

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

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authority of
The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Eighth Legislature

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BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
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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.
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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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SWAN, Andrew	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.
VACANT	Kirkfield Park	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYER

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 20—The Biofuels Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Struthers), that Bill 20, The Biofuels Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biocarburants, now be read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this bill which solidifies Manitoba's position as a leader in the biofuels sector. The bill provides for the licensing of biodiesel manufacturers, the adoption of biofuel's fuel quality standards and the future implementation of biodiesel sales mandate. It also amends The Biofuels Act to allow for the forthcoming implementation of the ethanol sales mandate and to update Manitoba's ethanol content and incentive structure in order to harmonize Manitoba's approach with measures at the federal level and in other provinces.

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

Bill 218—The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), that Bill 218, The Elections Amendment and Elections Finances Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, this bill goes a long way in ensuring that there is transparency in terms of the investigations that are being conducted by Elections Manitoba. We have seen an incident, in particular, in the last few months in regard to the Premier's (Mr. Doer) Office and staff, and one of the reasons why legislation of this nature is needed to ensure that there is more transparency by having annual reports to the Manitoba Legislature.

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

Bill 216—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act

Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale): Mr. Speaker, I move, pardon me, that Bill 216, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act—

Mr. Speaker: Order. You have to move the motion first.

Mr. Reimer: Pardon me, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), that Bill 216, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Motion presented

Mr. Reimer: Mr. Speaker, this bill exempts the Winnipeg Humane Society for the prevention of cruelty to animals from the requirement to pay municipal and school taxes in respect of its lands and buildings. The exception does not include municipal levies for local improvements.

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

PETITIONS

Provincial Nominee Program

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:

Immigration is critically important to the future of our province, and the 1998 federal Provincial Nominee Program is the best immigration program that Manitoba has ever had.

The government needs to recognize the unnecessary backlogs in processing PNP applications causes additional stress and anxiety for would-be immigrants and their families here in Manitoba.

The government needs to recognize the unfairness in its current policy on who qualifies to be an applicant, more specifically, by not allowing professionals such as health care workers to be able to apply for PNP certificates in the same way a computer technician would be able to.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Premier (Mr. Doer) and his government to consider improving and strengthening the Provincial Nominee Program in order to recognize and acknowledge how important immigration is to our province.

This is signed by E. Savella, C. Savella, K. Savella and many, many others. Thank you.

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

Removal of Agriculture Positions from Minnedosa

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

Nine positions with the Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, Crown Lands Branch, are being moved out of Minnedosa.

Removal of these positions will severely impact the local economy.

Removal of these positions will be detrimental to revitalizing this rural agriculture community.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the provincial government to consider stopping the removal of these positions from our community, and to consider utilizing current technology in order to maintain these positions in their existing location.

This petition signed by M.A. Howard, D. Trott, J. Birch and many, many other women, especially.

Grace General Hospital ER

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

The provincial government has not ensured that the Grace Hospital emergency room is staffed with a full complement of ER doctors. The ER has been short several doctors for more than two years.

Because of this shortage, only one ER doctor is working on many shifts, forcing long patient waits for emergency care.

Residents of the community fear that the Grace Hospital ER will be forced to close if this ER doctor shortage is not fixed immediately.

The provincial government has not come forward with a clear, immediate plan to address the ER doctor shortage.

We petition the Manitoba Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald) to consider developing a clear, immediate plan to address the ER doctor shortage.

To request the Minister of Health to consider taking all necessary steps to ensure the Grace Hospital emergency room does not close.

Signed by L. Thompson, L. Voth, J. Thiessen and many, many others.

* (13:40)

Lynn Lake Friendship Centre

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and these are the reasons for this petition:

Cree Nation Child and Family Caring Agency is a provincially mandated First Nation child protection and welfare agency. Operating under authority of the provincial Ministry of Family Services and Housing, the mission is to help keep children, families and communities safe and secure and promote healthy citizen development and well-being.

Lynn Lake is located 320 kilometres northwest of Thompson, Manitoba, on PR 391. There is no social worker living and working in the community. The goals of the ministry are implemented from a distance and supplemented with infrequent and short visits from a social worker located in Thompson.

The Lynn Lake Friendship Centre is a designated safe house and receiving home providing accommodations, services and care to children and families experiencing difficulties in a safe environment. The designated safe house and receiving home are forced closed at this time due to outstanding accounts payable due from Cree Nation Child and Family Services Caring Agency.

Failure to have a social worker based in Lynn Lake providing immediate and sustained services and forcing the receiving home and designated safe house to close, children and families experiencing

difficulties in Lynn Lake and area have their health and safety placed in great jeopardy.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Mr. Mackintosh) to consider re-staffing the social worker position in Lynn Lake in order to provide needed services to northwestern Manitoba in a timely manner.

To request the Minister of Family Services and Housing to consider mediating outstanding accounts payable due to Lynn Lake Friendship Centre by Cree Nation Child and Family Caring Agency in order to allow the designated safe house and receiving home to resume regular operations and services and continued utilization of these operations and services.

This is signed by P. Meraty, B. Cooper, F. Linklater and many, many others from Lynn Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: I am pleased to table in the House the Annual Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner for the year ended March 31, 2007.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Virginia Tech Shootings

Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister of Advanced Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that all members of the House were shocked yesterday when it was reported that 32 people at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, were killed by a gunman before he turned the gun on himself. The news of this horrific tragedy resonates with us here in Canada and around the world. We do, unfortunately, have some understanding of the effects of this event, remembering, for example, events at Montréal Polytechnique and more recently at Dawson College. I think it is important to let the people of Virginia know that our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time.

Here, in Manitoba, our post-secondary institutions have developed and continue to update emergency response plans to protect students and staff in events such as this or in other emergencies.

On behalf of all Manitobans, we extend our sympathy to the families and friends of the students and staff at Virginia Tech.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that, following statements by my colleagues, all members observe a minute of silence to honour all those affected by this tragedy. Thank you.

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): I thank the minister for the statement. We share the shock and sorrow that the minister has conveyed on learning of the terrible events yesterday at Virginia Tech. The tragic loss of life is incomprehensible and shocking to all of us. We certainly join with the minister and with other members in extending our sympathy and prayers to our neighbours who grieve as a nation, and also to those families who have lost family members in this tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, we certainly support the minister's call for a moment of silence. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to speak to the minister's statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I join other members of this Chamber in taking a moment to consider the awful and shocking events of yesterday, and to extend our condolences and sympathies to families and friends of those who were so tragically shot or injured yesterday.

It certainly brings the tragedy close to home when it happens on a post-secondary education campus and when it affects so many people who are so young with such great promise. I join the other members now in supporting a moment of silence so that we can remember what happened yesterday and also dedicate ourselves to doing what we can to prevent future occurrences.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement for a moment of silence? Please rise for a moment of silence.

A moment of silence was observed.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Educational Institutions in Manitoba Procedures for Emergency Situations

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, just further to the minister's comment on the horrible events yesterday at Virginia Tech, I just wanted to ask the Premier this. Recognizing that these events took place only yesterday and not a lot of time has gone by since those horrible events in Virginia, but when we consider them, we know and we share the horror of all members in the House as to what happened there. We do think about the young people who attend our post-secondary institutions here in Manitoba, our universities and colleges. All of us who are parents certainly think about the desire and the wish for our kids to be safe when they attend school. It's that much more horrifying when a place of learning in a place of optimism becomes such a horrific scene of such a terrible crime.

I wonder if the Premier could just provide any kind of preliminary briefing to the House at this stage as to any conversations he has had and any steps that are being taken to review policies and procedures at our existing institutions here in Manitoba and, in particular, deal with the issues of internal communication which seem to have arisen as an issue at Virginia Tech—whether he could simply brief the House on the measures in place to deal with such an incident in the event that such an unthinkable thing did take place here in Manitoba.

*(13:50)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all of us who send our children off to school and who have our children in colleges and universities share the sorrow of what happened yesterday. Of course, it's all too often, regrettably, in North America where we see these incidents taking place and the innocent victims that are shot down in their youth indiscriminately. Certainly, I join with the minister and all members of the House in offering our condolences to the families of the victims of Virginia Tech. We will pass on to the governor and the people of Virginia the comments made in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, the member raised a couple of issues. Have we gone over our procedures? We continually go over the procedures that are in place—we, being the collective group responsible, whether it's the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, the police forces in Manitoba and in

Canada and police forces located at the various campus sites with the administrations of those various institutions.

I would point out that since the tragedy of Columbine there has been a change in the approach on these kinds of potential incidents. There has been a lot more work and advice from police officers to each other and to the various educational institutions. The theory that used to be in play of protection by perimeter security and potential negotiations with a potential shooter or shooters has very much changed. If there's any kind of shots being fired or any knowledge to the police force that a shooting is taking place, it's to be treated as an active shooter response. In other words, a homicide is in progress, and the actions are different than they were some eight years ago, not only in Manitoba but in Canada. So those procedures are always looked at.

I know after Dawson College, all procedures were reviewed again. Certainly I know the police forces were, in fact, at a stage of having a simultaneous exercise at the University of Manitoba in May to deal with some of these issues of internal communication, because you have the RCMP, you have the Winnipeg city police, you have the security personnel at the universities, and it's a very legitimate issue of what is the command and control structure in these kinds of situations. They continue to review them completely, and that's why they had the exercise scheduled in May, before this tragic incident.

Provincial Budget 2007 Debt Increase

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): I thank the Premier for those comments and for his answer to the question.

Mr. Speaker, this year's budget missed an opportunity. The budget projects an increase in revenues to the Province of a whopping \$651 million over last year's budget, the greatest year-over-year increase in revenues to the Province in history. Yet the borrowings, the debt of the Province, increased by more than \$56 million from last year, more than \$2.6 billion since 1999 when the NDP took power and since the NDP Minister of Finance became the minister.

So I ask the Minister of Finance: Why increase the debt? How much more revenue does he require before the debt doesn't go up?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, year over year, our debt-to-GDP ratio has gone down. As a matter of fact, since we've come into office, our debt-to-GDP ratio has gone down 20 percent.

The other thing we've done is we have now, for the first time in over 40 years, addressed the pension liability which members opposite actually never even had it on the books; they had it hidden. We've been making down payments on the pension liability every single year, and in the result, we've had four credit rating upgrades from the bond rating agencies in Toronto and New York, which I think underlines the point that fiscal responsibility has been one of the hallmarks of this administration.

Mr. Hawranik: Mr. Speaker, Manitobans now pay \$860 million in interest on the debt every year, and that's up \$25 million from last year. Manitobans now pay nearly \$2.5 million a day in interest on the debt of the Province.

So I ask the Minister of Finance: At a time of record-high revenues, why would he choose to increase the debt of the Province?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to actually put the facts on the record. In the budget this year, we devote 7.5 cents of every dollar towards debt repayment for investments we've made in hospitals, in schools, in highways. When we came into office, members opposite were spending 13 cents on the dollar for debt repayment. We have reduced the cost in the operating budget by 45 percent on the amount of money we have to devote to debt repayment. We have reduced it by 45 percent from 13 cents on the dollar to 7.5 cents on the dollar.

Mr. Hawranik: Mr. Speaker, what the minister forgets is the fact that interest rates went down over that period, down more than half. That's the difference: \$25 million more in interest than last year, \$56 million more added to the debt, all at a time when we have record-high revenues in this province. No matter how much money comes in, no matter how much more money comes into the Province, there's never enough. This minister sees an opportunity to borrow more money and he takes it without regard to future generations of Manitobans who will be responsible for repaying that debt.

So I ask the Minister of Finance: 35,000 Manitobans left the province since 1999 because this minister failed to provide hope and opportunity for

Manitobans. Now, Mr. Speaker, they have another reason to flee the province, to avoid paying the debt that this minister has put upon them.

Mr. Selinger: I just wish the facts would support the rhetoric of the member opposite. Mr. Speaker, 7.5 cents on the dollar versus 13 cents on the dollar—a debt-to-GDP ratio of around 23 to 24 percent versus 31 percent when the members opposite were in office.

As a matter of fact, in 2003-'04, our net debt was \$11 billion 129 thousand. This year, our net debt is \$11.13 billion. It's gone up \$1 million in four years. We have been fiscally prudent and, at the same time, we have highways, we have schools, we have universities and we have hospitals; things that the members stand up in this House every single day and ask for but don't want to pay for it.

Provincial Budget 2007 Debt Increase

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the spin from the Minister of Finance is no longer as convincing to Manitobans as it used to be. If you increase spending by enough, you can certainly reduce the share of budget going to other things. We just want to point out that under this government, Manitoba's net debt has climbed to \$16.06 billion. No matter how they try to spin it, the net debt is going up over \$56 million from last year alone. That is money that one day Manitobans are going to have to repay.

More specifically, what does it mean for our young people? It means that the NDP government is happy to mortgage the future and run up the credit card in order to meet the short-term political needs of this government. That's just wrong.

Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier (Mr. Doer) justify running up the credit card when most other jurisdictions in the country are doing the responsible thing and reducing their debt?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, there are so many factual errors in that statement, I'm amazed the member has the gall to get up and make it. First of all, the net debt is \$11.13 billion, not \$16 billion as the member said. The member likes to make false accusations all the time, but he never has the decency to apologize for the statements he has made.

What about other provinces? Their debt is actually going up faster than ours. Provinces to the

west of us are increasing their debt by 8, 9 and 10 percent as they make investments in highways and in essential public assets. Our net debt-to-GDP ratio has gone down every single year we're in office. Our credit rating has gone up and the proportion of money we put to the debt in the budget has declined 45 percent, from 13 cents to 7.5 cents on the dollar.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, the minister has the nerve to ask for an apology. He's the minister who put into his 2003 budget that Crocus was investing money in the Manitoba economy and creating jobs. This is the Minister of Finance who got up day after day and said he didn't know anything about problems at Crocus when he signed off on a Cabinet submission in November 2000. He's got no credibility.

