programs that are offered at the men's resource centre, what a wonderful resource this is for them, because we do know that when men are wanting to say "no more" and wanting to make positive changes that it is, again, our responsibility as legislators and as members of the community of Manitoba to help them do that.

I even know of one individual who went there for support and has begun to provide programming himself. So to my mind this is a very, very successful story of how we have been able to help someone make changes in their life in a very personal way, and they are now empowered to help other people make those changes. So I would like to congratulate the men's resource centre for the very good work that they have done.

Now, leaving a situation of domestic violence is a very big step, but we also have to ensure that, when people want to make the changes necessary in a permanent way, they do not end up going back to that same situation, that again we have the supports.

I would like to speak for a moment about second-stage housing here in Manitoba. I was very pleased just last week to attend the 20th anniversary of W.I.S.H., which is a second-stage housing organization, not-for-profit organization, here in Manitoba that was started by community members who just wanted to make sure that when women have taken the step to leave domestic violence, that there is a path that enables them to stay out. A lot of the work that the people in W.I.S.H. do is with women who are rebuilding their lives or in some cases building their lives and showing their children that there is a different way to live.

I very much congratulate and applaud the folks at W.I.S.H. as well as our three other second-stage housing, non-profit organizations in Manitoba, and I want to assure the House that there is never a waiting list, that we are always able to accommodate through these organizations good living situations for women as well as programming. But it is only with the front-line workers that we would be able to do that.

Again, I want to talk a little bit more about staying out of a situation of domestic violence, and I want to congratulate the Native Women's Transition Centre. About 18 months ago, I believe it was, they opened Oyate Tipi. This is actually a warehouse of household items that could be large furniture items such as couches, beds, kitchen tables, as well as the smaller, cutlery, silverware, dishes, bedding, et cetera. This service provided through the Native Women's Transition Centre actually provides household furnishings for women so that as they move into a house, as they move into an apartment, that they do not move into a place with four walls in an empty building. These are gently used articles, as they like to say, that are going on to provide safe housing for new families. These articles are available free of charge to women who are wanting to start.

I know of a story that came out, I believe it was on CBC, around the opening of Oyate Tipi where a woman talked about leaving a very bad situation and was able to go to one of our women's centres, was able to go through second-stage housing, and now, almost a year after leaving that situation, was actually able to move into an apartment. She was very concerned because she felt that she and her children would be sleeping on inflated mats on the floor and sometimes sharing one or two blankets. She went to Oyate Tipi and found that she was able to actually furnish her apartment in a way that was welcoming and home-creating for her and her children, and it was the first time that they had

actually lived in their own place, their own apartment, with their own items, and created their own safety.

* (15:50)

So I think it is, again, important to recognize the efforts of the front-line workers, and let them know that this is a government that wants to work with them.

The Domestic Violence Front-End Project is another initiative that we have brought forward, and it has reduced the time for domestic violence cases to go from the first court appearance to entering a plea for more than seven months to as little as two months. So, again, recognizing the trauma of leaving a situation and wanting to do the healing that is necessary to be doing, we know that women want to get through the court process and that it can often be a very trying time, so we have tried to reduce the time necessary to go through a court process, so that the real work of the healing can begin.

I am very proud to say that this is a program that recently won a prestigious national award for excellence in public service, and it was Chief Judge Raymond Wyant in the *Free Press* just this past September who said we were able to realize some pretty dramatic results. We were able to cut the total backlog. I think that that speaks to the holistic approach of this government. It is not just having women leave, it is not just providing second-stage housing, it is not just providing a path through training and through availability of a safe-living situation, but it is also working in the court system and making sure that we make that as smooth as possible.

One of our most recent announcements was when the new Governor General was in town. I was very proud that we were a government who announced that training funds up to the amount of \$5,000 would also be made available to women. So it is helping women get out, stay out, go through the court process, set up safe housing, but also build towards the future, where they can be independent, because a lot of women who are in these situations have, in the past, been forced to go back because they certainly do not have the alternatives needed to build the future for themselves and their children. But this is a government that is committed to working with them through every stage.

I think I will close my remarks here, but, again, I want to bring us back to the bill at hand, and talk

about the significance of Manitoba, the Government of Manitoba, not being afraid to bring in new initiatives, to work with the community around suggestions that come forward, and to look at ways that we can continually improve the safety of women, of children and of families who may be experiencing domestic violence and ensuring that we will be able to help them move out. It is in that vein that I am hoping that we will all be able to be supportive of this bill and, again, I congratulate the Attorney General (Mr. Mackintosh) for yet another initiative that he has brought forward, the first in Canada, and I can tell you I shall be very, very supportive of this bill as part of our continuum of care for women and families to leave domestic violence situations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I, too, wanted to be able to put a few words on the records in regard to Bill 3. You know, when you take a look at it and you say that, strictly speaking, in terms of numbers, we have thousands of Manitobans that leave our province for other provinces every year. We have individuals that come to our province, thousands of people that come to our province every year, from other provinces. Our Charter says that we have mobility rights, which is a very strong, positive thing. Canada is a beautiful country. For me, personally, I see myself staying in Manitoba.

Well, for a lot of people, that is not necessarily the case. As a result, I believe it is important that we have legislation of this nature, because this type of legislation, Mr. Speaker, protects the interests of all Canadians. You know, when we have these ministerial meetings, national ministerial meetings, whether it is the First Ministers, or the ministers of Justice, or Health, or whatever it might be, at times I believe that they can be exceptionally productive if, in fact, they attempt to deal with issues like this, issues in which, ultimately, what you see is the country represented by those provincial ministers working towards harmonizing a system so that everyone benefits.

