



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

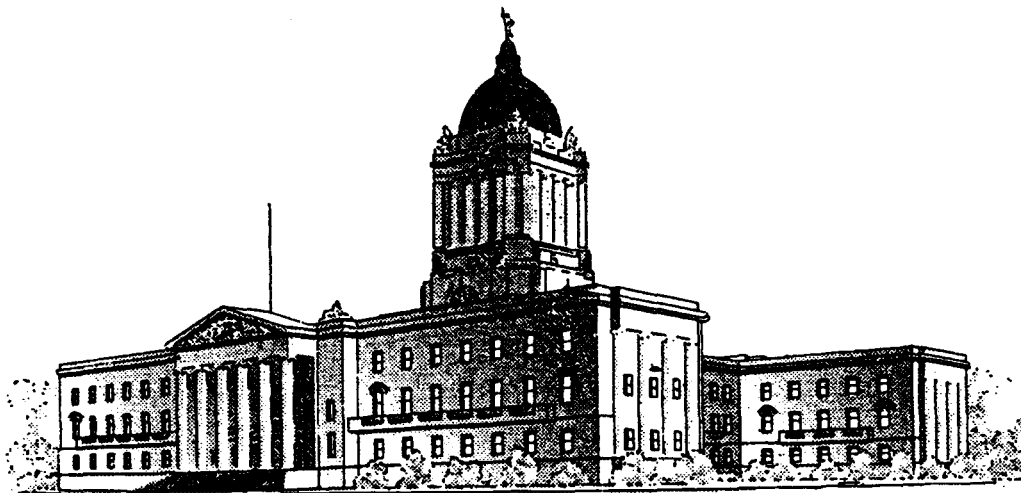
of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Asaniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, June 10, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Discipline and Assignment of Judges

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a matter of privilege.

This is a serious matter, and this is my first opportunity to do so. The issue is regarding the discipline and the assignment of judges, and the role of the chief provincial court judge by statute, The Provincial Court Act.

The member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) has questioned my position as minister in what he calls, and I quote, effectively disciplining the only judge who has spoken against this backlog—Hansard, June 8, 1994, and statements that he has made in the media.

Mr. Speaker, I had no involvement. This is entirely within the jurisdiction of the chief judge. The chief judge deals with the assignment of judges to courts. The chief judge dealt with this matter and controls placements.

Mr. Speaker, the member for St. Johns has maligned my reputation as Attorney General by this inference. Therefore, I move, seconded by the government House leader (Mr. Ernst), that this matter be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections and that the member table his evidence or withdraw his charge unequivocally and apologize to this minister and to this House.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I was somewhat surprised that the Attorney General, in attempting to establish a matter of privilege, made virtually no reference to Beauséne, and I suspect there may be a reason for that because I believe the minister is essentially engaging in debate.

I realize the minister was not present when the comments were made, but if the minister would care to check in Hansard, the comments she is alleging in her matter of privilege—the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) was very clear in asking the question: “What role did the government play in effectively disciplining the only judge who has spoken up against this backlog?”

Mr. Speaker, that was a question, and I realize the minister sometimes misunderstands the role of Question Period, but the role of Question Period is for opposition members to ask questions of the government and, indeed, we also expect, on occasion, that the government may even answer some of those questions.

Mr. Speaker, how can an opposition member, our Justice critic, who has spoken out repeatedly about our concerns about the handling of the justice system by this minister—how can it be considered a matter of privilege when our member, who has risen on almost a daily basis to raise questions about what is happening to our justice system in this province—how can that be a matter of privilege? Does it satisfy any of the provisions in Beauséne, Citations 24, 25, 26?

In fact, if the minister would care, or others on that side who perhaps advised the minister on this ill-fated matter of privilege—I would suggest that not only is the minister’s matter of privilege not a matter of privilege, it is not even close to a prima facie case. If the minister would care to read Beauséne about what a matter of privilege is, she will find that it is the privilege of members, in fact it is the obligation of members to be asking the types of questions that the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) has been asking.

I will quote, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion on this so the minister perhaps will take the time to read about what Parliamentary privilege is. This is

Citation 24: "Parliamentary privilege is the sum of the peculiar rights enjoyed by each House collectively as a constituent part of the High Court of Parliament, The privileges of Parliament are rights which are 'absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers'. They are enjoyed by individual Members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members, and by each House for the protection of its members and the vindication of its own authority and dignity."