We know from the budget documents that the debt is going up over \$2.6 billion since the NDP took office. Thousands of young people have left. How does this minister expect young people to want to stay in Manitoba when he continues to run up the credit card they're going to have to pay off?

Mr. Selinger: We have run up the credit rating. We have not run up the credit card. Now I know the member is reading from a prepared script and doesn't have a clue what he's talking about. The net debt is \$11.1 billion, not \$16 billion as the member mentioned. The amount that we spent in the budget is 7.5 cents versus 13 cents when they were in office. The debt-to-GDP ratio has gone down by 20 percent. Our credit rating has gone up four times based on substantive improvements we've made. We've paid down the pension liability, and the members didn't even have the decency to acknowledge that we put \$1.5 billion into the Teachers' Retirement Fund to stabilize pensions for teachers all across this province.

*(14:00)

Young People in Manitoba Opportunities Outside Province

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): The script I am reading from is his budget, Mr. Speaker, and maybe he has got a point. Maybe we shouldn't be relying on his budget when it comes to the information we rely on.

When you look at his shameful track record of misinformation contained in past budgets; well, we now know as a result of this government's mismanagement of our finances, the number, the thousands of young people who have left. Even the

Chamber of Commerce has started to raise the issue of young people leaving. They have got a full-page ad in today's newspaper. They're hosting Leadercon 07: Keeping Young People in Manitoba. They say, and I quote: "To gain a better understanding of what will help keep young Manitobans in the province." It will look at the challenges facing various issues and the potential solutions to the problem.

The Chamber of Commerce has identified the problem, Mr. Speaker. When are they going to acknowledge that we've got a problem with keeping young people in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the budget that members opposite allegedly are going to vote against has a small business tax. Well, some of the same people that are putting out these ads had a small business tax of 8 percent when they were working as functionaries for the Filmon government. Now the small business tax has gone from the highest to the lowest and proceeds down to 2 percent and 1 percent.

Young people leaving: negative in the '90s; positive now. Mr. Speaker, new measures in this budget—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: I actually think it's negative when young people leave and positive when they stay. Under our government, Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I recall the credit rating agency saying: How come they didn't put all the health capital on the books? How come they didn't put the pension liability on the books? How come they didn't take the gas company and put it on the books? How come they kept two sets of books? Under this Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), we finally have one set of books for the people of Manitoba.

Crop Insurance Levels of Compensation for Flooding

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Crop insurance data is going to be used as the basis for the compensation for Assiniboine Valley producers who have been flooded for the 2005 and 2006 year. Landowners whose valley lands have been flooded will receive

full crop insurance benefits without having to average their lands with those that have not been flooded.

I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture how those landowners who do not carry crop insurance will be treated under this formula and, in fact, will they be able to receive the same level of compensation that those farmers who carried crop insurance will be receiving.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): I thank the member for raising this issue which he was not able to address when he was in government, and I'm very pleased that our government has been able to address it, Mr. Speaker.

This is a very important issue for the producers of the valley. We looked at how we would be able to put money in place for them. The member is accurate. The crop insurance data is the best data that we have, and that is being used as the basis. To his specific question: Will those people who are not in crop insurance be able to access the funds? Yes, they will.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind the Minister of Agriculture that we weren't in government in 2005 and 2006 when the flooding took place.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister whether those landowners immediately downstream of the Shellmouth Dam, who do not carry crop insurance because of the fact that they had to average their flooded lands with lands that were not flooded, are going to have access to the same level of compensation as those farmers who carry crop insurance and who were only flooded in 2005 or 2006.

Ms. Wowchuk: I'm sure the member has talked to those producers of the valley. If he talks to them, he will know they came to us and said: This has been a problem since 1995 and earlier, and the members of the opposition, when they were in government, would not deal with it. Although the issue that we are dealing with are the two specific years, '05-06, these issues go well back to the Tory years, and those producers were ignored.

Mr. Speaker, we are using crop insurance data, and those people who do not have crop insurance will also be able to get support. As we develop the upcoming program, then we will look at those issues, but the producers will be involved in the designing of

the program into the future. The producers have had input into this.

Mr. Derkach: I hate to give the Minister of Agriculture a history lesson, but indeed, in 1995 when the flood occurred, producers were compensated under the Disaster Assistance Program. So, Mr. Speaker, she should check her facts.

The concern is for those landowners who do not carry crop insurance. My question is, which she has not answered, whether those producers who do not carry crop insurance because of the averaging issue and because their lands are flooded three out of five years under the artificial flooding from the Shellmouth Dam, whether those farmers will have the same fairness and treatment that farmers who carry crop insurance when it comes to compensation for the flooding in 2005 and 2006.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, I can tell the member that producers in the Assiniboine Valley are going to be treated fairly, whether they were in crop insurance or not. We understand this is an issue that has been very hard on the producers. It has been very hard on them because of their averages in crop insurance, and they will all be treated fairly. As we go forward to develop the new program, there will have to be—people will have, producers will be involved.

Mr. Speaker, I can say to you that I have a letter here from the chairman of the Assiniboine Valley producers, and he says, on behalf of the Assiniboine Valley producers: I would like to thank you and your government for the ongoing support of our organization and its members. It has taken us many years, but we are pleased with the announcement to support the program of '05-06.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Canadian Trade Unions Foreign Seasonal Workers

Mr. David Faurchou (Portage la Prairie): El altavoz de señor, que el bordo de trabajo de Manitoba decide actualmente si los trabajadores estacionales extranjeros tienen el derecho de afiliarse a una unión canadiense.

Translation

Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Labour Board is currently deciding whether foreign seasonal workers have the right to join a Canadian trade union.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke in Spanish to the Minister of Labour in perhaps the same fashion and

misunderstanding that Mexican workers in Portage la Prairie were spoken to in English by union representatives of the UFCW.

The Manitoba Labour Board is currently deciding whether foreign seasonal workers have the right to join Canadian trade unions. This decision has tremendous implications for farm labour in Canada, despite the fact that it is a federal government program.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Labour and Immigration update the House on the Labour Board's decision.

*(14:10)

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I thank the member for the question. As the matter is before the Labour Board and the Labour Board is an adjudicative body, there is no update in regard to that matter. That is a matter that will be decided by the Labour Board.

I thank the member, though, for raising this question, because I think that we want to provide an environment here in Manitoba when newcomers that are working in the agricultural industry are protected by our labour laws and by our Employment Standards Code laws. That's one reason, Mr. Speaker, why we just updated our Employment Standards Code, and we are reviewing agricultural workers and communicating with ag workers and stakeholders as we move forward.

Mr. Faurschou: Mr. Speaker, I do want to apologize for all Spanish-speaking persons for perhaps my translation and pronunciation because it is not my first language—[*interjection*]

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Faurschou: This is a very serious issue and a very timely issue insofar as that the Mexican migrant labour is supposed to return to Manitoba starting next week, and this decision has yet to be rendered.

Mr. Speaker, 63 of 65 workers from Mexico signed the petition indicating that they did not want to join the union. In addition to that, 43 of them issued statements to the Manitoba Labour Board indicating that they were misled by the UFCW and wanted no part of the union. However, the Labour Board has ruled that these statements are inadmissible. The Labour Board refused to disclose the reason as to why these statements were inadmissible and excluded.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain why these statements opposing union membership were ruled inadmissible?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Labour Board is a quasi-judicial body. The chair of the Labour Board, appointed by the Minister of Labour, received unanimous consent from labour and business, unanimous consent. Mr. Hamilton was approved by both parties. I think members opposite should not adjudicate quasi-judicial decisions on the floor of the Legislature. The Minister of Labour has picked the person that's independent. This Legislature should be independent.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Faurschou: Mr. Speaker, it is recognized the Manitoba Labour Board is a quasi-judicial body; however, its mandate is provided for by the legislation that this NDP government passed in this House to great opposition.

The statements signed by 43 Mexican labourers indicated that they were misled by the UFCW. The union spokesperson promised to acquire legal assistance for three individuals under arrest provided that they joined the union. Once they realized they were deceived, these men withdrew their memberships; however, the Labour Board's ruling prevented them from doing so.

These visitors to our province can no longer afford the tens of thousands of dollars that the case before the Labour Board has cost them. If the issue is about rights, then why do they not have rights to withdraw from the union if they choose?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Ms. Allan: Well, it's really unfortunate that the Member for Portage la Prairie would raise this issue in the House. It is incredibly unfortunate—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind members that when the Speaker is standing all members should be seated and the Speaker should be heard in silence. I want to remind members that we have visitors in the gallery,

we have the viewing public and time is scarce. We're trying to get as many questions and answers as we can get in during Question Period so I ask the co-operation of the members.

Ms. Allan: Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite knows, this is a very serious issue and that's why this—[interjection] The matter is before the Manitoba Labour Board.

The member opposite knows that the chair of the Manitoba Labour Board was a unanimous choice of both the employer representatives and the labour representatives. We have every confidence that the Manitoba Labour Board will deal with this matter.

It would be completely inappropriate for me as minister to get involved in this. I know full well my responsibility as the Minister of Labour. We will wait for the Manitoba Labour Board to make its decision.

Northern Flood Agreement PCN and Cross Lake Protest

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, members of PCN from Cross Lake are peacefully occupying the Jenpeg generation station in order to bring public awareness to their inability to get a solution from the provincial government in implementing the Northern Flood Agreement. They state that they will not leave until provincial officials agree to meet with them.

I ask the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs: When will he meet with the PCN residents in good faith to address their concerns?

Hon. Oscar Lathlin (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I can indicate to the member that we are aware that the Cross Lake First Nations have set up a camp across from Jenpeg. I have written a letter to the chief offering to meet with him, and I know that Manitoba Hydro has written a similar letter offering to meet with the chief. We are now awaiting a response from them.

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that they want all parties at this meeting as quickly as possible. We're deeply concerned that these residents feel that they are not being properly treated in their attempts to get compensation under the Northern Flood Agreement. They state that they have been patient but the repeated delays are forcing them to take action.

So, I again ask the minister: How will he address the concerns of these residents for PCN and ensure that fair and transparent negotiations are conducted in a timely manner?

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Speaker, this government is fully committed to working with the Cross Lake First Nation. We have been working hard with Manitoba Hydro to finally come to a resolution on the Cross Lake northern flood issue. Unlike the people across the way when they were in government they actually twice—twice they appealed the arbitrator's decision to build a bridge near Cross Lake. When we came into government we overruled. We decided to work with Cross Lake and the bridge is there now.

Mrs. Rowat: Manitoba Hydro has already agreed to meet with this group. They're waiting on the Province. If a resolution is not resolved soon the band has stated that they may move their protest to Highway 6 and block this vital transportation route, so action is needed immediately.

I ask the minister: What assurances can he give PCN members that their concerns will be addressed immediately so that a further protest does not occur?

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to the member as well that meetings on a continuing basis take place with Cross Lake First Nation with Hydro and representatives of government. As I indicated to the member earlier, I have written to the Cross Lake First Nation. I've offered to meet with them. I am now awaiting for a response from them. As soon as I get a response, if they want to meet with me, yes, I will meet with them.

* (14:20)

Health Care Mental Health Services

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the government has announced a review of regional health authorities because they have no idea where they're going next or where to hide. So they've called for yet another review when there are many recommendations still not acted on.

Let me give you another example. The recommendations of the ad hoc committee on mental health of the Provincial Council of Women which says, and I quote: We are trying to understand why the system has so alienated the families of those suffering from mental illness and why there is toleration for so many failures to serve adequately those who suffer from mental illness.

To the minister: Why is this government doing so little and failing so badly in the provision of services and supports to those with mental illnesses or mental disabilities?

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Healthy Living): I thank the member for the question. Our government has committed \$40 million to enhance the spectrum of services for mental health and addictions in this province. We're dealing with these challenges. We're providing support in multitudes of ways: public education, prevention, supports, interventions for the clients as well as for their families. We're committed to supporting them. We've made that investment.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, that's not what this independent report says. The report said this government had, and I quote, a massive systems problem. This government operates a system plagued by, and I quote, a culture of secrecy and non-accountability. Imagine that, an independent report saying a culture of secrecy and non-accountability; all the way, of course, from Crocus to mental health care.

One of the biggest issues here is this government's blatant discrimination between those with physical disabilities and those with mental disabilities when it comes to the provision of various public and social assistance programs.

I ask the Premier (Mr. Doer): Why does his government tolerate such blatant discrimination in the provision of services to those with mental disabilities compared with those with physical disabilities?

Ms. Irvin-Ross: Mr. Speaker, I need to clarify that the \$40-million investment has been since December '05. We made that investment. Those supports that we are providing are supporting the individuals and their families. We have programs such as PACT. We have the investment into the Selkirk Mental Health Centre. We have the new announcement that was made today: \$188 million into housing, and a priority for that will be one of the pillars of mental health and making sure that proposals will be accepted. We are moving on this.

We have continued to provide support since 1999 to encourage public education, to provide supports in a multitude of ways. We also have worked with all of our partners and have developed those supports.

Cabinet Representation of Immigrants

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, as you yourself are aware, many immigrants that come to Manitoba, one of the biggest hurdles they have to face is the issue of credentials and getting their abilities recognized. The Premier is in an interesting position. As the Premier of this province, he's had the opportunity to appoint members of his caucus to Cabinet. I'm talking about members from the Filipino community and East Indian community.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is: Does he not believe that his members from Radisson, The Maples and Wellington have the capability or ability to be in his Cabinet? For seven years he has been the Premier and he has had the opportunity to be able to appoint someone from the Filipino community or the East Indian community into Cabinet.