You know, I trust the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) or he will have a staffperson reading through a Hansard. I would very much appreciate the spreadsheets, not only on Bill 3, but also on Bill 2, because I suspect that we are going to be passing these two bills. Actually, we have already passed 2 to committee, but I suspect that the likelihood of 3 passing to committee is very strong, too. So I would appreciate the spreadsheets before we go to

committee. If they could forward that on to my office, I would welcome that.

But anyway, what I was saying was that everyone benefits if, in fact, we have governments across Canada working together so that there is more harmony, Mr. Speaker, on issues like this. The idea of having monetary and non-monetary judgments being enforced across Canada, even though a judgment might have occurred here in the province originally or in any other province and someone has moved from that province into Manitoba, it would be beneficial that the courts here or the judicial process would honour those other judgments. That is what I mean in the sense that we all benefit by legislation of this nature.

That is why we do not have a problem in terms of seeing this bill go to committee, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it is a positive bill, and I suspect there will not be very much for public input. I have not heard anyone address it to me personally, no calls or anything of that nature. But, having said that, that does not necessarily mean that people do not have an interest in the bill because I think that the impact it will have is actually fairly significant.

I would be interested in hearing from the Minister of Justice as to where reciprocal legislation is being worked on today in other jurisdictions. Maybe the minister will have the opportunity to talk about that in committee, if not, in third reading, because when the minister goes to the Justice meetings, we trust that the issues of this nature do garner significant attention. I know there is always this natural inclination, especially with this Minister of Justice, to use those types of meetings to take shots at Ottawa as opposed to doing some really good, solid, tangible things that will have a positive impact, Mr. Speaker. This is one of those things which, I think, would be a very strong thing, something that would be beneficial, the sooner that all provinces adopt it because I am sure members, every member of this Chamber, whether it is friends, if not friends, even family members that used to live in the province of Manitoba now that live outside of the province of Manitoba, and there are all sorts of judgments that take place and those judgments, whether, as I indicated, that they are of monetary or non-monetary judgments, that they should be recognized as having validity in other jurisdictions.

So, with those few words, Mr. Speaker, we are quite prepared to see the bill go to committee. Thank you.

* (16:00)

Ms. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Fort Garry): It is a pleasure to stand up and to put a few words on the record regarding Bill 3, The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act. This legislation is going to make it easier for women who have protection orders across Canada and they want to come to Manitoba. This order will follow them. That will help with their mobility as well as their sense of security.

In my past life as a social worker, I dealt intimately with people involved with domestic violence, the victims as well as the offenders, and the victims, as they came into Manitoba and into Winnipeg to resettle from Saskatchewan, would have to go through a process of applying for a new protection order, which was very onerous and also put them at jeopardy for their safety. Because of that, they would have to contact the offender, and they would start a whole court process yet again. So I am very proud that this government and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh) are bringing this legislation forward. It is going to continue to support and protect people in Manitoba but also will ensure that people relocating to our province will maintain a level of safety and comfort. This is only one part of our domestic violence strategy, which is comprehensive and preventative in nature.

Some of the highlights I would like to talk about are expansion of the specialized domestic violence victim services from five to 28 communities for better access outside urban centres. Domestic violence does not just happen within the Perimeter. We acknowledge that it is an issue that affects Manitobans in rural and northern areas as well.

I am proud that one of the services that provides support to families regarding domestic violence is the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre. They provide individual counselling as well as support for groups. They also help individuals resettle and begin their new lives in a manner that they can feel safe and productive.

As well as expanding services across Manitoba, we also expanded the mandate of victim support workers to help victims obtain civil protection orders either before or after charges are laid, so, again, simplifying the process for women and children to ensure their safety.

Investing: We have invested \$131,000 in additional funding to 34 community agencies whose focus is domestic violence. We have expanded

public awareness campaign in urban, rural and northern communities. That campaign promises are not the only things that get broken reinforces the important message that people can take steps to help end domestic violence in their communities.

After being elected in 2003, one of the privileges that I had was when we launched this campaign. I was able to represent the minister and the Premier (Mr. Doer) at this event and the hope that service providers as well as victims had during that campaign launch, that we are going to prevent other women and children from being impacted by domestic violence as well as provide support for A Woman's Place with \$40,000 in funding, as well as services of the Crown attorneys and victim support workers. Again, this is a service, a strategy that will cocoon victims of violence in a way that gives them the supports that they need individually, as well as family supports, but also a prevention model.

I think it is very important that all sides of the House support The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act, Bill 3. It is also going to make sure that, when a person is relocating to another province, the law enforcement officers or agencies are going to be protected, too, with liability from any action taken in good faith in the enforcement of a Canadian protection order. So, when they are presented with a protection order, they will trust that this is a valid protection order, and if it is not, they will be protected from any concerns that will happen after that.

The legislation will allow a party Canadian civil protection order to register with Manitoba court in the event that they wish to seek enforcement to the specific provisions in the order. This is very progressive legislation. It is legislation that is going to provide support to families and individuals now and in the future. As I said, it is only one part of a multifaceted approach that we have in our province to support families. There are lots of other programs that we are involved in.

The Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet also does prevention work through the parent-child centres as well as through programs such as Triple P, a parenting program which is going to provide support and information to families in Manitoba.

So I want to conclude my remarks, again, by saying let us take this bill to committee and pass it through and make sure that Manitobans and newcomers to our province will continue to live and

thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any other speakers?