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that one of the fundamental privileges of this House is the right of any member to ask a question of a government minister and get an answer, not this so-called matter of privilege.

* (1005)

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, on the matter of privilege, the government is clearly very hypersensitive to the issue of backlogs in the Family Violence Court.

First of all, the important point has to be made that my question was not addressed to the Attorney General (Mrs. Vodrey). There was no personal charge, let alone a charge. It was addressed to the government. I said: What role did the government have in effectively disciplining the only judge who spoke up against the backlogs in Family Violence Court?

A second point is, we have to look at the context within which this question was raised. Manitobans have been raising concerns with me on a daily basis about Family Violence Court. Since Judge Meyers' effective discipline, they have been raising that issue with me. It is my responsibility as a member of this House to be vigilant for Manitobans, particularly in the context of the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) having got up in this House on the issue of a retirement package and made the comment that provincial court judges, in his view, were employees of the government of Manitoba. That has set the judicial system back centuries in western democracy. With that attitude, that question is called for.

Furthermore, we have seen how the application has been of the Filmon Fridays to the courts. Even

more particular, we have seen Manitobans witness a back-room deal with judges on their retirement package between the cabinet and judges. There is such a thing as independence of the judiciary from the government of Manitoba. That question, which is a subject of the matter of privilege, was a necessity in this province.

I have a role, and what this matter of privilege is, is a sad attempt to stifle public debate and stifle the role of the opposition in examining the administration of justice in this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank all honourable members for trying to advise the Chair on this matter. I will take this matter under advisement, and I will come back to the House with a ruling.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: I am tabling, in accordance with Section 42 of The Ombudsman Act, and I am pleased to submit the 24th Annual Report of the Ombudsman, covering the calendar year January 1, 1993, to December 31, 1993.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this morning in the Speaker's Gallery, eight visitors from the Women's Committee of the MGEU, and they are under the direction of Ms. Myrna Phillips.

Also, from the R.B. Russell Vocational School, we have twenty-five Grade 12 students under the direction of Mr. Paul Sutherland. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes).

From the Treherne Elementary School, we have twenty-seven Grade 7 students under the direction of Mr. Craig Spencer. This school is located in the constituency of the Speaker.

Also, we have representatives of the ACCESS program in Manitoba.

On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you here this morning.

* (1010)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

ACCESS Programs Funding Reduction

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have asked repeatedly about the cutbacks, the 20 percent reduction in spending for the ACCESS program in the province of Manitoba.

The ACCESS program, of course, has been very, very successful over the years in training people for educational positions, for social work positions, for doctors' positions, for engineering students and graduates. It had a tremendous success, and even when the former Lyon government looked at it in 1979, they came to the same conclusion that many of us have come to, that we have a return on our investment in terms of people being employed in the province of Manitoba in careers that provide dignity and stature in our communities, Mr. Speaker.

In 1990, when we asked this question about the federal government's reductions in the ACCESS program, the Premier of the province said, and I quote: We have argued the case for BUNTEP and ACCESS programs for these kinds of human resources within our education and training system, that we believe are absolutely critical and necessary for the future development of our aboriginal people and for many of our disadvantaged people, and is a tremendous investment, Mr. Speaker.

That is what the government said in 1990. In 1994, they reduced that investment by some 20 percent.

I would like to ask the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey): What impact and how many students will no longer be able to return to the ACCESS program and return to their educational programs as a result of the 20 percent reduction made by this government?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, this is the third occasion on which members opposite have asked questions in the House dealing specifically with

ACCESS. Many of the responses and answers that I give will be those that have been on the record now since the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) tabled the budget.

Last year within the ACCESS program, there were some 312 new intakes under that program. There will be that same number this year, the new entry in 1994-95. There will be no change in the impact on intake with respect to the program.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a letter from the University of Manitoba to the minister's own deputy minister, indicating the administrative problems and human problems dealing with the government's arbitrary change of a 20 percent reduction in this budget.

The minister talks about no change in intake. We have been listening to people who have been directly affected. Here in Manitoba, we have a \$200-million increase in the amount of money this government is spending on social assistance, and it does not make any sense at all to us to have governments cutting back on investing in education and training when we see a massive increase in spending on the social assistance side.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the minister: What does he say in terms of his previous questions to six students in Lynn Lake who are in the BUNTEP program who no longer will be able to stay in that BUNTEP program as a direct result of the Conservative cutback of 20 percent funding for those students and for that program of ACCESS?