My question put simply to the Premier is: Why has this Premier chosen not to appoint members from the Filipino community or the East Indian community to his Cabinet, having been Premier now for seven years?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Well, we have the pleasant situation that, save for yourself, Sir, we could probably put—and I believe we could put all 34 into Cabinet in terms of their talent and ability. You know, I always believe they should be very careful about—when talking about affirmative action, one should be very careful about one's own record. We're proud of our affirmative action record. We're proud of our accreditation policy for new immigrants which has a lot more work ahead of us.

Is the member opposite stepping down and letting an affirmative action candidate run in his place for Liberal Party, Mr. Speaker?

Family Services and Housing Affordable Housing Initiatives

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, during the lean, mean 1990 Filmon Tory government's years—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Member for Burrows, to continue.

Mr. Martindale: —the federal government eliminated funding for social housing. The Filmon Conservative government immediately eliminated

funding for social housing. We had a huge problem, especially the inner-city and the North End, of boarded-up houses, a serious arson problem, empty lots and, worst of all, no vision and no hope.

Since the year 2000, the three levels of government have been partnering to invest in affordable housing and we are making progress. We've got the vision and we've brought back hope.

Can the Minister of Family Services and Housing inform all Manitobans about our new investment in social housing, our four pillars of housing.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Family Services and Housing): Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to confirm for the House that today we have unveiled a four-pillar affordable housing strategy for lower-income Manitobans with an investment of \$188 million.

Mr. Speaker, the four pillars, of course, comprising HOMEWorks! for the construction and major renovation of affordable and decent homes for Manitobans, enhancements to the existing public housing stock, doubling our capital investment in our public housing stock. We are getting two new designated Safer Communities investigators for greater safety. And for the homeless, an increase of 44 percent for emergency and transitional shelters and \$4 million more for basic renovation programs.

I hope this was the last barrier, the last piece of information in the way of members opposite voting for the budget. Having got that out of the way, I look forward to a chorus of yeas at 4:30.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Community Newspaper Day

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to stand today and recognize Community Newspaper Day in Manitoba, April 17.

I introduced a private member's resolution two years ago on May 12, 2005, to set aside a day recognizing the importance of those in the community newspaper industry and the important place newspapers have in communities. I'm proud to say it was unanimously passed in the House.

* (14:30)

As a past owner/publisher of the *Headingley Headliner* community newspaper and a past member of the Manitoba Community Newspapers Association, I know first-hand what community newspapers mean to their respective communities. People look to their local papers for community events. They see people they know on the pages of their paper. They read the advertising; they discuss letters to the editor or editorials; and they keep those newspapers and historical archives to remember events and people.

The Manitoba newspaper association is an organization that works on behalf of all community newspapers to promote advertising, maintain ethics and standards in the profession. There are presently 45 member newspapers with a combined weekly circulation of over 360 households and over 550,000 readers over the age of 18.

The Manitoba Community Newspapers Association members will celebrate its 88th year this year with their annual convention held May 11 and 12, very fitting as this is the actual day this resolution was passed. Many newspapers will be recognized for their achievements in writing, design, and advertising at this event.

I would also like to recognize the many newspapers that serve a variety of multicultural communities in Winnipeg and the province and recognize the professionalism which they maintain and the service they provide to their communities. No matter who you are or where you live, it is your newspaper that you look to as a source of information.

I would like to congratulate all those who work in the community newspaper field and wish you all continued success. Today and every day we recognize the good work that you do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Affordable Housing Initiatives

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I was delighted this morning when the minister responsible for housing announced a comprehensive, four-pronged, \$188-million investment strategy for housing in Manitoba.

I was pleased that Flin Flon was mentioned specifically as a place where we want to finalize our seniors housing proposal and proceed with the building. Despite the goodwill and hard work from all sides, the new seniors housing project is not yet a reality in Flin Flon. In our attempts to provide

housing, there have been obstacles and challenges, but let us be clear. All partners, the federal, the provincial, and the municipal governments, have proven that addressing the needs of Flin Flon seniors is a very high priority. It certainly remains a high priority for me.

I thank the minister for his unwavering faith in the partners who are working to bring the Flin Flon project to fruition. The end product will be shaped by our northern reality. We will succeed because we are working toward unanimity on a number of issues, including site or sites, type of building, per unit costs, and so on.

Let me state again, the provincial government is fully committed to the project and always has been. The money is on the table, still, and the Department of Housing is in active discussion with the current proponent of the project.

As northerners, we will continue to rise above the delays and frustrations. By working together, we can make more senior housing a reality in Flin Flon. I again thank the minister for his continuing support, and I am confident that goodwill co-operation partnerships will ensure the success of this project. I look forward to the beneficial results that this funding and these partnerships will bring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Neil Andrews

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): I rise today in memory of an amazing human being, Neil Andrews, who passed away at the age of 57 on February 17 after months of physical deterioration from Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

I am sure that many in this room and many Manitobans province-wide are familiar with this name, and the reason why this is the case, Mr. Speaker, is because Neil Andrews made an impact that was felt all around the province.

He was a well-known curler, a sports enthusiast, a leader in both sports and the business community, and the founder and CEO of Guild Insurance Brokers in Brandon. Above all, he was a community leader, a coach, a mentor to many youth and young athletes who looked up to him and who came to know him through sport.

Neil Andrews' accomplishments received significant recognition and accolades on numerous occasions. In 1995, Neil founded the Brandon Marines baseball team and led this team to victory

four times at the Manitoba Senior Baseball League championships between 1999 and 2005. In 2006, the Brandon City Council voted to rename Westbran Stadium after Neil Andrews. Neil has been the director of the stadium since it was built in 1993. Recently, friends and family launched a successful fundraising campaign to pay for improvements and upgrades to the stadium.

Last fall, Neil learned of his diagnosis with this terminal brain disease. Despite this terrible disease, Neil never felt sorry for himself. He supported his family by being accepting of the circumstances and by being his usual strong and stalwart self. In those last few months, the evidence of the impact that Neil had on those around him was unmistakable in the many people who called, came to visit and offered support to his family and his friends. He was never alone.

Neil leaves behind his wife Heather, daughter Tara, son Nate, daughter-in-law Kristine, grandson—special in his heart—Parker, two brothers and one sister.

I wish the family well on their recent loss. Neil will certainly be missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Sargent Park School Heritage Fair

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): Mr. Speaker, last week I had the privilege of attending the Heritage Fair at Sargent Park School.

The school gymnasium was full of projects celebrating the geographic and ethnic diversity of our country. Younger students were assigned to prepare projects about Manitoba communities, and the work I saw at Sargent Park covered every area of our great province. Other students highlighted Canadian provinces, cities or landmarks. Many students' projects featured famous Canadians, past or present. Though I was not surprised to see John A. Macdonald or Shania Twain, I was pleased to see profiles of people as diverse as Aboriginal marathoner Tom Longboat, BlackBerry inventor Mike Lazaridis, Inuit performer Susan Aglukark and the developer of the electron microscope James Hillier. Older students prepared PowerPoint presentations detailing their own heritage and stories of immigration from their families' countries of origin.

Sargent Park is a great school with students from nursery up to grade 9. I'm always impressed with the quality of the academics, athletics and performing arts at the school. The excellent administration and

staff are supported by energetic and interested parents.

I am pleased that on April 13, 2007, the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) announced that Sargent Park School will be enjoying substantial improvements, including a new multi-purpose room and four new classrooms. I will look forward to watching construction proceed and enjoying future events in the new areas, whether I Love to Read Month, Christmas concerts—yes, Sargent Park School has Christmas concerts—or any one of a host of other great activities.

It is a pleasure to work with this innovative and successful school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Seniors Health Resource Team

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of being in government when the first Seniors Health Resource Team in any community was established, and it happened to be in the North Kildonan-East Kildonan area of the city, where a registered nurse and an occupational therapist were hired to promote wellness and healthy lifestyles and provide support to seniors right where they live.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we had the good fortune of having hired Sonja Lundstrom, who is the registered nurse, and Eleanor Stelmach, who is the occupational therapist. The program has grown and flourished in our community and many, many seniors have been the benefit of all of the programs that have been implemented. We have two women who have boundless energy and enthusiasm and all kinds of creative new ideas.

Just recently, in McIvor Mall where I have my constituency office, I've been able to partner with the Seniors Health Resource Team to provide mall walking inside, and many, many individuals from our community walk the mall every morning during the week.

I've also had the opportunity to partner with the Seniors Health Resource Team and student nurses from Red River College and from the University of Manitoba to provide the opportunity to do blood pressure clinics and osteoporosis clinics right in my constituency office.

Mr. Speaker, those are advertised throughout the community. We've had significant participation. I do know that the wellness and the teaching that happens when people come in to have their blood pressure

and their bone density and such assessed that they benefit from the teaching from the student nurses who have partnered with the Seniors Health Resource Team.

I want to commend them for a job well done and to the volunteers that support the Seniors Health Resource Team in our community. Congratulations on a job well done.

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

ADJOURNED DEBATE (Eighth Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) that the House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) in amendment thereto and the proposed motion of the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) in subamendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou), who has 25 minutes remaining.

* (14:40)

Mr. David Faurichou (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to once again rise in debate of the budget proposed before the Legislative Assembly.

I was yesterday making mention of the Trans-Canada Highway around Portage la Prairie where, effectively, the closure of the bypass around Portage la Prairie has been of a major inconvenience to many persons travelling the Trans-Canada Highway. As well, it provides an example of this government's mismanagement and lack of planning that has seen to the closure of the major artery here in Manitoba as it pertains to the motoring public.

Mr. Speaker, I want to move on to other items because this budget is something that one really truly has to examine with the additional documentation that comes along with the very flowery address that the Minister of Finance has presented on April 4. I'd like to cite just very specifically that, in the field to which I have earned my living prior to coming to the House here, in agriculture, is one that I turn to first.

Coming off of a year where some of the areas of Manitoba had not much more than an inch of precipitation, pardon me for using the imperial

measurement, but a very, very minor amount of precipitation was provided to us by nature. So, in the production of potatoes, one needs to supplement because potatoes, as you are aware, are mostly water and require a great deal of moisture in the soil in order to reproduce.

Mr. Speaker, a reliance on irrigation is absolutely critical for the production of potatoes and sustaining the potato processing industry here in Manitoba. So I was very keen to see whether the Department of Agriculture was recognizing that we're going to need more available water for irrigation here in the province of Manitoba, and especially with the experience last year, which now is calling for additional availability of supplemental water under contract by the two major processors here in the province of Manitoba of their contract producers.

Mr. Speaker, so I read with interest that the line regarding irrigation development in the province of Manitoba has, in fact, been cut. Now, one would expect that should be significantly increased. However, I did mention this to the Finance Minister, and he assured me that there are additional monies for irrigation development here in the province of Manitoba. But it is elsewhere in the budget, in areas where, effectively, one cannot really ascertain as to where this money is going to be spent, or if the money is going to be spent. Manitobans are asked to, effectively, trust this government that they will be expending dollars where they are most of benefit to Manitobans.

I also want to draw attention to the Manitoba Food Development Centre, which was mentioned in the budget speech. One would expect that there was going to be significant additional monies for activities out of the centre in Portage la Prairie, but I look with interest that, in fact, there is only a minor, minor increase in the Food Development Centre's overall budget, from 2.1 million to 2.2 million, a little more than a hundred thousand dollars. If one wants to actually look a little closer to the activity of the Manitoba Food Development Centre in Portage la Prairie, where the operating budget has been increased, the programming budget has been cut.

I look to the Finance Minister and ask: Why would he want to herald this in his Budget Address, that his government was supporting the value-added processing here in the province of Manitoba through the Food Development Centre, when he is, in fact, asking us to support a budget where there is a cut,

and I repeat, a cut to food commercialization and marketing by this government?

I also want to, though, make mention there are positive features to this budget, where the government has recognized after years upon years of delay and, maybe, perhaps just coincidentally, it's an election year, that they now recognize that Portage la Prairie is definitely in need of assistance to redevelop areas of our urban centre that are now inhabited by those that are, unfortunately, unable to afford much for their homes. So, with the expansion of the Neighbourhoods Alive! program, Portage la Prairie, along with other centres in the province, will be receiving support from that very, very good program.

However, what has this government done when you look to the detail? That is something that really caught me very curious as we really must recognize that, in the building industry, the construction industry throughout the province—and I look to the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation and government services. He knows very well that the inflation in that area of business is going up double digits. I hope that he can convey that to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that we have to make certain that we at least have the same purchasing power as we had the year before. We have to offset the inflation in these particular areas.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to look to Neighbourhoods Alive! When one factors in inflation, really there is no additional money for that very valuable program here in the province of Manitoba. So the budget is basically the same as it was last year, yet there are now five additional centres in Manitoba that are supposed to be splitting or getting a piece of the pie of the Manitoba Neighbourhoods Alive! program. So, really, I think that the effort to expand it to Flin Flon and The Pas, Portage la Prairie, Dauphin have, in fact, really been on a politically expedient nature. So I would like very much to leave that on the record, that while the program is one that governments should receive credit for, it's how they administrate, and that is what I want to make mention of in a couple of areas, that Portage la Prairie was very, very specific.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

But I do want to move into areas that are more of a provincial nature. By listening to this government, you would expect that they are going to be spending a lot of money in education which, perhaps, they believe in their own minds they are, but yesterday, yesterday, they had an announcement that they still

are unable to recognize the need that we in business have here in the province of Manitoba. They had to go to a Crown corporation and ask for them to finance a program to train long-haul drivers, which this government recognizes is a very, very necessary training program, but they, in their own budget, even after more than \$600-million additional revenues that they have this year, they can't afford to train truck drivers. So they have to go to the ratepayers, you and me that have vehicles registered with Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, and we have to pay higher insurance programs, higher registration fees, to pay for, now, a training program which really is the mandate and the responsibility of the government.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government really has shown now, again, that they do not plan very well. This budget was only tabled a week ago, and already they've recognized they haven't put enough money into training, and they have to go to MPI. Oh, my goodness. I mean, one week and they're already admitting this budget is off course and off base and they've made a mistake. They have to go to MPI. This is something that is truly indicative of this government's overall planning towards what is necessary here in the province of Manitoba. I think Manitobans will see, when the next election comes forward, what they really should have been doing.