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 3, The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act.

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

Bill 5—The Dental Hygienists Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 5, The Dental Hygienists Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

What is the will of the House?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Leave it standing? Okay, there is agreement that it will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure, once again, to be able to speak on another fine piece of legislation brought forward by this government. Earlier on I had a chance to speak to the security guard amendment act and now The Dental Hygienists Act. It is amazing that it really is an honour to speak to this bill.

Mr. Speaker, as members have said, the time for this legislation has come. The act will provide better accountability for Manitobans. It will allow the dental hygienist profession to be self-regulated. I think all of us in this Chamber have been lobbied from time to time by dental hygienists. They get you in a very, kind of, vulnerable state. They are prodding you with these various instruments; they have these drills and other instruments of their profession. They get you back there and say, "Oh, by the way, can you guys move forward along with our dentist hygienists act?" Of course, we are saying that, well, it would probably be the wise move on our part, that we certainly would do so. I am pleased to say that our government is doing just that.

We know that this new college will be accountable to our government, Mr. Speaker. It will be required to submit an annual report and, as well, will include public representation on the board. So there will be members from the public. There will be, obviously, individuals, dental hygienists from the

profession who will be able to sit on the board to ensure that their representations are heard.

As well, the college will attract more professions to practise here in Manitoba. Having a regulated industry such as this will provide stability and predictability and it will enforce standards which professionals have said will make for a more desirable work environment, Mr. Speaker. So we are dedicated to making sure that the environment is better for the dental hygienists to work in, that there are standards, stable and predictable and enforceable standards that professionals have called for.

As the members know, in the recent Speech from the Throne we have announced that we are going to be providing better care for children's dental health. This act will help us, Mr. Speaker, in meeting that important goal because it will allow individuals who work in this industry to help expand their industry and to govern themselves.

As the members know, in 1993 I sat in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I voted against, I know several of my colleagues that are here, some of them that are here now were here then, in 1993, voted against the Member for Steinbach and his colleagues when they cancelled the children's rural dental program. I know that, as members in this House, we strongly protested that move. It was an attack upon young rural Manitobans and northern Manitobans, and the members opposite, when they were in government, decided to cancel that program.

* (16:10)

So now, Mr. Speaker, we have inherited a problem where tooth decay, particularly among children, has become a great problem, particularly in rural northern Manitoba. Again, and this is perhaps why the Conservative Party have been unable to ever elect a member from northern Manitoba and I predict they will never elect a member from northern Manitoba, because we have such wonderful representation from the North now that people from the North will never elect a Tory and are very, very happy with their current representative from the North.

With this legislation, the dental hygienists in this province will join 92 percent of their colleagues across Canada who are already regulated under a college. So 92 percent of dental hygienists in Canada are currently regulated and now, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba dental hygienists will also be part of that. The Manitoba Dental Hygienists Association

president recently praised our government and he praised the Minister of Health (Mr. Sale) for bringing forward this important initiative.

I believe there are over 500 dental hygienists practising in Manitoba and currently they are regulated under The Dental Association Act. I said this act will create a College of Dental Hygienists, which will be part of the regulation to ensure that this particular industry grows in this province. As I have said—

An Honourable Member: Point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Member for Inkster, on a point of order?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have been sitting here for a while and I just had a point of order in terms of the issue on quorum. If, in fact, there is no one sitting in the front benches on the government side and you have four ministers that are in the Chamber, does that have any impact on quorum?

Mr. Speaker: Same point of order, the honourable Member for Steinbach?

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, certainly I suspect a ruling will indicate and properly should that the quorum relates to those who are actually within the Chamber, but I do take the member's point to heart that there are very few Cabinet ministers here. There are very few individuals in their place and position, and I think it shows disrespect for this Legislature that the government does not take these issues seriously.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, on the same point of order?

Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, it is not part of the dealings of this House to address who is in the House and who is not in the House. However, it is obvious from this side that there is just about triple the number of all the other parties in the House at present time. I do not believe the member has a point of order and, certainly, he is being disruptive to the member that is speaking. I do not believe there is a point of order being addressed.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Inkster, first of all, I would like to remind members that our rules state that it is

not in order to address the absence of members, and No. 2 is that quorum is 10. There is no identification of what members or what ministers, it is a quorum of 10. I look around and we have much more than 10, so we will continue the debate.

* * *

Mr. Dewar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I want to continue on with my discussion here about the importance of dental hygienists and how it is important that we get this legislation passed. Regrettably, the Member for Inkster has tried to delay passage of this by his needless interruptions and I am very pleased that you ruled against him.

As I have said, we have introduced pediatric dental services in Thompson. We are bringing care closer to home for northerners. We have repatriated surgeries to all communities. I believe we are going to do children's dental surgeries in the community of Beausejour. The wait list has come down from 1400 to 900 and we know that there is more to do. This legislation is part of that, it is one aspect of that, Mr. Speaker. We realize that it is long and overdue. The Conservatives, when they were in government, did not do it when they had their chance, but I am very proud to be a government that is. Thank you.

Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words on Bill 5, The Dental Hygienists Act. One reason health is a very important matter to our movement over the years. Since the days of Tommy Douglas, we have always been the party of health. In fact, Tommy Douglas won the greatest Canadian award. He is our greatest Canadian. Let us continue the work of what Tommy Douglas started way back in the 1940s. That is why this bill is quite important to us.