* (1015)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, the 20 percent reduction referenced by the member, roughly 61 percent of that will be institutional costs. Most of the reductions will be at the institutions themselves. The other 40 percent represents the direct benefit provided to students.

Mr. Speaker, I again point out that, whereas the average nonrepayable student and academic support received by a student '93-94 was approximately \$11,800, that was for one year, nonrepayable. What we are doing for the sake of equity is saying to all students, particularly those who have good opportunity for employment at the end of graduation, certainly there is some

incumbency upon every person requiring support, that the first tranche of that support—\$165 a week—should be required to be taken out by way of loan to be fair across all of the roughly 35,000 post-secondary students within the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I do not know how this government can talk about equity. Here is a minister who, as a previous Minister of Finance, approved a \$43.5-million loss projection coverage for the Winnipeg Jets and at the same time was cutting back 20 percent from the ACCESS students of Manitoba. Here is a government that increases up to \$12 million in the corporate training grants right across Manitoba while it cuts the guts out of the ACCESS program here in Manitoba. I would ask the minister to start looking at the human dimensions of his cutbacks.

Mr. Speaker, I asked the question about the six students at Lynn Lake. What does the minister say in terms of the human impact and the equity to Michelle, a single mother of three children who has enrolled in this program, has completed three years of university education and can no longer continue that education so she can have the career in the area she is trained after the government has reduced their commitment by some 20 percent to this good solid investment in the education and training and the economy of Manitoba?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, we are asking some ACCESS students, by way of loan, to pick up the cost of \$165 a week. Every dollar beyond that required will be by way of the public purse support, every dollar beyond \$165 a week regardless of the need, not asking one dollar of it to be paid back.

The Leader of the NDP party who has such an aversion to debt, ergo the reference to the Winnipeg Jets, can maybe explain why it is he has no problem with the province having a \$300-million or \$400-million deficit. Maybe he can explain why it is he has no principles with respect to these issues other than trying, indeed, to play to an audience because of a policy change.

We made this change notwithstanding the fact that this government stood in the breach of a

federal government which withdrew funding for a number of years. We have committed millions of dollars, in some areas \$10 million a year, and in some years \$10 million a year, to this program. Unfortunately, we cannot continue to make that contribution. We have asked some of the students to take on some level of indebtedness with respect to their study.

ACCESS Programs Student Loan Eligibility

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Since April I have tried to explain to the Minister of Education what will be the impact of requiring ACCESS students to go to the Canada Student Loan Program. We have to remember that these students, many of them, are in 11-month programs where they cannot get the summer employment to repay the loans. They are not equal in that sense to other students.

The Canada Student Loan Program has annual caps which are too low for students with families to survive. The Canada Student Loan Program has cumulative funding caps which do not meet the specific needs of some ACCESS students. The Canada Student Loan Program does not even meet the basic needs of some of the expensive programs in medicine, and the Canada Student Loan Program has rigid asset requirements which do not meet the needs of ACCESS students.

My question for the minister is: Will he determine exactly how many ACCESS students cannot return to school next year as a result of his policy requiring Canada Student Loans? Will he make a commitment to enable all students in the program to complete their degree?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the member for Wolseley knows better than any member of this House with respect to the ACCESS programming and the lack of caps. These are all of the support policies in place: basic student allowances; rental subsidies; transportation allowances; day care expenses; medical; dental; optical; other student travel; special support; tuition; books and supplies; program books. All of those are paid for beyond the Canada Student Loan caps. They are all paid for until, if the student's household income

exceeds the Stats Canada low-income cutoff, an equivalent amount is deducted.

Mr. Speaker, that cap for an ACCESS student: one-person family, \$16,000; three persons, \$25,000; six persons, \$37,000. Those are the caps that are in place, not the Canada Student Loans caps to which the member refers. She has to be honest.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell the House whether in those programs where there are practicums involved—the northern Bachelor of Social Work and the special premedical programs and other medical programs—whether those students will be eligible for funding during the periods of placement? Will he tell us how the one-month break that most ACCESS students have—the one month, not the five months that other students have—will be handled under this program, and will he finally answer the question: How many students cannot return—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has already put her question.

* (1020)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, \$165 a week. That is what we are asking students to assume by way of debt.

It is not that they will be short \$165. For those students that justify the need, as every other student within the province does under the criteria put into place under the Canada Student Loan program, if the need is justified, the money will be there. But what we are saying is, those individuals who are virtually guaranteed a job upon graduation, there is some incumbency that they be treated no differently from any other student in the province and that they encourage some debt in support of their study.