I don't fault the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Lemieux). I fault the Minister of Advanced Education and training for not helping out an industry that truly is in need of more skilled, trained professionals behind the wheel, transporting the goods and services around Manitoba and into other provinces and internationally.

*(14:50)

I want to now check the Education Department here. Again, this government has heralded how much money they are spending in education. But let me just look for but a moment onto the actual expenditure that the Department of Education is making towards investment in our schools, the bricks and mortars to make sure that the schools stand for another day and new schools and classrooms are afforded to our children, capital funding for education here in the province. We're talking about buildings that provide for our children.

Our children need an education. What has this government done? Last year they budgeted \$58.8 million. What are they planning to spend this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker? One would expect that it

would be increased, but no, with this government, they pay lip service to the importance of education here in the province of Manitoba and the need to revitalize our schools and to provide the facilities in order to educate our young people, our future of our province. What have they done? They've cut \$12 million out of the budget, \$12 million. This year's budget is \$46.8 million, but what I surmise, I surmise they say, don't worry, don't worry, it's in the budget somewhere. So you have to turn to Appropriations where there really isn't any line or allocation or appropriation other than it will be spent.

So this government has—what it has done is taken monies out of the budget where it's very specifically to be spent but then put it into another area where effectively it allows this government to act on a discretionary basis to spend whatever they feel is in their best interest to get re-elected. Isn't that something else? As a government, to take money out of our schools and put it in a pot for projects that will be announced that are politically advantageous to the NDP, that is low, Mr. Deputy Speaker, low, low, low, when you go and take money out of Public Schools Finance Board, which provides for the schooling of our young people, and put it into another area that allows this government to go electioneering with an additional \$12 million. I think that really speaks volumes of what this government is all about. It's all about getting re-elected and having nothing to do with the future and planning for our young people here in the province of Manitoba.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that I would like to say much, much more, but I will leave on this point, and this point is the one that hits home. It's the bottom line, absolute bottom line, and every individual sitting and voting on this budget in support of the NDP has got to share, and that is your credibility insofar as making this province even more of a have-not province.

An Honourable Member: Four credit upgrades—

Mr. Faurshou: Right now they want to say four credit upgrades insofar—why don't you finish the equation? The equation is Manitoba Hydro has had a similar number of downgrades because you've shifted your debt from government to a Crown corporation, and this shell game Manitobans are going to wise up to.

So the bottom line, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that when you do the final accounting, Manitoba is slipping farther and farther behind all of the other provinces, and it's the other provinces that are having

to dig deeper in their taxpayers' pockets in order to bail out Manitoba.

How can you guys look at yourself in the mirror and say I'm proud to make Manitoba a have-not province? In fact, the bottom line now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to go cap-in-hand, tin cup in hand, and ask other provinces, other taxpayers from around our nation to fork over 36.5 percent of our budget; 36.5 percent of our budget comes from taxpayers outside the province of Manitoba. I think that's a legacy that this government is going to have to live with when they go to the polls very, very shortly, and Manitobans will remember.

Thank you ever so much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to have this chance to debate this budget.

Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud to stand and speak against the motion from the Leader of the PC Party and the Leader of the Liberal Party and in favour of the Manitoba government budget that introduces tax reduction for taxpayers and businesses and new initiatives on justice, infrastructure, health and the environment.

It is great to see that Manitoba's unemployment rate has fallen to a 30-year low in 2006, at 4.3 percent, and that this represents the second-lowest unemployment rate among provinces. Last year we saw 6,700 new jobs created in the province. Almost 90 percent of these were in the private sector. Housing starts and the sale of homes is at a rate that continues to astound even real estate agents. Housing values are at an unprecedented level, and many individuals are finding that they are able to sell their homes for even more money than the listed price.

I am proud to be a part of the government that has earned four credit rating upgrades since 1999. These indicators taken together speak to a strong economy.

In this budget, the NDP government is reducing the income tax rate for middle-income earners by a quarter of a percentage point to 12.7 percent, and increasing the middle-income threshold to \$66,000 effective in 2008. The 2007 budget also adds \$200 to the basic personal exemption and increases the spousal amount and eligible dependent amount by 24 percent to match the basic personal amount. Income splitting for seniors is also included that will match changes in the federal government budget and save pensioners an estimated \$11 million.

The government has increased the education property tax credit to \$525 from \$400. This method of providing tax relief has proved to be very successful and is helpful to homeowners.

Our province's population is growing, and we are working hard at encouraging this growth. International immigration has reached an unprecedented number of 10,000 new immigrants to Manitoba. This increase in the number of new immigrants is a direct result of the success of our Provincial Nominee Program. We will be expanding this program to encourage 20,000 new immigrants in the future. Encouraging immigration helps build a strong economy and enriches the culture and traditions of our province. This budget provides new funding of \$9.5 million for immigration with support from the federal government for settlement services, language training, labour market integration and ethnoculture and anti-racism initiatives.

The budget is the first in 50 years to provide a summary budget using generally accepted accounting principles as suggested by the Auditor General for many years.

The budget also reduces the general corporation income tax rate to 13 percent on July 1, 2008. The small business tax will be reduced to 2 percent on January 1, 2008, and will be cut a further 1 percent on January 1, 2009, which will help 80 percent of Manitoba businesses.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was pleased to be able to represent our province yesterday at the opening of the new Ste. Agathe health care centre. The centre will provide services for Francophone Manitobans in their language of choice. It will allow rural residents to access information such as audio-visual health resources, physician consultations, nutrition and fitness programs, access to health professionals and to Telehealth, amongst many others. This will make a real difference in people's well-being.

As a government, we are continuously working to improve health care in Manitoba and to offer services to Manitobans close to home. This budget has confirmed our funding for additional training spaces for doctors and nurses, and it has continued on our commitment to reduce waiting times for hip and knee surgeries. As well, we have invested in major capital projects like the St. Boniface cardiac care centre and the Health Sciences Centre.

I was very pleased to be present at the opening of the new Women's Health Clinic at the Victoria

Hospital last month. I am thrilled to see our government's commitment to the delivery of oncology and emergency services at Victoria General Hospital with the recent announcement of \$13.5 million for the redevelopment of this hospital.

Our government has committed to purchasing a state-of-the-art, non-invasive cancer knife, the next generation cancer-killing machine, at a cost of \$10 million.

We have invested \$150 million in the budget for a province-wide electronic health record system to help make health care delivery the safest and most effective that it can be.

*(15:00)

We have succeeded in cutting the wait list for cardiac bypass surgery to the point that it is now the shortest list in the country. The wait time for radiation treatment for cancer has plummeted from six weeks to one week, among the best in the country. The Canadian Institute of Health Information has spotlighted Manitoba for having the shortest wait time in Canada for cardiac bypass surgery and for being a leader in radiation therapy with a median wait time of one week. Since July 2005, the median wait time for orthopedic surgery has been reduced by 50 percent.

We are more than doubling the training seats in emergency medicine at the University of Manitoba and offering continuing education courses in emergency medicine for family physicians. Our commitment to health care has resulted in an increase in the number of international medical graduates, more than 50 new technologist training seats and 3,000 nurses in training. That's fantastic when you compare it to the 1990s when nurses' training spots were cut back.

This budget provides resources to ensure that burn victims receive compassionate, quality care in a new burn unit located at the Health Sciences Centre that will honour firefighters.

Manitoba's strategy for building a positive economic climate includes ensuring education and skill development are met. This budget commits to provide a 60 percent rebate on tuition fees for university and college students that work and live in Manitoba, maintaining the affordability of education by continuing the 10 percent tuition reduction that has helped increase by 34 percent the number of university students and increase by 32 percent the number of college enrolments, provide off-set

revenue to universities and colleges to compensate for the tuition reduction, exceed our previous commitments to universities and colleges by providing an average funding increase of 7 percent. This is a 2 percent increase over what was previously announced, and will prove to be very helpful to the operation of the University of Manitoba which is in my constituency. It fulfils our commitment to provide \$2 million for Manitoba graduate scholarships and \$8.2 million for Manitoba bursaries. Since 1999 the number of apprenticeships and people who have completed the requirement for journey person status are up by almost 50 percent.

The new budget also provides additional funding for 30 new police officers across the province, 14 for Winnipeg, including five for the stolen auto unit.

Budget 2007 commits new funding to the Crystal Meth Strategy, including resources to support implementation of The Youth Drug Stabilization Act. Budget 2007 provides funding to create a specialized unit to handle child exploitation cases, including a new, dedicated Crown attorney. The unit will take a pro-active approach to address Internet luring and child pornography and ensure contact between communities, children's services, police and prosecution. It also expands on the successful Lighthouses program to 50 sites.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to speak for a moment just about the success of the Lighthouses program in my constituency at La Barriere Crossings School, where we have seen up to 50 children attend each evening when the program is offered. Lighthouses provide positive after-hour recreation, educational and social activities for youth in schools, friendship centres and other community facilities across our province. As you know, it is the interaction with positive role models that can help our youth in not being attracted to gang life. It also expands the Turnabout program, a first-of-its-kind in Canada which focusses on children under the age of 12 who are in conflict with the law.

This budget provides an investment of almost \$400 million next year in highways as part of a five-year \$2-billion plan to improve road infrastructure. Residents in St. Norbert are very happy to see Highway 75 being redeveloped and that work has been undertaken on the Red River Bridge along the Perimeter Highway. They're also extremely happy to see our commitment to flood protection with funding for the continued redevelopment of the floodway being part of this budget.

This budget also invests more than \$10 million in new funds to work on water protection projects, improve water management and flood protection and implement the recommendations of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board. It also commits to help reduce greenhouse gas with a new \$2,000 rebate for Manitobans purchasing hybrid electric vehicles, and to help Manitobans install geothermal pumps by making available loans of up to \$20,000 through Manitoba Hydro.

It also commits to support First Nations' work to achieve UNESCO World Heritage designation for the east side of Lake Winnipeg.

In regard to the City of Winnipeg, an increase of 18 percent overall has been committed to the operation and to their budget: \$2 million to restore the 50-50 transit funding formula and \$21 million for road improvements and bike path development. This brings funding for the city of Winnipeg to \$186,600,000.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very proud to stand on this side of the House to speak about this budget and the positive things it has done for Manitobans, in particular as it relates to tax reduction, justice, infrastructure and, in particular, health, as we know health is the No. 1 priority for Manitobans, and we've maintained that commitment. Thank you very much.

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I look at this year's budget, and, frankly, it's concerned me to the point where I am unwilling and unprepared to give up my opportunity to speak on this for any reason, because what I am seeing in this budget is a government that is awash in funds, and that should be a good thing. That should be good for the people of this province where there are dollars that government can administer to the benefit of the population. But two things happened today that I think provide sufficient motivation for me to, on behalf of my constituents, express some severe reservations and concerns about how this government manages its affairs and particularly how it manages the budget.

I have to tell you, without being pompous about it, I spent 11 years on Treasury Board to try and bring the finances of this province into control during what was seen as the single, largest financial event in terms of a downturn, in terms of a recession, since the 1930s. There were other people who were part of that administration who were a lot smarter than me and understood finances much more than I

would ever pretend to. But there's a bottom line that you learn when you're in business for yourself over the years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is that, when you are in the midst of a growth in revenue, when you are in the midst, awash with funds, as this government is, why in the world would you expand the debt?

I am old enough to remember Pierre Elliott Trudeau in his prime when the revenues to the federal government were growing at 17 percent year over year. Even the Premier (Mr. Doer) of the day and the Finance Minister (Mr. Selinger) here today can't imagine 17 percent growth year over year in revenues to the government. But what did Pierre Elliott Trudeau and his cohorts do? They spent at a rate of 24 percent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And what did that do? That created the debt that Canada had that caused Paul Martin, the Minister of Finance in the 1990s, to claw back transfers to the provinces, huge clawbacks in the 1990s, in order to bring the finances of the federal government under control. He did it at the expense of the provinces.

We now have the reverse situation. We have the people of Manitoba who are receiving, through their government, massive increases in transfer payments, increases that would make even Pierre Elliott Trudeau blush, I have to admit. The growth that we're seeing in the—[interjection] Well, I say that with the greatest respect for a significant politician that has now passed on, but the fact was he, in his years in government, set a pattern that I believe set us up for what happened in the 1990s. I'm worried that the government of today, here in Manitoba, through this budget, is very likely laying the seeds that could create some of the same problems for this province down the road because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I represent the agricultural area of this province. I represent an area that is dependent on livestock very heavily, a constituency where there is some very prime agricultural land, grain land that you will see when you drive by on the main highways. But you get off of the beaten track, this is an area that, when I was first elected, had the preponderance of low-income people living there. We still have a lot of people in that constituency. I cannot say for certainty if it is the one area of this province that still has the lowest average income, but 20-some years ago, it was a constituency that had almost the lowest average income in this province.

* (15:10)

That's why, when you look at a budget like this, you look for some balance. You look for some focus. Mr. Deputy Speaker. When there's focus in a budget, you know where the government wants to take the province. Today, when I saw the introduction of the bill on biodiesel, what immediately popped to my mind was the government of the day knows that this is very much a today issue. Between ethanol and biodiesel, many people, particularly in the grains industry, are saying: Well, this may be our ticket to stability and rural agricultural finances. This may be the ticket to keeping our sons and daughters in the communities in which we want them to stay and continue to prosper.

But what do we see? We see a government that recognizes the politics of it, and they're quick to introduce legislation; I mean, the same thing on the ethanol bill. This is not far from the budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because, the fact is, we've seen legislation after legislation, but not the action that's required to be demonstrated in the budget.