This bill will define the practice of dental hygiene and provide for the regulation of the profession, so it sort of cleans up and clarifies many issues in dental hygiene. It also includes provisions to establish the college of dental hygienists of Manitoba. These are the specialists that will rule on many issues. Also, it will establish a governing council with public representatives and require the registration of dental hygienists, and it will create processes for handling complaints and discipline. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that modernizes the work that dental hygienists do.

Mr. Speaker, our party does more than just put out MRIs, as you know, and CT scans across the province. We have done more than just, you know,

build and expand, renovate hospitals such as Swan River, Brandon, Ste. Anne, Portage la Prairie, Beausejour, Gimli and Steinbach. We have also opened up new primary health care centres in Camperville, Waterhen, Flin Flon, Riverton, Niverville, Sprague and the R.M. of Montcalm. This is just part of our larger health packages that we are working on. We have done much, but there is more to do, and we continue to do more.

Mr. Speaker, as already pointed out, the Tories are rather weak on health care. In this area, they are very weak. However, during election time, they will come out with some slogans and say, "Hey, here we are." But they really do not have an agenda on health. This is just one area that we are modernizing where they have done nothing for years. In 1993 the Tories cancelled the children's dental program, and we inherited the situation where children's tooth decay was becoming a problem, especially in northern Manitoba, which they paid no interest to. We also introduced a pediatric dental service in Thompson, bringing care closer to home for residents of the North. The wait list for the program has come down already from 1400 to approximately 900, the wait time down from about eight months to around five months. We have more to do, but when we got elected in '99, we had to catch up from the 10 or 12 lost years of the Tories.

The dental hygienists are a very important part of health care. Our oral health affects our overall health and well-being, and oral diseases affect our whole health system. I know people in the opposition think it is a small bill, but to us dental care is most important. Oral diseases require dollars to treat. In '99 it was estimated that private spending on dental care in Canada reached \$6.4 billion. Millions of hours of work or time are impacted each year due to dental disease and dental visits.

So we are pointing out that this is very important to us. Dental health care is very important to Canadians and we are just modernizing dental hygienists' work.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*(16:20)

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to put a few words on record regarding Bill 5, The Dental Hygienists Act, which, among other things, defines the practice of dental hygiene and formulates regulations for the profession. It also establishes a college of dental

hygiene, a governing council and processes for registering dental hygienists and dealing with discipline and complaint issues.

I was listening, with bated breath, to my colleague from Rossmere, who was trying to put this into some larger context, and I am very happy that he referenced Tommy Douglas and the New Democrats, the CCF at the time, in 1944, for whom health was a No. 1 issue. It has always been for this party. Of course, dental health is part of that much larger package.

As a matter of fact, oral health is of great importance to all people, because it affects you, not only in the terms of physical health, but also your healthy self-esteem. I mean, I often wonder when I see pictures of Third World countries and they are interviewing somebody and the person is missing all his teeth, or the teeth have rotted out, I cannot see that person having, you know, really good self-esteem, because one of the basic things you should be having, good dental health, is absent. We have much to be thankful for in this country, not only a good health care system, but, by and large, a good dental health care system as well.

It is, Mr. Speaker, a huge business, not only in Canada, but all across the globe. But particularly in Canada, it is a business that involves some \$7 billion, the dental care business. There are 14 000 dental hygienists in Canada and 500 in Manitoba itself. It is a very noble profession and an important profession to all our health.

About six weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, I was in Cross Lake, a community in northern Manitoba, along with a very distinguished colleague of mine. We happened to be doing a tour of the school, and I was very happy that one of the people in the school showed us, I guess they called it the dental office, and the lady working there. I do not honestly know what her title would be, whether she was a dental hygienist or a dental technician, or whatever, dental assistant. I think probably more than that because she handled all dental issues in the school, unless they were of an extreme nature, an acute nature, then, of course, she would call in a dentist from outside that, I imagine, would fly in every once in a while. But virtually 99 percent of the time she would handle all the dental issues that would arise in that school, the Otter Nelson River School in Cross Lake, and I thought that was such a sensible approach. It was the same sensible approach that, many years ago, I believe it was under Premier Schreyer that we

brought dental programs into the school, where we had under-12 dental programs for children. Those were great programs. It was too bad that they were cut by the Tories, because it makes so much sense to focus your front-line professionals at early intervention, rather than wait later on when you have to redo or to fix up something that should have been handled many, many years earlier on.

Now, some of my colleagues have referenced the fact that dental care is not at 100 percent optimal level in northern Manitoba, because many of the communities are isolated. That is certainly a factor, because many communities have difficulty keeping a dentist or supporting a dentist. I can point out, for example, Lynn Lake and Leaf Rapids have been working hard to try and get a dentist in on a regular basis. But also there is the fact of nutrition, Mr. Speaker, because dental health is very much related to proper nutrition, and in northern Manitoba sometimes proper nutrition is hard to come by, particularly in isolated, remote and poor communities. The price of milk is sometimes astronomical. In fact, I got a call this morning from a lady in Leaf Rapids. Leaf Rapids is not at all that far north, compared to other communities, but the lady there was pointing out that she was in the Co-op store and a two-litre jug of milk was \$7, I believe, whereas a two-litre jug of pop, soda, whatever, Pepsi, Coke, I am not sure what they were selling, was 99 cents for two litres. So, very obviously, poorer people, or people who have difficulty having enough money to buy nutritious food, would gravitate towards buying that kind of nutrition for their children, or poor nutrition for their children, because I think pop or soda is certainly not a good substitute for milk, but it is one of those sad realities in northern Manitoba, that the price is sometimes out of reach of ordinary people, and that has horrendous effects on their health, and certainly on their teeth.