Federal Funding

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, the issue is, under this program they are not going to graduate, and that is what I am asking the minister. How many will—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister to meet directly and immediately with his federal counterparts to insist that they reinstate their share of ACCESS funding and enable those existing students to complete the program.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is a member in this House that does not understand and accept how good this program has been in many dimensions. There is not a member in this House.

When it was first entered into, it was a shared program between the federal and provincial governments. Over the course of a number of years, the province now has been asked to take on all of the funding. It is a very rich program, but to the extent that we can no longer have it in place and support it completely on our own ticket as we have in the past, there has had to be some changes in the program. We will try to maintain it, and, yes, every time we meet with the federal government—and it is pointed out to us by other provinces and everybody that views it, it is a good program.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, unless the federal Liberal government comes forward and gives us more money, as used to be the case, we will have to proceed with the changes within the program.

ACCESS Programs Funding Reduction

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is for the Minister of Education. I have listened to the minister's comments in response to the questions of my friends in the official opposition.

My question for the minister: He keeps saying, as a defence to these cuts, that in fact it is not going to have a negative impact on enrollment in the ACCESS program. That is what he says, and that is one of his key defences of this 20 percent cut.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, the program was cut 11 percent, and enrollment dropped 15 percent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, how can he stand today and say that with a 20 percent cut, there will not be a cut in enrollment? The facts say differently. History proves differently.

Will the minister be open and honest with the members of this Legislature and acknowledge that this is, in fact, going to deplete enrollment in this critical program which he himself has just indicated is a good program?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the member does not have to call into question my openness and honesty on this issue.

The fact is the changes made in '93-94 did have impact on intake, and again, that was a decision that had to be made after a number of considerations.

Mr. Speaker, when we this year asked students, either coming into the program or who are in the program, to undertake some of the responsibility with respect to indebtedness, we still believe and we know that there will be no impact on intake because there is a waiting list. There is a waiting list to come into this program. Many of the students coming into this program—as indeed when the ACCESS evaluation and the Hikel report is tabled, it will show a growing number of students did not need the level of support provided.

So as they are called upon then to put up more of their own resources, it will open and free the opportunities for others who are on the waiting list. That is why the intakes under this policy change will not be reduced, whereas last year they were reduced somewhat.

* (1025)

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, that is simply ridiculous. The minister knows better, and those who will continue to be able to access this program are those who will be able to afford it and who have money. That was the point of this program, was to provide for people who did not have those resources but did want to educate themselves.

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question for the minister: The Roblin commission report was much heralded by this government and was brought down, and they have consistently indicated, this minister has indicated his support for that report. That report says, page 49, and it studied this ACCESS program: "Viewed in their totality, the Access programs have clearly been successful in

pioneering the integration of Aboriginal people into post-secondary education." Recommendation: "That the Access Fund be maintained and, in years where the operating grant are increased, that the Fund be subject to a similar increase."

How does this minister justify a 20 percent cut in this program that the Roblin commission itself studied and decided was a good program? There is not a word about cutting that program in this Roblin commission report.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, you see, the Leader of the Liberal Party fails to distinguish between the ACCESS programs and the ACCESS fund. His Education critic should probably have helped him on this.

Mr. Speaker, there are two different issues. The ACCESS fund is seed money that is given by the Universities Grants Commission to the university to promote and foster a new program area, and what Roblin was saying basically is: Maintain the fund, but make sure that the university funding globally takes over the responsibility after two or three years so that the fund then can move to a new focal area.

The reference to the programs and the fund are not related at all, so the member does not even know the basis on which he asked his question. He is wrong. He is dead wrong, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Edwards: I am sure the minister will peruse the record and want to correct himself. Maybe he should have read the report on page 49, which talked about the ACCESS programs having been clearly successful in pioneering the integration of aboriginal people into post-secondary education. The minister knows that Roblin supported those programs.

My final question for the minister: Today, the labour statistics came forward from Statistics Canada and indicated that unemployment for women under the age of 24 has gone up 3 percent in the last month and has gone up 5.4 percent in the last year.