Action, let's be specific. The Government House Leader (Mr. Chomiak) might not want to talk about the specifics of how his government single-handedly is building the ethanol plant in Minnedosa. Is that what he wants to say, because that's not the case. The only people who have—the only initiative there is private money and federal initiative. The Province of Manitoba is missing in action. Missing in action. *[interjection]* It's not—with apologies, Mr. Deputy Speaker—it's not zero, but, when you have a massive infrastructure undertaking like this, the implication for this Province is that they're MIA, and that is not good.

That same situation is developing around the biodiesel infrastructure, and lots of talk, not direction. Direction. Remember the slaughter fiasco in this province since our cattlemen fell onto the hard times of the BSE, and they're still not over it. How much slaughter capacity did we develop? How much—*[interjection]* Now the government did their best to politically manage it, I've got to give them credit for that. But, in coming out of it, was there a government initiative that made my neighbours' sons and daughters feel that they would be confident in even keeping the cow herd? There are dozens and dozens of livestock-producing families in my constituency who are calling it quits. There are retired people, now retired, retiring farmers who said: My retirement will be nowhere near what I had hoped.

Now, they understand world economics. They understand that they were in one of the most competitive industries around the world where they don't really want government intervention. Well, what we've needed was governments that had some foresight, that looked forward and were willing to commit to the industry to make sure that there were jobs here, to make sure that the raw product that we are producing out there can be value added in this province.

What does this government do? What does this government do? The one agricultural green light that we've had out there, the one shining example of how you can take a raw opportunity and turn it into development for your community is the hog industry, and what does this government do? They slap them down with a freeze in development.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Mr. Speaker, this is not about a particular plant. This is about a whole industry, a whole industry. When you look at, we have—*[interjection]* well, you know, this is reminiscent, reminiscent of the years when we were looking for irrigation opportunity for potato production in this plant. The chief opponents of irrigation are now sitting in government over there. They were not enthusiastically embracing the opportunity to produce potatoes, to process them and to develop the jobs in the communities of Portage la Prairie, Carberry and the surrounding communities, right down into the Morden-Winkler area where potatoes can be produced, and speciality crops. They are benefiting. They are growing. They are vibrant in those aspects of their industry.

So I'm making this a very personal response to this budget, Mr. Speaker, because, as I look at the wasted opportunity that this government is presenting to the people of Manitoba with this budget—we have the largest budget in the history of this province and we have the largest expenditures on health care. People will say, you know, that's important. We've got to develop the health care services that we've come to expect as part of our society. But, out in the part of the world where I and some other members in rural areas of the province of Manitoba, we're looking at communities that are shrivelling. We're looking for communities that the only initiative that they're going to be able to develop will be from within their own resources. It will not be as a result of the GO teams or as a result of the development of a thrust on behalf of this province.

In fact, I would suggest that there's a number of success stories out there that have occurred in spite of the way this Province has taken the direction. You know, I listen—*[interjection]*

The Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), who is a fine gentleman in his own right, and I will never take that away from him, but for him to, today of all times, turn around and talk about the mean, lean '90s, he is part of a government today that may well be making some of the same mistakes that were made by the federal government that eventually led to those mean, lean '90s, if that's what he wants to call them, because when you lose control of your finances, you lose control.

How is Manitoba Hydro doing these days? How are they doing? How is their credit rating doing? I really have to admire some of the political soft shoe that this government is able to produce. The government's rating as a province is not the same as the rating of our one jewel, the hydro opportunity that's out there. Their rating is not doing what it should be doing at the time of clean, green energy, at the very time when we can look to what has been a long-time and stable company in this province. Now they are increasing their debt without increasing their productive capacity. That's what concerns me. *[interjection]*

Well, you know, laughter on the front bench of the government might be appropriate because that probably indicates that they don't understand what's going on.

Well, Mr. Speaker, their productive capacity—perhaps the Premier (Mr. Doer) would like to tell me what he thinks, and he'll get his chance in a few minutes, what he thinks of the productive capacity. How many more units of energy can Manitoba Hydro produce under his tutelage than what they did before? We are in the process of building expansion. We need to be aware of the fact that, at the same time as we are into the glory days of making announcements around this budget, someone needs to stand back and take a sober second look at what the policies are of this government and where it will be next year, where it will affect governments five years from now. The decisions made today, those expenditures made today will affect where we are five years from now.

You know, one of the catch phrases that's in this budget that really bothers me—in 1986, the war cry, and I was a trustee in 1986, the war cry or the battle cry, if you will, between the trustees of the day and

the governments, the Department of Education was 80-20. That will be where we will be, 80-20. Now, we hear the government today saying 80-20, but they didn't define 80-20.

* (15:20)

The teachers' association should be apoplectic if they wanted to think in long term about what this government is talking about. They should be apoplectic because, when I talk about 80-20, they recognize very quickly that there are some decisions that are going to be made. Ralph Klein would be the one who, in many instances, was accused of the—he who pays the piper, calls the tune. Well, the government hasn't elaborated on what 80-20 means. The trustees are starting to be suspicious because they know where this is potentially going to lead.

So I am concerned about the intentions of this government. When they put out 80-20, they are simply going through what I think is an exercise in sprinkling pixie dust across this province because pixie dust has a strong resemblance to thousand dollar bills.

The implications that go with this budget, I think, were predicted very wisely by a writer with the Manitoba Chamber, and he added a little humour to his comment because this to me exemplifies what has happened to the province of Manitoba relative to the governance in this province, and he was quoting Winston Churchill when he was joking about the lamb lying down with the lion. In Winston's term that was the lamb being in the cage with the lion. In the terms of Manitoba, it's the lamb lies down on Broadway, because the taxpayer gets more than just fleeced and cannot expect long-term management and long-term planning from the government.

We could make this partisan if we want, but, regardless of—look, the average schmuck out there, who is not a card-carrying politician or part of a political party, is going to say: Who in this province is going to look after my best interests? Who is going to make sure that when my kids go to university they will have an opportunity?

I brought this one auditor's report with me to remind me what's occurred. I have a stack of auditor's reports, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you don't accuse me of using a prop here. I have a stack of auditor's reports that are about that deep. My colleagues accuse me of being a pack rat sometimes, or disorganized, but, when you have that many auditor's reports during the tenure of your

government, and a lot of them are not very complimentary, this is not a sign of good management because the one sitting on the top has Crocus on it. We're not talking about the little flower. We're talking about the unfortunate events around venture capital investments in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak directly to something that is very near and dear to my heart. In this summary of the government's budget, we're talking about water stewardship as a general term. The minister many times, and the Premier (Mr. Doer), have said: Well, water quality trumps everything. But their actions have not followed it up. They have reorganized, they have disorganized and they have reassembled the Department of Environment, the Department of Natural Resources, the water quality sections, to the point where I would argue that many, many people within those departments, good-quality individuals, are not able to function at a high level because of the disorganization that this government has introduced into the departments by constantly shifting the responsibilities around in order to profile their concern for water.

So what do we see in this budget? We see a fairly small addition to expenditures relative to water. One expenditure that is listed here as one of the main thrusts in terms of protecting water quality is conservation districts. Well, I again, without bragging, I hope, Mr. Speaker, can point to the fact that the oldest and largest conservation districts in this province do come generally from the area that I represent. The Whitemud, the Turtle River and the Alonsa Conservation District are three of the seniors, if you will, in the conservation movement. To their credit, and I will be magnanimous in this, all stripes of politicians have supported conservation districts because their policies are the right policies.

But what has happened is we are hiding behind the conservation district logo. We're saying, look, we support conservation districts; they're very important on our list of priorities here. But they're going broke, Mr. Speaker, because they cannot fulfil their mandate. We've expanded the number of conservation districts. I would say right now on the record, no matter who is in authority to set the budgets in this province, if we continue to starve the conservation districts, we will continue not delivering good water conservation and water quality preservation in this province. We will just not be able to do it because you cannot sit in the downtown area of Winnipeg in this Legislature and think about

the environment being out there. Well, pardon me, the people that many of us from rural Manitoba represent, that's where we are. That's where we live and work and make a living. The water quality and the water conservation that we practise will make a bigger difference to the quality of the water in this province than anything else, yet we have not seen the recognition of that in the directions that are indicated in this budget.

Mr. Speaker, we are supporting further research on Lake Winnipeg, but there's enough knowledge about the concern and the potential damages in Lake Winnipeg to know that we need to couple that research with action on matters that we are already aware of. Of course, that reflects directly into investments in infrastructure for all of our industries, all of our towns, all of our homes and cottages.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, we are now at a crossroads and I'll bring it down to a very simple example. Manitoba is known as cottage country. Manitobans do more cottaging, have more second rural cottage residences probably per capita than any other part of this nation. The fact is that, as we look at the program to put in holding tanks, nobody thought about the fact that what are you going to do with it after you get it in the holding tanks. There are communities out there. The Premier has put forward his initiative about more cottages, but he didn't tell anybody that that would require the receiving areas to build lagoon structure to provide the treatment. Holding tanks are not sewage treatments. They are sewage collection. Infrastructure is treatment. These are very specific issues, small issues that someone could argue, well, they're buried somewhere in here, but the record shows they're just being ignored; they're not being buried.

Mr. Speaker, as we look to develop more of those opportunities that are a very pleasant, very important part of Manitoba life, I think that when the government talks about infrastructure, we want them to look at our roads. Goodness knows that they've been neglected. We know we need multimillion-dollar investments there. But, when we're talking about investment and infrastructure, don't let anyone think that that doesn't mean sewage treatment. It's been on the agenda far too long and it hasn't been dealt with.

That would provide a focus for the people in this province to say this government knows what they're doing with that plethora of money that is available for expenditures. Choosing a priority that would

demonstrate that they really are going to walk the walk on some of these issues would make a difference out there. That would make a difference.

I know the Premier knows that this is an area that in many respects he should have paid more attention to because reorganization—you cannot compare last year's expenditures with this year's expenditures—goes a long ways towards making things look like there's a good day tomorrow.

*(15:30)

Well, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is here. I don't agree with the thrust of many of the issues within this budget. I think this headline says it all: The lamb lies down on Broadway. We are far too trusting of the fact that this government may be choosing the wrong priorities when they have this much money available to them.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to comment on some of the statements made by the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) as part of the debate that takes place in this Chamber. But, you know, he's talking about his own constituents and talking about his situation back in his riding. It's really going to be interesting to see whether he votes with the jackals that sold the telephone system from underneath his feet against the wishes of rural Manitoba, of course engineered by the chief jackal, and I can't, of course, mention anybody.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talks about his constituents. You know, he had 11 years, and he raised farm taxes. Farm taxes went up. He sat at the Cabinet table and approved the portioning going up and costing farmers \$7 million. The farm taxes are going down another 20 percent in this budget. They've gone down 60 percent already. Are they going to vote with their broker friends or are they going to vote with the farmers?

They seem to now vote for the brokers in Manitoba, the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) and her band of corporate friends. That seems to be the new power. The centre of power is Tuxedo, not Ste. Rose. It's okay for the people of Tuxedo. They'll be able to buy Jaguars again when the members opposite, when they're elected 40 years from now, if they try to sell Hydro.

But, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the member should be very, very careful. I also would point out that he mentions 1986. Who can forget that infamous press release he issued apologizing for being kicked out

before he was kicked out? Nobody in the history of this House has ever done that.

But I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite should know that the taxes when they left office were 50 percent. The funding for education, after the Filmon government promised to go to 80 percent funding, 80 percent of what? It was 50 percent. They cut the education tax credit that hurt the lowest-valued senior citizens in homes in Manitoba and in Winnipeg. They cut that from farmers. They cut that from everybody. Of course, members opposite should know and remember that.

Mr. Speaker, we know that this is a government that believes in social justice and economic justice. It has a budget that invests in people that are the most vulnerable in our society and it also invests in competitive issues for people that are on the business side of the equation.

We already have our bona fides versus the mean team on vulnerable people in Manitoba. I do not have to preach to the converted in Manitoba about who has a heart and who doesn't. So, when we talk about social housing, when we talk about child poverty and the clawback, when we talk about minimum wage, when we talk about labour laws, when we talk about employment standards, when we talk about investing in those people that are most vulnerable—even mental health, over 1,100 people now living in the community under our programs. So it's not required.

Of course, members opposite, I think they asked their first northern question today, Mr. Speaker, and I want to applaud them for finally asking a question today about northern Manitoba. You know, I remember dealing with the Cross Lake bridge. I remember David Newman. Remember him? He stood up and he attacked the religious organizations of Manitoba for establishing residential schools when they had a panel of justice in Cross Lake. That's what they did. I still have the *Hansard*. If you want to hear what Mr. Newman said about the Mennonite Church, about the Anglican Church, about the Jewish religious leaders, about the Catholic leaders, they attacked them. That's how defensive and bunkered-in they had become. I still think most of the cultural bunkering in mentality is across the way. Someday, when members opposite have a little time, and they might have a little time on their hands some day, I would recommend they follow the Golden Boy and go north. Take a little look. Don't just tip your wings on your way to Japan. Spend

some time in northern Manitoba. You'll really appreciate it.

Now, in terms of economic justice, I want to read the Toronto Dominion Bank 2007 Manitoba budget review. I think it's important to have credible, third-party analysis on the budget. As the member opposite, the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) said: Not this partisan stuff, let's have some non-partisan stuff. Well, I'm going to give you some non-partisan stuff. Mr. Speaker, \$166 million in projected black ink coming off a \$148-million surplus in 2006 and 2007. Investments in priority areas of health and education and tax cuts for individuals and businesses. Further budget surpluses and they go on to say: Surpluses as far as the eye can see. I would add on: as long as this government is in office, as long as this government is in office.