So I thought I would put that on the record, Mr. Speaker, because our isolated areas could use a lot more support, both medical and other supports. So, anything we do to improve the situation is a positive, and this Bill 5, certainly, does improve the situation by creating a self-regulating dental hygienist system.

Mr. Speaker, we did have, as I mentioned earlier, a very good children's dental program years ago, and it was also in the schools, and in 1992 the Tories cut it. It was referred to in some quarters, and I will just quote a few people, *The Winnipeg Sun*, in May of 1993, called it "a heartless attack on poor and middle-income families." That should not, of course,

surprise us. We have had the Tories having heartless attacks on poor and middle-income families for a long time. It is nothing new. I think it was *The Interlake Spectator* that called the cuts "mean," or "mean-spirited," which I think they were. The Tories said, "Well, you know, we should have maybe put them back and replaced the cuts." But they had lots of time in office to do that and they did not do that.

As well, I should point out, in 1993, when those fairly mean-spirited cuts were made, it put an awful lot of people out of work. It put dental hygienists out of work, dental nurses, technicians and, I imagine, even some dentists because those massive cuts have their impact, not only on the health care of people, but on the people in the profession itself. When they laid off thousands of nurses—well, thousands; hundreds of nurses, you know—that obviously had a major impact on the health care of Manitobans.

So I am happy to see that we are doing something. This is an important step in the right direction. We are dealing with front-line workers. Bill 5, The Dental Hygienists Act, is a good step in the right direction. I commend the government for having introduced this bill and I hope all members support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any other speakers? Seeing none—oh, honourable Minister of Family Services and Housing.

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Family Services and Housing): Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise in favour of The Dental Hygienists Act. There are over 500 dental hygienists in Manitoba, and I think that we have come to the time in our province where we are very, very ready to respect dental hygienists as professionals in their own right, professionals who know that they provide a very important service. When we talk about the dental care continuum, hygienists play one of the most important roles in that it is a preventative role. It is a preventative role in the physical treatments, but also in the education that they provide to Manitobans of all ages. So I am very, very strongly in favour of this legislation.

I think it is important to recognize that the new act will actually create a college of dental hygienists in Manitoba and that this college will be delegated the authority to regulate the practice of dental hygienists so that we know that dental hygienists will be able to make decisions that are necessary to advance their profession and make decisions that are

necessary also to advance the care that they provide to so many of us in the province of Manitoba.

I think it is also important to note that Manitoba is respecting the movement across Canada that is recognizing dental hygienists, 92 percent of whom already are under regulated colleges. So I am very, very pleased that our Minister of Health (Mr. Sale) has taken the initiative to recognize, in this jurisdiction, the need to have an act like this.

I think it is also important to recognize that there has been a very positive response from the dental hygiene community to this act and to this legislation. I will just quote Kristin Carter, who is the Manitoba Dental Hygienists Association president, who said, "Dental hygienists look forward to accepting the responsibility for helping to improve the public's access to primary oral health care," and "the MDHA praises this government for tabling this bill," stating that they, too, "congratulate the Health Minister for this important initiative."

So, again, this is another example of this government working with our community—in this case, it is the dental hygienists of Manitoba—and putting together an act that I hope will be supported and become the law in this province that recognizes and respects the important work done by hygienists, but also recognizes that hygienists are professionals in their own right. So I encourage the House to be very supportive of this piece of legislation. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Any other speakers?

Okay, when this matter is again before the House it will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

* (16:30)

Bill 6—The Dental Association Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 6, The Dental Association Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck).

What is the will of the House?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina. [*Agreed*]

Any speakers?

When this matter is again before the House, it will remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Pembina.

**Bill 9—The Farm Practices
Protection Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 9, The Farm Practices Protection Amendment Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Cullen).

What is the will of the House?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain. [*Agreed*]

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Conservation): Mr. Speaker, as a member of this Legislature who represents a number of farmers, it is very much a pleasure to stand in my seat, not stand in my seat, sorry, to stand in my place next to my seat. Lest those people who read Hansard over and over got the idea that I am standing in my seat, I want to correct myself on that. I am standing next to my seat, still very proud of the fact that I can stand next to my seat and talk on behalf of those people in my constituency who make their living off of the land.

I want to make, I think, a very important point, Mr. Speaker, is that this bill is not good just for farmers, it is good for farmers and the communities in which they live. I think, if anything, we have to get across to people who may not live on farms or in very small communities, is how important that connection is between the farmer and the community, more so, even in small, little communities, in small, little districts who do not have, maybe, the modern conveniences of large urban centres. But there is something about these little communities that I very much like, and that many people in this province, I think, understand and to their credit—

An Honourable Member: They are dying.

Mr. Struthers: Well, the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) says they are dying. I do not accept that. I absolutely do not accept that. We can roll up the sidewalks in these streets if that is what the Member for Steinbach thinks we should do. We can take the approach of the Member for Steinbach and tell little communities all over rural Manitoba that they are dying, that maybe they are not worth fighting for, that maybe that way of life was just something that was there back in World War II or whenever the Member for Steinbach thinks these communities were vibrant. I just do not accept that. I

reject that kind of very narrow vision from the Member for Steinbach. I think those little communities are vibrant. I think those little communities have a lot of lessons for the rest of us in Manitoba that we can learn from.