They go on to talk about the debt-to-GDP is going down. The cost of borrowing money is going down. The Province moves to improve tax competitiveness. The education property tax will increase, \$125 to \$525. Middle-income tax bracket is going down. Personal amounts for spousal and dependants will be improved. Reductions in small business tax will be the lowest in Canada, going down to 2 percent and 1 percent. Corporate tax from 17 to 13 to 12. Corporate capital tax eliminated. Focussed on health and education, the debt-to-GDP is going down from 16.2 percent to 15 percent. The bottom line: Today's budget continues to demonstrate solid fiscal management, increased focus on the summary accounts. Policy selection presented in this budget is a good balance between tax cuts and reinvesting in priority areas.

Speaking of priority areas, Mr. Speaker, how can members opposite, who only invested a few extra million dollars after increasing gas tax, vote against \$400 million a year in highways? How can they vote against 300 megawatts additional wind power? How can they vote against more investments in hydro-electric power? What have they got against northern Manitoba? How can they vote against more police officers? How can they vote against more workers for child protection and child care in Manitoba? By any measure, this is a very solid budget, and if anybody votes against it, I can't wait for the Premier to have the courage to call the election and hold members at their task.

This is a good budget. When the Filmon government brought in one good budget, we voted for it. We voted against the other ones we didn't

agree with. We voted for one good one. That's what people want. They don't want people just putting on a partisan uniform. As the Member for Ste. Rose said, they want people actually to make decisions on the basis of merit, not on the basis of what the brokers say about what a budget should do or not do. I know the brokers are disappointed that we're not selling Hydro. I know the brokers are putting all their chips on the sellers of the telephone side of the table. We know what side we're on; we're on the side of all Manitobans. We know that people like this budget and we're prepared to defend it everywhere in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

* (15:40)

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Carman was up on his feet first, and I go opposition, opposition, government, opposition, so I've already recognized the honourable Member for Carman.

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I don't intend to put anybody in an awkward position here now. I just want to take this opportunity to put a few remarks on the record. The remarks basically will deal specifically with the budget that is presently before us because I have been given a wonderful opportunity. By no means do I want anybody to think for one second that this is my swan song, because it is not. This will not be my swan song.

You might have got thrown off the train, but there're many trains going by, let me tell you, and when you've had the opportunity, such as I have, to serve the people of this province for many, many years, it is indeed a worthwhile career. I was very fortunate, let me tell you. My first seat was on this side of the House. We were in opposition. Then we slowly transgressed to the other side, and I sat where Mr. Speaker sits today.

There was the eye-opener of all, and this is the part of my entire career that caused me a lot of grief because I treated individuals as people. It did not matter to the Speaker of the day which side of the House you were on, what party you represented. You were here elected by the constituents to serve your constituents, and by God, I sat through many years in the chair that Mr. Speaker, who we adore—and by the way, Mr. Speaker, you do an absolutely wonderful job doing it.

But, Mr. Speaker, we've sunk to an all-time low. I mean, when I say an all-time low, it is the fact that when we start taking on the Auditor—what many of

you are not aware of is the fact that the Auditor, Carol Bellringer, is originally from Carman. Her father, Mr. Doyle, is a dear friend of mine. Now, when this side of the House decided to attack Carol Bellringer, an individual that is so professional, and that we would take this opportunity to try and use her as a scapegoat for whatever the issue was of the day, this was grossly unfair. Now we've done that.

Also, I apologize right now for this side of the House to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. The Lieutenant-Governor, as each and every one of us is aware, is a representative of the Queen. Now there is much to-do here in the last few days about a particular vehicle that he is driving. Yes, we are in an age where individuals talk more about being green, but I don't recall anybody saying a word in 1999 when Yvon Dumont bought this great, big Cadillac. It wasn't even an issue.

An Honourable Member: Oh, yes.

Mr. Rocan: It was not an issue back then. It was not said, we bought this big car. So to you, Your Honour, I apologize right now, and I will have that good fortune later this evening to spend some time with you and to apologize again. But these are some of the little issues that happen here.

But, when I moved over to the other side of the House, now I sat on the side where there was a government, and you were supposed to get things done for your constituents. Now this is the part that irks a lot of people because Denis Rocan believes, the Member for Carman believes you're elected by the people for the people. This is your No. 1 task and responsibility.

The individuals who go out of their way to put a little X beside your name, and they do that for one reason, Mr. Speaker. They do that in the hope that you will make their life a little bit better. Now it just so happens that I come from an area that was Conservative and Conservative and Conservative and Conservative, which is true, but they honestly believed that Denis Rocan was going to assist them. Now, my constituents, I have always said, and the newspapers have reported it, my constituents have been the best served of all, and not only because the Filmon government was then of the day in place, but I can tell you right now, in all sincerity, and I thank each and every one of the ministers across the way and indeed this Premier (Mr. Doer) because my constituents have never been better served than they are today.

When I look at the windmill farm, there's a big plus for my area. When I look at the no-smoking bill, that's a plus for Manitobans, but I got that because the Premier, the Minister of Health of the day, and several other ministers believed in what we were trying to do. The Member for Charleswood, the Member for Fort Whyte, these individuals who sat on the committee, the Member for Transcona who sat and worked extremely hard for the people of this province knew the risk that we were taking, but it was for the people of this province.

When I look today and I see the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Lemieux) when he puts the number of dollars that he has in place, my constituents have been clamouring, screaming for roads to be built. Now, yes, there is a lot of work to be built, but, when I look at the 10-year plan and I see the \$400 million a year that is going to be in place, we are sincerely hoping that some of that will trickle down to my part of the world which, I believe, it will.

I have to take a moment to thank the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Sale) because the member was then the Minister of Industry and Trade when the windmills were being promoted and talked about, and it was through his due diligence and working with his department that we were able to secure along with Executive Council the first wind farm in Manitoba.

But I've got to go one step further. This was a couple of years back, and I'll always say that there's truly a God. My wife and myself, we had a layover in Toronto, and we were just off on a holiday. At 5 o'clock in the morning we were requested to be in the lobby because there would be a bus that was going to pick us up and we were going to transfer airplanes. So, true to our word, we were there at 5 o'clock, and as the bus was just starting to pull away I happened to look out the window, and I saw a senior individual running, dragging his suitcase, trying to catch the bus. Well, I yelled at the bus driver, like a quick hey, there's a man coming. The bus driver said, he's late. I said, I don't care, he's on our bus. The bus driver stopped, and I quickly went to the door, and as the bus driver opened the door, I put out my hand, and I grabbed the individual's hand, and I pulled him into the bus, and that man was no other than Hubert Kleysen, and Hubert Kleysen says, Denis, boy, am I glad to see you. He said, I'm just on my way back to Florida, and I have come across some of the finest technology in the world. He said, it's called a CyberKnife. He said, let me quickly go

through my documentation. He went through a bunch of papers. He said, would you take this back and take it now to the Minister of Health? He says, and you tell him about this CyberKnife. He says, Hubert Kleysen wants to purchase a CyberKnife for the province of Manitoba. I said, Hubert, what is a CyberKnife? He said, Denis, it's close to a Gamma Knife.

I took the job, and I took the responsibility very seriously. I went and saw the member. We sat down, and we talked about this CyberKnife, not knowing what we were even discussing. The minister took it on upon himself, and he went and saw a guy by the name of Brian Postl. Brian Postl started to do some research on this CyberKnife, and we found out that this is indeed the Cadillac, that this is indeed the cutting edge of the technology when you want to deal with cancer. I see today now the budget makes reference to this CyberKnife, \$10 million, that Hubert Kleysen was going to take it upon himself to purchase for the province. The government of the day, for whatever reason, they decided to purchase it, which is cool. We are just glad that we in the province of Manitoba have the CyberKnife that will be coming to benefit all Manitobans. So, to Hubert Kleysen, thank you very much. To the minister, thank you very much.

Many other things have come forward that an individual has to be looking at. I looked at the number of balanced budgets that this government has been able to bring forward, and I think, and I count it, and somebody please correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the number was eight. You've lived within the balanced budget legislation that we have passed here in this House, and we thank each and every one of you for not—for whatever reason, not spending above and beyond, and this is one of the things that I believe that is instrumental to the people of this province, if you want to move ahead. On this side of the House, we have sort of a—there is a sort of a cancer that's festering here. People's words are on this side of the House right now; we're having trouble believing individuals on these signed documentation and whatever. But that will soon become public very quickly, because the individuals on this side of the House have a trouble with giving their words. Now, when you're out campaigning for the people—now I have done seven or eight campaigns myself personally and campaigned for many others. The thing is you've got to be truthful to the people whom you represent. If you're just out there and you figure you can go like the wind and

you can change for whatever reason, this is not beneficial because people can see through that. They see you to be a political opportunist.

Now, to each and every one of us, and I say one of us because I have every intention—there will be a general election called very shortly. I have not quite made up my mind. I'm meeting with several people. There are several pieces of the puzzle that have to come to play before a decision is made, but I'm fairly certain that Denis Rocan has every intention to come back in this House. But I need to say this here and now, ladies and gentlemen, this is not my swan song, but from what I see in this budget, with all the day cares in rural Manitoba that I've been able to get, the highway projects that I've been able to get, the funding that I've been able to get from the highways, the Francophone community, we in rural Manitoba, we see the French language services not only in Notre Dame, St. Claude, Notre Dame de Lourdes, but, indeed, in St. Boniface, St. Lazare, St. Jean. We see it. There is a major benefit.

* (15:50)

As the only Francophone in this building, in this Chamber, I say it to you, Mr. Premier, we thank you. We appreciate the support that this government has given to the Francophone community, and, for this reason, ladies and gentlemen, I have no other opportunity but to vote for this budget when it comes around.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule 31(8), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered next Tuesday will be the one put forward by the Member for Transcona (Mr. Reid). The title of the resolution is Apprenticeship.

Mr. Speaker: For the information of the House, the private member's resolution to be considered next Tuesday will be put forward by the honourable Member for Transcona. This is pursuant to rule 31(8). The title of the resolution is Apprenticeship.

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to place a few comments on the record about the budget and the finances of the province under the NDP and to put a few comments on the record on behalf of our caucus and the constituency of Lac du Bonnet and the residents within it.

But, before I start, Mr. Speaker, I heard the Premier (Mr. Doer) in his address to the budget indicating that he likes non-partisan stuff. Well, let me give him a few quotes that he may be interested in, particularly from the Chamber of Commerce, both the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce when they said: Manitoba is not tax competitive. How does he like that quote?

Another one from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business: Manitoba is not tax competitive. Another one from the Canadian Taxpayers Federation: Manitoba is not tax competitive. If he wants quotes we can provide quotes. We're not tax competitive and that's the bottom line, Mr. Speaker.

The budget started out with the phrase, tomorrow's opportunities. The difficulty with that is that it was addressed by a very disappointing budget, a budget that lacked vision and lacks direction, a budget that has no long-term plan, whether it's a plan related to making Manitoba a have province, whether it's a plan for economic recovery due to the massive overspending, overspending without results by the NDP or whether it be a plan to keep young Manitobans here in Manitoba. We've seen since 1999 35,000 young Manitobans leave our province.

This is a budget that has \$651 million of new revenue. This is a historic high increase from one budget to the other, one year to the next, \$651 million of new revenue. That new revenue is not due to an expanding Manitoba economy. That new revenue is not due to dramatic population growth. That new revenue is in most part due to increased, dramatically increased transfer payments from federal government handouts, \$402 million more in federal government handouts than last year.

The increased revenues, Mr. Speaker, \$651 million, budget over budget year. Where did it go? Where did they spend it? It went every place you can think of, to every group and segment of Manitoba to curry votes in favour of the NDP. What's the reaction by the special interest groups? Not one interest group that we could see had anything good to say about the budget, not even

Winnipeg Harvest, not the Social Planning Council, not the Chambers of Commerce. Not one group was happy with that budget. The money certainly didn't go to provide meaningful tax relief for Manitobans.

The most dramatic tax reduction that I heard in the budget was the profound announcement by the NDP that they were going to fund 80 percent of education costs out of general revenue and the 20 percent balance would come from an assessment on property. It sounded nice but, when you look at the details of the budget—and, Mr. Speaker, this is absolutely true for this budget—the devil is in the details. When you look at the details of the budget, No. 1, it may happen within the next five years and then again it may not.

Number two, it was predicated by the statement: subject to balanced budget requirements. This isn't a commitment. This is a statement of intent. There was no commitment to decrease taxes on property, to decrease education taxes on property, only to fund 80 percent of education costs out of general revenue.

As more money flows from general revenues, school divisions continue and still have the ability to raise school taxes by increasing mill rates for education. Education taxes will still increase every time a provincial general assessment increases property taxes, increases assessments. The Province may use more general revenues to fund education, but school taxes can still increase because mill rates can increase and assessments can increase.

Other tax reductions were announced, but they were miniscule in comparison to what other provinces have done. All provinces are reducing taxes year after year after year, and Manitoba is falling further and further behind because we are not reducing taxes in this province fast enough, and, as a result, we're not competitive. Most of the tax reductions, in fact, Mr. Speaker, announced in the budget won't even occur until well after the next election in 2008, 2009 and even 2010.

Tax reductions announced in the budget were minimal. For every \$1 of tax reductions in this budget, there was \$7.40 of new spending. Compare that to the federal government budget, Mr. Speaker, which received rave reviews across the country. For every dollar of tax cuts, there was only \$3.50 of new spending.

Because most of these tax cuts announced in the budget will take place in future years, the vast majority of all those revenues went for government

spending, handouts to every group that they could find to curry more favour for the NDP just prior to an election. Truly, this is an election budget, public money being used to convince Manitobans to vote for them. Manitobans deserve more. We listened to the budget, Mr. Speaker. We expected more. Manitobans expected more and we were all disappointed.

The government, the NDP, the Finance Minister would have Manitobans believe that he reduced taxes. It was right in the budget, Mr. Speaker, that he reduced taxes by \$640 million from 1999 levels. Tax reductions, however, we find are not tax reductions when it comes to this government. On the one hand, tax rates were reduced in some areas of taxation since '99 and I don't deny that. It's obvious that they have reduced taxes in terms of tax rates. We only state that the government, that the NDP have not been keeping up with other tax reductions in other provinces.

They fail to disclose that in every one of its eight budgets since 1999, it increased taxes the sneaky, backdoor way, sneaky backdoor taxes, fees, licences and permits, every one you can think of. In fact, more than a hundred different taxes were substantially increased under the watch of the NDP, so much so, Mr. Speaker, that Manitobans are now paying \$450 million annually in these kinds of taxes in 2006 and 2007 than they did in 1999, plus they took \$203 million out of Manitoba Hydro just to balance the budget in 2003.

The minister likes to count only one side of the ledger, the tax decreases that he introduced. He failed to inform Manitobans about all the tax increases that he brought under his watch, Mr. Speaker. By and large, the increases in taxes almost cancel out the decreases that he talked about.

Let me give you an example about the kinds of taxes that he increased, Mr. Speaker. In April 18, 2006, he increased the justice service surcharge to \$40 from \$35. He increased marriage licence fees in 2006. The driver's licence reinstatement charge was increased in 2006, and these are just examples. In 2005, he increased fees so much that the Vital Statistics agency got increases in revenue of \$140,000 from the previous \$75,000.

* (16:00)

He increased taxes to the Companies Office in 2004. A variety of fees and permits and licences were increased, a total of \$1,000 in increases in fees

to the Corporations branch alone. When I look at 2004, he increased the scope of the provincial sales tax to include professional services, such as legal and accounting fees. That raised another \$17.2 million in revenue in 2004 alone. Licence and registration fees of vehicles were increased, another \$20 million in revenue. Pharmacare deductibles increased by 5 percent for those with income under \$40,000. He increased the land transfer taxes, an extra \$1 million in revenue in 2004 alone. In 2004, he also increased the taxes on diesel fuel by 0.6 cents a litre, another \$95,000 for the coffers of Manitoba. In 2003, as an example, he increased Pharmacare costs by \$35.2 million more. Again, he expanded the PST application to services such as plumbers and electricians. These are only some of the examples, and every year, year after year after year, we've seen these kinds of increases in taxes totalling more than a hundred different fees, the sneaky backdoor way, Mr. Speaker.

He only counts one side of the ledger and not the other. I know in the House the other day, he mentioned to me that he decreased taxes in this area and he decreased rates in another area. We don't deny that. He counted every one of them to get the \$640 million as we've counted to get the \$450 million plus \$203 million out of Manitoba Hydro. Our point was not that we weren't presenting both sides of the ledger. He presented tax decreases; we showed the other side of the ledger, the other side of the argument in the fact that he does, and has, increased taxes.

The budget was disappointing because there was no direction, no plan, Mr. Speaker, and those tax reductions in the budget, again, will not make our province competitive with other provinces. It was disappointing but not surprising, considering the previous budgets that this government has passed.

Since 1999, they've had increased revenues available to them, Mr. Speaker, \$2.7 billion annually more than in 1999. In 2007, we had 9.3 billion. In 1999, \$6.6 billion. Increases in federal transfer payments are responsible for more than 50 percent of the revenue growth of this province under the NDP. No other province in Canada has this very dubious record. We've failed to grow our revenues in this province because we've failed to grow our economy in step with the rest of Canada. It's very obvious in terms of where our new revenue is coming. Most of our new revenue is coming, in fact, from federal transfers. They've increased by over a billion dollars on an annual basis in Manitoba since '99. Manitoba

now has the distinction of being the only have-not province in western Canada, and we will continue to be a have-not province for a very long time unless fiscal policies change in this province.

Why does Manitoba have more federal transfers, Mr. Speaker? It's quite obvious. First of all, I can tell you that it's a very, very complex formula. I think the Finance Minister (Mr. Selinger) acknowledges that, a very complex formula that is followed by the federal government. However, I can tell you that, if we're doing well in relation to other provinces across this country, we don't experience lower federal transfer payments; we get higher transfer payments. If we were doing well comparatively to other provinces, our transfer payments would be lower, not increased.

All of this extra revenue, Mr. Speaker, \$2.7 billion more than in 1999 and, at the same time, the total debt of the province went up by more than \$5.5 billion since 1999. Now, how much is \$5.5 billion? It's a stack of \$100 bills. You take the \$100 bills, stack them one on top of the other 88 kilometres high. That's how much \$5.5 billion is. It's enough to expand the floodway eight times. It's enough to repave and reconstruct every provincial trunk highway and every provincial road in the province, and there's still enough left over to build the Wuskwatim Dam generating station.

What's the cost of this extra debt, Mr. Speaker? We now pay on the total debt of the province \$3.5 million a day in interest in Manitoba, and that in itself, the interest itself is enough to fully fund our education department with enough left over to fully fund our universities. Increasing Manitoba's debt creates a massive potential future cost when interest rates go up. A simple 1 percent increase in interest rates will increase our interest costs by \$250 million a year.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are different kinds of debts. There are three different kinds of debts in the province. One is the operating debt. This government likes to talk about the operating debt because it's the debt that, in fact, is controlled by the balanced budget legislation and is relatively constant. What they don't like to talk about is the total debt of the province. They do sometimes talk about the net debt of the province, and let me give an analogy so that members opposite can understand debt in Manitoba. Take, for example, you have a home in the city of Winnipeg, and the home in the city of Winnipeg is worth \$100,000. Well, if you have a mortgage against that \$100,000 of a \$300,000 mortgage, how

much is your debt? Of course, if you asked any ordinary Manitoban how much the debt was, they would say \$300,000 because that's the amount that you pay interest on, and that's the amount that has to be repaid. Well, that's the total debt of the province, the \$300,000 number.

What's the net debt? Well, according to the NDP, they would interpret that same scenario as the net debt being \$200,000 because you have a \$100,000 home to pay off the first \$100,000 of the \$300,000 debt, ignoring the fact that interest has to be paid on \$300,000 and the entire \$300,000 has to be paid out before you're debt free.

Now, the fallacy of the argument of the NDP and the Finance Minister, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that we would never sell our assets in Manitoba in order to pay off the debt. We wouldn't sell our hospitals. We wouldn't sell our schools. We wouldn't sell our legislative buildings. We wouldn't sell our Golden Boy to raise any money to pay off the debt. That's the difference. We won't sell Hydro. Let me make it clear. We will never sell Hydro. If anyone's going to sell Manitoba Hydro, it's members opposite. The NDP will sell Manitoba Hydro just to pay off the massive debt that it has got with Manitoba Hydro. They're going to be forced to do that. If anyone's going to sell Hydro, it's the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, all this extra spending, all this extra debt, and there are no results. I know we've heard many times from the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Lemieux) that he is going spend an extra \$400 million, 400 million more dollars this year on infrastructure. It's not about how much money you spend; it's what are the results. He's not talking about how many highways or roads he's going to pave or reconstruct, he only talks about the amount of money he's going to spend. More mismanagement by the NDP will only result in wasted money as we've seen in the past.

It's time for a change in government, Mr. Speaker. This Premier (Mr. Doer) is tired; he has no new ideas. It's time for a change in fiscal policy. We need to make sure to use Manitoba Hydro so it can grow our economy. We stand for that. We need to use Hydro profits to—we don't need to use Hydro profits simply to balance the budget because of massive overspending.

Mr. Speaker, though, I can tell you we're going to vote against this budget in spite of what the government may feel. We feel though, however, there are some good things in the budget. There are

some things that we could support. But, overall, I can tell you the overall fiscal policy and the fiscal direction of this Province is wrong. We aren't growing our economy. We aren't growing our economy in step with the rest of Canada.

I know the Finance Minister will probably stand up and say, well, in 2006, we grew above the national average. However, that's just a wild guess, another wild guess, by the Finance Minister. Nothing has been confirmed by Stats Canada as yet. In fact, he stood up every one of those years and said, we're going to grow, our economy's going to grow above the national average. For each of the previous seven years, he said that every time, and he was wrong. How are we going to believe it's going to be right and correct this time, Mr. Speaker?

Obviously, he's going to stand up and make another prediction that we're going to grow above the national average, and he's going to be wrong again. Simply dead wrong. The point is that for each of the last seven years we have not grown above the national average in terms of our economy, and I don't think there's a lot of hope for the future. Even if we did, even if the numbers did come out higher than the national average this year, we still would be dead last. We'd share the distinction with at least one or two other provinces. We'd be dead last in economic growth in the province. Those are my comments, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to hear the comments from the Minister of Finance. Thank you.

* (16:10)

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, budget 2007 is a building budget. We are building the province through a green and growing economy, wind power and hydro-electric power. We're building safe and strong communities, more police officers, expansion of Neighbourhoods Alive! and more funding for public transit.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

We are building and improving health care, more training for doctors, nurses and technologists, investments in health care infrastructure that were so long neglected when members opposite were in office. We are building support for children and families, safe and affordable housing, more funding for child protection services, support for low-income working families, increased investment in child care. We are building protection for water and the environment, water and sewer projects, climate change legislation. We are building opportunities for

our youth, encouraging young people to work in Manitoba by offering a 60 percent tuition-fee income-tax credit to post-secondary graduates, keeping tuition fees frozen, exceeding our commitment on funding to universities and colleges, more scholarships and bursary support. We are building tax savings for Manitobans, \$297 million in new tax benefits including personal tax cuts for all Manitobans and \$93 million in business tax savings.

Budget '07 builds on the new course we have set for our province, a course based on entrepreneurship and innovation, growing the skills of our hardworking labour force, expanding our natural advantages in renewable resources and expanding new markets for Manitoba businesses at home and around the world. Our budget is focussed on Manitobans' priorities and lays out a long-term vision for better, faster health care delivered closer to home, affordable quality education and training, addressing climate change and preserving our water resources and the environment, building our roads and highways, making Manitoba a more attractive place for youth, growing our competitive advantages, investing in a green and growing economy, fighting poverty and removing barriers to employment, building healthier, safer and stronger communities, providing tax savings for Manitoba families and businesses and continuing with a sound fiscal plan.

Rebuilding Manitoba's health care system continues to be our top priority, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our government has invested over \$1 billion to build and modernize health care facilities and install new diagnostic equipment throughout the province. This includes a long overdue new hospital for Brandon, a fully modernized state-of-the-art Health Sciences Centre, Manitoba's largest ever health care capital project, a new hospital in Swan River and major renovations to Concordia, Seven Oaks, Gimli and St. Anne hospitals, a new hospital for Selkirk and the surrounding region. As well, a major redevelopment of Victoria General Hospital will begin, including expanded emergency and new oncology departments. Budget 2007 invests in more training for health care professionals, providing ongoing support for the expanded, 100-student Faculty of Medicine class, an increased 25-space licensing program for international medical graduates, more than 50 new technologist training seats and 3,000 nurses in training.

Budget '07 also invests \$3 million in new funding for physician specialist training, including emergency room doctors, oncologists and

pediatricians. Our investments over seven years have now succeeded in restoring the number of nurses who disappeared when Tories were in office. We are proud that 1,500 more nurses are back to work providing valuable front-line patient care in our province. Budget '07 also provides new funding for additional nurse practitioner positions.

On education, our investments in quality education for our children and youth are important investments in Manitoba's future. High school graduation rates have increased to 84 percent from 73 percent since 1999. In each of the last eight years, our government has met or exceeded our commitment to fund public schools at the rate of economic growth, providing a total of \$185 million in new funding, an increase of 24 percent since 1999. This year's increase of \$30.3 million is the largest increase in almost two decades and provides increased support for all school divisions. This compares to the Tory years when education funding increased by only \$16.1 million or 2.1 percent.

Our plan for public schools builds on a solid foundation of strong support for education and maintaining affordability for taxpayers. As part of our strategy to reduce education property taxes, we have raised provincial funding to \$956 million for the '07 school year and increased the education property tax credit. We have also fully eliminated the residential education support levy. University and college enrolment is up by one-third in Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker, supported by a 10 percent tuition fee reduction for students. Budget '07 announced the continuation of the tuition fee reduction as we have done each and every year.

We are fully providing offsetting revenue to universities and colleges tied directly to enrolment, a total loss of \$95 million since 2000. Last year, we significantly increased our support for post-secondary education with the largest ever commitment of \$60 million over three years. Included in this commitment was a promise of a 5 percent funding increase for '07-08. Budget '07 exceeds our promise by providing an average funding increase of 7 percent this year, which is equivalent to a 4 percent tuition fee increase, meaning that students will not have to pay any more while universities and colleges will still benefit.

On water quality, protecting the quality of our vast water resources is a top priority. Budget '07 invests more than \$10 million in new funds to address recommendations on the Lake Winnipeg

Stewardship Board, advance sewer and water projects, and improve our water management and flood protection. With this budget, our government has committed more than \$130 million for water and waste water infrastructure projects across the province. The Tories cut drainage and water resources by 43 percent, which resulted in municipalities picking up those costs. We have doubled the drainage budget and developed a Water Stewardship Department with an office of drinking water quality.

Highways: Last year Manitoba provided its highest level of highway support: \$257 million, up from \$177 million in 1999. This year the renewal of highway infrastructure is taking on an even greater priority, as Manitobans have expressed their strong desire to accelerate investments in our transportation system. Budget 2007 provides a 58 percent increase over last year, bringing annual provincial highways investment close to \$400 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Compare that. That's more than double the \$177 million in 1999.

Over 10 years, the Tories have increased highways and bridge spending by a measly 4.4 percent. We have increased our spending on highways and bridges by 125 percent. We have introduced Manitoba's first ever multiyear plan for highways and bridges, which is set to complete a record number of projects with an investment of \$2 billion over five years. This budget will advance work on redeveloping Highway 75, the Trans-Canada Highway, and northern roads and highways 2, 3, 6, 8, 16 and 59. We are also investing to build the first leg of the all-weather road on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, a key infrastructure priority for the region. We are building on the foresight of the original floodway vision, having secured a 50-50 funding partnership with the federal government to complete the entire floodway expansion project. Since construction began a year and a half ago more than one-third of the channel excavation work has been completed. Manitobans now have protection against a flood equal to the greatest in recorded Manitoba history.