I was struck last week when I was participating in the Remembrance Day ceremonies in my constituency in Dauphin. I saw some pictures from very small communities that contributed many, many young men and women to the cause back in World War II. I was amazed at how many young men and women came from some of these little districts, little districts today that are, indeed, struggling. That are, indeed, today fighting to stay alive. What the people in these communities need is not the negative doom-and-gloom attitude of the Member for Steinbach and his colleagues across the way, what they need is a government that is positive about their futures. That is us here on this side of the House. What these communities need is a government that is willing to take on the very tough issues that face little communities and farmers. That is what they have in this government, on this side of the House. We want to be positive about living in rural Manitoba, not negative about living in little communities in rural Manitoba, like I see emanating from across the way.

We need to be positive about all of the benefits about living in little communities in Manitoba, and we need, as we have been doing for six years in government, to put forth ideas and resolutions and bills and programs that support people who live in small communities, who support the farmer who works day after day after day to put food on our tables. There is nothing more important than putting food on our tables.

We always have to remember that we cannot undervalue the worth of people who toil on the land to make sure that the rest of us can eat. Now, the Member for Steinbach (Mr. Goertzen) again encourages us to kill those communities and that is not—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

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

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I believe that *Beauchesne* is very clear that information needs to be factual brought before the House.

The minister is saying that I am suggesting that communities be killed, but what I have suggested is that, in fact, when hospitals are being closed in Rivers, when schools are being closed in Westman, that this government's policies are killing these small communities. That is the issue and they need to address it.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Steinbach, points of order are not to be used for debating purposes.

On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Steinbach, he does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Struthers: What I think it was, Mr. Speaker, was a point of guilty conscience on behalf of the Member for Steinbach. He can sit at his seat and he can chirp away here all day, as he does day after day, about the doom and gloom that he sees happening in rural Manitoba. He can chirp away about how these communities need to have their sidewalks rolled up.

He can chirp away over there all the time about these little communities being negative, and he can doom-and-gloom it all he likes, but that is not going to stop this government from moving ahead and doing the right things for rural Manitobans, doing the right things for farmers, doing the right things for rural communities, communities like Alonsa in the constituency of my friend across there from Ste. Rose.

Whenever I stop at the community of Alonsa, they talk to me about the good things that their conservation district is doing. They talk to me about the good things that that conservation district is doing, not just in terms of drainage, not just in terms of the usual kinds of projects that conservation districts get in, but that is a good example in Alonsa of local communities, local people working in a very creative way with government, with local private interests, with the local producers to produce very good results.

So, if the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) wants to join in with his colleague from Steinbach in being negative and doom and gloom, then he can, but I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Ste. Rose has been here long enough to know that there are a lot of good things happening out there in rural Manitoba, that there is a lot of very positive action that is being taken.

I think way down deep members opposite know that there are some very good things that this government has done to help farmers, to help small agricultural communities. *[interjection]* Well, I would encourage, though, the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), I would encourage that Member for Emerson to dig into it and take a good hard look, do some research for a change and take a good look.

I will even help the Member for Emerson to see some of the good, positive things. When he was in government, Mr. Speaker, did they do anything in terms of farm taxes?

An Honourable Member: Nothing.

* (16:40)

Mr. Struthers: Oh, no. I want to caution people, do not fall into the trap of thinking they did nothing. They raised taxes on farmers. They raised the portioning on taxes. They raised it, Mr. Speaker. It would have been better if they had done nothing.

We, on the other hand, have taken a different approach. We have dealt with portioning, to begin with. Then we started to take seriously the requests that we were getting in terms of the education tax on farm property. We have moved on that, not once, not twice, but three times now. Mr. Speaker, 60 percent, we are 60 percent ahead of what the Conservatives did when they were in power. That is a real savings for my constituents who make their living off the land, who provide food for all of us to eat.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is a good thing. I think members opposite understand that that is a good thing. I think, deep down, they know that. I think, deep down, they kind of regret not having voted for a Throne Speech that included the movement towards that 60 percent number.

One thing that I hear a lot about, and I know all of us have heard this, and to the credit of people who do live in our largest city, our capital here in Winnipeg, a lot of people understand that it is absolutely important to set the stage for the younger farmer to take over from the older farmer. In my constituency, there are a number of farmers who get to that 68-, 70-, 72-year-old stage. They would like to retire. They would like to move—

An Honourable Member: That is the average age of people over there.

Mr. Struthers: You are a lot of help.

They would like to move off the land. They would like to retire and have some sort of a life living in dignity. They would like to be able to do that. More still than that, they would like to be able to bridge the generation. They would like to have their land, their holdings transferred to a younger farmer with a young family who can enrol their students in a nice, little rural school, whose kids can go and learn to curl at the local curling rink. They can skate out on the pond and then play on the local hockey team and be members of the community club. Their kids can join the 4-H. I mean, there is no better way to live. There is no better lifestyle.

But what they are finding is that that is a tough transition for the older farmer to do that. That is why we have come forward with the Bridging Generations Initiative. That has provided in excess of \$40 million to assist this very thing to happen, an inter-generational transfer of the farm from a farmer who wants to retire to somebody younger.

Now, this is not just good for the farmer who wants to retire; it is good for that person. It is not just good for the younger farmer who wants to get into agriculture as a way of life. This is good for our communities. This is good for our districts, our regions. This is how you go about building stronger communities in all parts of rural Manitoba. It is very important that this project, that this initiative, this Bridging Generations Initiative that my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (Ms. Wowchuk) has brought forward, I think this initiative needs to be highlighted, and I think this initiative needs to work because this is an important component of success in rural Manitoba.