Population and immigration: Building on our strong record in education and training, our government recognizes the need to increase efforts to grow our population and keep our communities and economy strong. Business leaders have made it clear that labour force expansion is a key to competitiveness. Manitoba's performance over the last seven years has been exceptional. In comparison to the

1990s, our labour force has grown at nearly three times the rate. Our employment has increased more than twice as fast, and our youth population and youth labour force have also grown more than twice as fast. In contrast to the Opposition Leader's erroneous claims last spring that thousands of young people were leaving the province, more youth are staying in Manitoba compared to when he was advising the government on youth retention policy.

The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) said, I quote: Well, there's still more young people leaving than coming in and there's still hundreds and thousands of young people leaving every year. We know it anecdotally and we know it through the statistics. So that's unacceptable. I don't particularly care if he wants to make comparisons to, you know, the 1990s. I'm not interested in that.

Of course he's not interested. It would only dredge up the shabby Tory record on youth retention. In fact, in the past seven years net migration added 3,300 young people to our population. This is a real improvement over the net loss of almost 2,600 young people experienced between 1992 and 1999.

While Manitoba's population has continued to grow, we are committed to achieving even stronger results. Budget '07 invests in making Manitoba a more attractive place for youth, developing our Aboriginal labour force and continuing to increase the number of new immigrants to our province. Our government has introduced a major new initiative, unique in the country, to attract and retain youth: a 60 percent income tax credit on tuition fees for all post-secondary graduates who live and work in Manitoba. This initiative makes post-secondary education an even greater return on their investment and encourages our youth to put down roots and establish their careers in Manitoba.

*(16:20)

Our government set a bold target to attract 10,000 immigrants to Manitoba annually. Last year we exceeded that goal. Manitoba's immigration was up 24 percent in 2006, its highest level in over half a century, far exceeding national performance. Manitoba's Provincial Nominee Program continues to be immensely successful in bringing skilled immigrants and entrepreneurs to Manitoba, serving as a model for the entire country. Based on this success, our government has committed to another bold target, to double our current immigration level over the next 10 years.

The lowest annual number of new immigrants in the past 40 years was in 1998, when only 3,000 newcomers came to Manitoba. This result reflects the attitude of the Tories, that immigration doesn't count in their universe. The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) repeats his message that Manitoba has lost almost 40,000 to other provinces over the last seven years. This is the interprovincial migration from Manitoba. By excluding international immigration, the Leader of the Official Opposition insults 45,000 new Manitobans: Manitoba's 38,000 new immigrants and the 8,200 former Manitobans who have come home from other countries. How welcome would these Manitobans feel in the official Leader of the Opposition's Manitoba?

Our success in attracting and retaining immigrants is based, in large part, on Manitoba's innovative approach to helping immigrants settle and succeed in our province. Budget '07 provides more than \$9.5 million in new funding to enhance settlement services, language training, labour market integration and ethnocultural and anti-racism initiatives, supported by federal resources.

On the economy, Manitoba has a diverse economy with a strong manufacturing base and a large and dynamic services sector that build on our wealth of natural resources. Our competitive business environment includes a well-educated, productive and multilingual labour force, among the lowest electricity rates in the world, affordable taxes and low construction costs. Manitoba's capital investment growth is expected to be above 11 percent this year, more than double the expected growth for Canada. Private capital investment in Manitoba is expected to grow by 6.5 percent this year, second best in the country. Budget '07 broadens the Community Enterprise Development Tax Credit Program to include a new 30 percent tax credit for direct investments in emerging enterprises, start-ups and early expansions requiring large amounts of capital investment.

Manufacturing is a vital part of Manitoba's diversified economy, accounting for approximately 12 percent of our output. In our last budget we renewed and enhanced the Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit. Budget '07 makes the MITC even more valuable by increasing its refundability to 50 percent. Capital investments in manufacturing grew by more than 16 percent in Manitoba last year, with a further 30 percent increase in expected budget in budget '07. This is in sharp contrast to a national growth of only 0.1 percent last year and even less in

the beginning of 2007. Manitoba's economy grew by 3.1 percent last year as compared to 2.7 percent for Canada. Real GDP is expected to grow by 2.6 percent in '07, outpacing the forecasted national average of 2.3 percent.

Manitoba's unemployment rate fell to a 30-year low in '06, at 4.3 percent, the second lowest rate among provinces. After our new record for our employment levels in '06, some 66,700 new jobs were created, almost 90 percent of which were in the private sector. Consumer strength was reflected in housing starts, which topped 5,000 in '06, the highest level in almost two decades. In addition, building permits increased by 22 percent, more than double the national increase of 9 percent.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

With respect to rural communities and green investing, we are investing in farm renewal through an increase to the Young Farmer Rebate on the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation loan. We also have a new training program to assist young women to be more active in farm enterprises, an enhancement to the Bridging Generations Initiative made permanent with this budget, making it easier to transfer farms from one generation to the next by providing up to 90 percent financing. Rural Manitobans are seizing new market opportunities in biofuels. Budget '07 broadens eligibility for MASC's Alternative Energy Loan program. Biodiesel plant development and construction is already underway at four sites in Manitoba. We have taken steps to support the growth of this emerging industry with the elimination of the sales tax for the biodiesel portion of any blends. Manitoba's also supporting new biodiesel use in long-haul trucking fleets and in school buses. Our vision is for Manitoba to be a leader in biodiesel production, creating jobs, expanding markets for farmers, and spurring greater economic activity in our communities.

Budget '07 also introduces a new 10 percent green energy manufacturing tax credit designed to encourage new and expanded production for the use of green energy development. We also have a 300 megawatt RFP out through Manitoba Hydro to develop more wind power in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

In northern Manitoba, our government is working with Manitobans to increase better access to education and training, increasing economic development and more employment opportunities in the north. This budget provides additional dollars to

expand educational programming through the University College of the North, including 50 new nursing spaces. These 50 new nursing spaces double our commitment to northern Manitoba nursing. In addition, we have recently committed \$45 million to enhance UCN's capital facilities in The Pas and Thompson, and to establish two new regional centres in Grand Rapids and Oxford House. Budget '07 also provides funding to improve UCN's electronic network, linking 14 regional centres including nine on reserves.

With respect to municipalities, Mr. Speaker, we have 50 percent funded transit in Brandon, Winnipeg, Flin Flon and Thompson. In '07, the City will receive another \$29.1 million, a funding increase of 18.2 percent. Other municipalities will see a 17 percent increase in community development grants, as well as a 5 percent increase in general assistance. Our funding increase to public transit finally reverses the cuts made in 1993 to public transit by the Tories.

One of our proudest achievements has been the success of Neighbourhoods Alive!, a key part of our community economic development strategy. Neighbourhoods Alive! supports community driven revitalization in neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. Neighbourhoods Alive! is expanding into five more urban centres, including Dauphin, Flin Flon, The Pas, Portage la Prairie and Selkirk.

With respect to poverty and child welfare, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's '07 budget has taken a major step forward by introducing a new Manitoba Child Benefit for low-income families. The new benefit will provide more money for low-income working families to help with the costs of raising their children. This is a significant step in breaking down the welfare wall by ensuring that families retain supports for their children when they move from income assistance to work. Budget '07 also introduces a new Manitoba benefit which will complement the federal government's newly announced Working Income Tax Benefit.

Mr. Speaker, we have backfilled the federal Tory cuts to day care of \$14 million. This will provide funding as well for an additional 500 new spaces that were not previously funded. In addition, a new pilot project will begin this year, offering training supports to low-income persons over a longer period to improve opportunities for securing employment and a higher income.

Based on recommendations made by the provincial Ombudsman and the Children's Advocate, Manitoba is significantly increasing the level of investment in our child protection system. Budget '07 provides more than \$48 million in new resources to improve child protection services.

Our government continues to invest in Manitoba's children's early years. Research clearly shows that these investments pay the biggest rewards, supporting kids to do better in school and avoid costly run-ins with justice, health care and social service systems. With the co-ordination of Healthy Child Manitoba, we have established a province-wide network to give kids a better start in life. This budget also increases support to the Healthy Baby program. It also has \$7.5 million for fetal alcohol syndrome, and it provides \$1.8 million for low-income seniors in the 55 Plus program.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to tax reductions, Manitoba has done a tremendous amount in this budget. Our debt-to-GDP ratio—

* (16:30)

Mr. Speaker: Order.

The hour being 4:30, pursuant to rule 32(6), I'm interrupting proceedings to put the questions necessary to dispose of the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government, and all amendments to that motion.

Therefore, the question before the House is the proposed subamendment of the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard).

Do members wish to have the subamendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

THAT the amendment be amended by adding thereto the following words:

And further regrets that this budget also ignores the present and future needs of Manitobans by:

(q) failing to acknowledge that the province needs to stand shoulder to shoulder with Manitoba's First Nations and Métis communities in responding to the major needs in the areas of

housing, nutrition, wellness, and other areas, both by direct provincial action and by effectively calling the federal government to account for its shortcomings;

(r) failing to take adequate measures to protect children in the care of Manitoba Child and Family Services and to provide adequate transition to children in care so that they are not at high risk after leaving care;

(s) failing to provide an effective strategy to deal with child poverty;

(t) failing to provide Manitobans with the legal rights to timely, quality health care;

(u) failing to present an adequate approach to reduce phosphorous levels and algal blooms in Lake Winnipeg;

(v) failing to provide an adequate five-year plan and the needed resources to address the child-care needs of Manitobans;

(w) failing to provide adequate funding for the primary organization which provides provincial operating funding for health research, the Manitoba Health Research Council;

(x) failing to provide a vision for rural communities and farm families outside of the city of Winnipeg;

(y) failing to provide adequate support for libraries in Manitoba – when libraries are one of the major building blocks needed to improve literacy in our province;

(z) failing to provide adequate support to municipalities and small farming operations to end the practice of winter spreading of animal manure and human bio-solids;

(aa) failing to make rapid transit a priority in the city of Winnipeg;

(bb) failing to install an environmental levy on cosmetic fertilizers containing phosphorus that continue to aggravate the algae problems on Lake Winnipeg.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the subamendment?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: I declare that the subamendment is defeated.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if there might be the will of the House to have a recorded vote on it.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have support?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member does not have support.

The question before the House now is the proposed amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. It is the will of the House to have the amendment read, so I will read the amendment.

The proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition,

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "House" and substituting:

therefore regrets that this budget neglects many of the current and future needs of Manitobans by:

(a) failing to set out a coherent plan to stem the flow of people out of Manitoba, after the loss of 35,000 Manitobans to other provinces since 1999; and

(b) failing to make Manitoba a "have" province, reduce the debt and decrease the NDP government's reliance on federal transfer payments; and

(c) failing to implement taxation measures to make Manitoba competitive with other provinces; and

(d) failing to entice businesses to come to Manitoba and spur economic and job growth while Manitoba now ranks seventh in job creation as it falls even further behind other jurisdictions; and

(e) failing to address serious issues of crime such as auto theft, gang activity and violent crime; and

(f) failing to address chronic problems in health care, which has led Manitoba to be ranked 10th out of 10 provinces on health by the Conference Board of Canada; and

(g) failing to address the emergency physician shortage that has crippled Manitoba hospitals and threatens to close more emergency rooms; and

(h) failing to implement an effective strategy to reduce wait times for diagnostic testing, surgical procedures and appointments with specialists; and

(i) failing to address the needs of farm families, increase slaughter capacity, develop a comprehensive biofuel strategy, and provide a sustainable plan for growth of agriculture and the rural economy; and

(j) failing to declare a definitive end to the NDP government's practice of raiding Manitoba Hydro's revenues, which has negatively impacted the Crown corporation's financial position; and

(k) failing to address the fact that the government's mismanagement of the child welfare system has led to vulnerable children falling through the cracks; and

(l) failing to embark on a long-overdue, science-based effort to clean up Lake Winnipeg, contrary to the Premier's (Mr. Doer) earlier promise that the environment "trumps all other issues" in government; and

(m) failing to acknowledge that the NDP government's inaction on the environment resulted in a 480,000-tonne increase of Manitoba's greenhouse gas emissions between 2004 and 2005, the highest percentage increase in Canada; and

(n) failing to make meaningful progress to ensure the strength and competitiveness of our post-secondary institutions; and

(o) failing to provide clear information about the "Spirited Energy" campaign, the subject of yet another investigation of the NDP government by the Auditor General; and

(p) failing to be accountable to Manitobans for exorbitant cost overruns on the floodway expansion project and Manitoba Hydro office tower.

As a consequence, the government has thereby lost the confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the amendment, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it—or the Nays have it.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Formal Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): About to declare the government defeated, but I request a recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

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

Division

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

Yeas

Cullen, Cummings, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurschou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Hawranik, Lamoureux, Maguire, McFadyen, Mitchelson, Penner, Reimer, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Nays

Aglugub, Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Brick, Caldwell, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rocan, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith, Struthers, Swan, Wowchuk.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 20, Nays 34.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Is it the pleasure of the House to have the amendment read, or the motion read? No? Dispense?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

THAT this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Formal Vote

Mr. Chomiak: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

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

Division

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

Yeas

Aglugub, Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Brick, Caldwell, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rocan, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith, Struthers, Swan, Wowchuk.

Nays

Cullen, Cummings, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurschou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Hawranik, Lamoureux, Maguire, McFadyen, Mitchelson, Penner, Reimer, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk: Yeas 34, Nays 20.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you would consider the will of the House to call it 5 o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 5 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

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