If rural Manitoba succeeds, then all of Manitoba succeeds. We, in this province, are a bit unique because we have so much of our population who live in one large centre here in Winnipeg, and that could work positively in our favour in so many ways. There are many in rural Manitoba who believe that that could work negatively against us as well. But you know what? What we have to come to grips with, what we have to understand, all of us here as legislators, we have to understand that if we do have a strong capital city, and, if we do have a strong rural area and northern area in Manitoba, that that feeds off each other, that we are interdependent. The city dwellers and rural and northern dwellers, we are interdependent with one another. Whatever we can do to support each other, whatever we can do to learn more about each other, ultimately, I believe, Mr.

Speaker, is a good thing. That is one aspect that our government has been working very hard on.

From time to time, agriculture is faced with extraordinary circumstances. There are events that put rural Manitoba, put agriculture, into a crisis. We have been experiencing that, with the closure of the border, with the whole BSE crisis, that has hit not just our province, but other provinces as well, and this government has been responding to that crisis. This government has responded time and again to that crisis.

One of the main things that we have understood that our predecessors did not seem to get is that we do need to expand the capacity to slaughter cows in this province. In their world, when they had the chance to do things back in those dark 1990s, they dropped the ball. They did not expand our capacity to slaughter. They actually watched as it slid backwards. That is not the approach of this government. We have already moved forward with increasing the slaughter numbers. If anybody on the opposite side does not think that the BSE crisis is relevant to The Farm Practices Protection Act, they better give their heads a shake. They had better go back to the books and figure out what makes rural Manitoba tick, Mr. Speaker.

Our approach has been, in order to protect farm communities, to increase our ability to slaughter cows in this province, right here in Manitoba. It makes good sense. We have been doing it. I will put our numbers up against your numbers any day of the week. Even already, I would do that.

Mr. Speaker, the \$11.5 million in support of the Rancher's Choice co-op is nothing for members opposite to laugh about. That is nothing for them to laugh about. Even before that, we were so far ahead of the numbers that they were able to produce, that they are way behind. They are in the dust on this gravel road, so far behind. We will continue to take that challenge seriously.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, there are issues that seem like they are small, but when you think about them, they are very big. I am thinking about the Rural Stress Line, the Farm and Rural Stress Line. Now, this is an important line in and of itself. This is an important line for farmers and people living in rural Manitoba where there has been a lot of pressure, where there has been a lot of crisis.

An Honourable Member: What does the bill have to do with that?

Mr. Struthers: Well, if the member from Emerson does not think that the Farm and Rural Stress Line is connected to farm protection, then he knows even less about rural Manitoba than I give him credit for.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1990s, when our friends across the way had their chance to send the message to rural Manitoba that they were important, that their problems were important and that it was important to allow rural Manitobans a valve, a mechanism in which to bring forward their problems and talk about these pressures that we have in the farm communities, they said no.

* (16:50)

They had a chance to do the right thing with the stress line. They said no. They did not get it, Mr. Speaker. We get it. We have reinstated that Farm and Rural Stress Line after the former Tory government removed it. They said no to rural Manitoba. We said yes to rural Manitoba.

I also want to talk just a little bit about how important it is for a government to invest in the infrastructure that we so much depend upon in rural Manitoba, farmers, farm communities, even larger urban centres in rural Manitoba. Now, there are all of those traditional kinds of infrastructure that we all know are important. There is water infrastructure. People all across Manitoba made decisions on where they were going to homestead based on the availability of water. When my great-grandparents went to the Swan River Valley, they stayed there because they could have access to clean water. We need to remember this when we make decisions today. Sewage, we need to be very careful about what we do with our sewage and be responsible in the removal of the sewage that we create in our economic activity.

We need to have highways infrastructure. My colleague the Minister of Transportation and Government Services (Mr. Lemieux) can show where we have increased year after year from the paltry amount that was available under the previous government. We can show every year where we have increased that, where we have done more work on the highways infrastructure in our province. Mr. Speaker, I think drainage needs to be considered part of the infrastructure that we invest in, and we have been increasing those amounts in terms of drainage. That is a very important part of rural Manitoba.

I want to add to that that we also need, as rural Manitobans, we also need to see the infrastructure in

kind of a 21st century light as well. I represent some communities who do not have access to high-speed Internet. One of those communities is Ochre River. Now, why would Ochre River with a small little K-to-8 school, why would we ask those parents to send their kids to a school where they do not have the same kind of an advantage as another school somewhere else in the province? It is good education for these kids at Ochre River to have high-speed Internet. It is good economy.

The best kind of an economic strategy for a province is to have a good education plan, but you know what? More than anything, it is a matter of fairness; it is a matter of equity. People living in Ochre River have just as much right to that broadband, that high-speed Internet infrastructure as any student in any other community in this province. There are other communities too. I am speaking on behalf of my community in my constituency, and there are lots of other communities that we could put on this list that I think need to be hooked up with that infrastructure.

I think we need to start labelling it as important infrastructure because too often I think we see the high-speed Internet as an add-on, as a bell or a whistle. I do not see it that way, Mr. Speaker. I see it as infrastructure. I think every community needs to work with us, even through their local MLAs, to get hooked up to that infrastructure, because whether it is a school, whether it is a little library, whether it is a community club, whether it is the local R.M. office, they need to have that kind of a connection with the outside world, and our government has been working to do that.

Part of what we announced in the last round of Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure was an approach to broadband, an approach that will include many, many rural communities and rural people. It also included an approach to northern Manitoba, that part of the province that the former government never kind of rolled out the provincial map to take a look at. We are doing that as a government.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that Bill 9 is an important act, The Farm Practices Protection Amendment Act, and I am very proud today to stand in support of it. Thank you very much.

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): You know, I was not going to speak on Bill 9, Mr. Speaker. This is such a disappointment that this is the idea that this government has in terms of important legislation on behalf of agriculture and rural development. I am

appalled. What it is is another one of a series of light bills that we have introduced in the House. Excepting the bill around engineers and architects, most of the legislation we have seen in this session has not been of a weighty nature or one that has a significant impact on the future of this province.

The Farm Practices Protection Amendment Act, Bill 9, on the proposed motion of the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), talks about protecting the Farm Practices Protection Board from liability. I think that anybody in rural Manitoba who checks the record, I want that put clearly on the record that that seems to be the import of this bill. No one on this side would argue that that is a poor thing to do, but this probably should be characterized as housekeeping.

What has provoked me to speak, frankly, is my colleague from Dauphin who has used this as an opportunity for a platform to talk about all of the things that he believes his government is doing on behalf of the people of this province in rural Manitoba and how well they are doing on behalf of my constituents and others in terms of what is happening on their behalf in terms of initiatives from this government.

Mr. Speaker, in my response to the Speech from the Throne, I vented my frustration about the lack of leadership on the part of this government to deal with the issues that are current and ongoing in rural Manitoba. I was additionally motivated yesterday when we pursued the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers) and, ultimately, the Premier (Mr. Doer) of this province about what their plans were regarding the development of the new hog slaughtering facility in Manitoba, which we have a great deal of support and appreciation for. Olymel and their partners are a group of quality companies that will provide significant benefit to the pork industry in this province and significant benefit to all of the province with the size of their investment. I think with the ultimate high management standards that I know Olymel ascribes to, they will be a benefit to the community.

But the government took great umbrage at being asked, at simply being asked what their plans were to help put this company into the infrastructure of this city, help them to be put in a place where they will function comfortably within the livestock industry. That refers to the transportation corridors that may be necessary. It refers to whether or not the government has given adequate consideration to

environmental issues, and I see the member from Dauphin is staring blissfully off into space, undoubtedly thinking about the environmental quality of the Assiniboine where Maple Leaf was added to the infrastructure in Brandon. He knows full well that that was one of the most important issues that had to be dealt with, but, yet, his government is insulted that people on this side would even think to ask about the environment. Well, pardon me, Manitoba used to be a leader in the environment until this government came into power and it has gone downhill ever since.

* (17:00)

Mr. Speaker, in chirping across the way, I ask the member from Dauphin if he would take a little detour through Alonsa next time he was coming to Winnipeg. I am pretty sure he has some friends there. I do not get all of the vote there, that is for sure.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I do not mean that in any other sense except that, as an individual and as a neighbouring politician, I know he has some friends in the Alonsa area. I also know that, and the member, I think, will not object to me putting this on the record because it is true, if there is one area in Manitoba, that is the region between Alonsa and Amaranth and the area east of the community pastures in the area bounded on the other side by the lake, it is pure ranchland, in the main. These people have—[interjection]

Is my House leader about to give me the hook?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, with your agreement, I will step down for a minute.

Mr. Speaker: When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 25 minutes remaining.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on House business.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I think, according to our agreement between House leaders and according to the new rules that have been established, we are to signal which resolutions we are going to be debating tomorrow morning. I think it is with leave that we ask that the resolution regarding the appreciation of Manitoba law enforcement be debated tomorrow, if that is in agreement with government.

But, in addition to that, I am wondering whether or not there is still an ability for House leaders to meet to discuss other votable resolutions.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to not see the clock for a few minutes? *[Agreed]*

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Monday, November 21, at 6 p.m.; Tuesday, November 22, at 9 a.m. till 12 noon, and then from 3 till 5, by leave; and then that evening, Tuesday, November 22, at 6 p.m., to consider Bill 7, the architects and engineers legislation.

I have a second one, Mr. Speaker. I would like to announce the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Tuesday, November 22, at 6 p.m. to consider Bills 2, 3 and 8.

Mr. Speaker: I guess there is agreement for tomorrow morning to deal with law enforcement. There is agreement on that; that has been announced.

It has also been announced that the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development will meet on Monday, November 21, 2005, at 6 p.m., also on Tuesday, November 22, 2005, at 9 a.m., by leave. Is there agreement on that? *[Agreed]* From 9

a.m. to 12 noon and then from 3 p.m. till 5 p.m., so there is agreement on that.

Also on Tuesday, November 22 at 6 p.m.—*[interjection]* I will just finish this—to consider Bill 7, The Architects and Engineers Scope of Practice Dispute Settlement Act (Various Acts Amended).

It has also been announced that the Standing Committee on Justice will meet on Tuesday, November 22, 2005, at 6 p.m. to consider Bill 2, The Private Investigators and Security Guards Amendment Act; Bill 3, The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act; and Bill 8, The Official Time Amendment Act.

Mr. Mackintosh: With regard to the sittings on Tuesday, while the House sits, there is no quorum or votes, of course, on Tuesday morning, but, Mr. Speaker, from the 3 to 5 time, is there also agreement for no quorum?

Mr. Speaker: Okay, so, for Tuesday, November 22, 2005, is there agreement that there will be no quorum and also no votes between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.? Is there agreement? *[Agreed]*

So the hour being 5 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 16, 2005

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