Mr. Speaker, women under the age of 24 are a target group and represent a large user group of the ACCESS programs. Why is this minister cutting

that program when we already know that group is experiencing serious problems in finding employment in our economy? Why is he further worsening the problem for that particular group?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, it is because of that group basically—

An Honourable Member: You do not care

Mr. Manness: The member shoots across from his chair that I do not care about them. What a callous, foolish remark. It is because there is such employment success for the graduates within that group that I would ask the member, if he is really serious, that he makes an appeal, seeing he is so close to Mr. Axworthy and Mr. Chretien, to ask the federal government to re-establish the federal funding in this area. To the extent that he is successful, I am sure the Treasury Board of our government would reconsider and want to review again the amount of funding so that not only would we maintain the level of intake, we could probably increase it.

That is the challenge I put to the Leader of the Liberal Party.

* (1030)

ACCESS Programs Funding Reduction

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the support of the current Liberal Leader (Mr. Edwards). Regrettably, he was silent when the current federal government refused to reinstate ACCESS funding in their budget earlier this year. He had the opportunity then.

My question is for the Minister of Education. Rather than just blame the federal government, will he finally agree that the ACCESS program should be a higher priority than wasting \$43 million on the Jets owners, \$4 million on Connie Curran and \$600,000 on political advertising by the Lotteries Foundation?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, nobody has to tell me or refer or ask me to give this program priority. I was the chair of Treasury Board for many years where year after year after year, as we went

through the difficult decisions around developing yet another budget, that ACCESS continued to come forward, again, as one of the very rich programs of support within government, but yet one of the very laudable programs.

Mr. Speaker, this government did everything possible through those years. I can remember when the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism supported by the Minister of Education of the day, made at least one if not two trips down to Ottawa to try and make the plea that their level of support be maintained. We understand the value of this program. We have always, as a government, given it a very extremely high priority, I would say the highest priority with respect to education outside of regular instruction in the K to 12 setting. We have shown and demonstrated our priority with respect to this program over the years.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware of a 1979 study done by the previous Conservative government that found that in terms of transfer payments saved and taxes paid, program graduates pay back in seven years not only the cost of their own education, but the cost of dropouts as well?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware of that. That is why, to make this a program which is fairer and which can reach out to a larger cross-section of people, we are asking those people who become part of it to assume some indebtedness, \$165 a week. Every dollar required after that, every dollar up to in some cases a family of three people, up to \$25,000 will be paid for by the public purse. We agree.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, will the House have to censure this minister a second time before he gets the message that cutting ACCESS funding was not just wrong morally? It is a stupid decision that will increase costs to the taxpayers of this province. Is he aware of that?

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Speaker, the House will do what the House wants to do with me. I am sorry. I am one of 57 people.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, during these times of incredible fiscal and revenue shortfall to governments everywhere, difficult decisions have to be made. Whereas over six budgets this

government has been able to continue to maintain the level of support for the ACCESS program, we have changed the program so as to maintain the intake and yet call upon some greater responsibility for the individual student by way of indebtedness over the period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely convinced, given the success of the program, that those graduates will have an opportunity to pay back a first level of student loan, and indeed, they will feel better. Ultimately in the end run, I believe students will feel better in the fact that they have made a contribution, a direct contribution, to their own education.

ACCESS Programs Funding Reduction

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, there are many people in our society who continue to face many barriers, and this is no more true than for aboriginal people in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a constituency in which many communities do not have roads, do not have sewer and water, do not have complete schooling, and the ACCESS program has worked to bring those people, northern aboriginal people, into the mainstream of our society.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education, who talks about this being a richly funded program and talks about contributions, when will the Minister of Education recognize that this program is not dealing with students living in Tuxedo in half-million dollar houses, that it is targeted towards the disadvantaged in the core area of Winnipeg and northern Manitoba, and that it is absolutely unacceptable that a government, a provincial government, would cut this program more than any other program in this provincial budget?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I cannot say this in a categorical sense, although I am pretty sure I am on solid ground. We are the only province in Canada that has this program to the level of support offered.

That tells me, Mr. Speaker, that obviously, given the fact that we have a program at the levels of support that we have, it is a rich program. The member can try and draw in the class warfare and the struggles. He can try and make reference to Tuxedo. He can try again to talk and draw in for his own political purposes—[interjection] Well, they tell me to table the report. It is doing things differently by the Roblin commission. This is a public document and the Leader of the NDP should know that. He has read it at least five times.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the minister has quoted from the Hibel report repeatedly in this House. He has never tabled that report in this House. The rights of members in this House, I think, are to have full access, full information that the government has commissioned with taxpayers' money. What is the government hiding?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Education and Training, to finish with his response.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, the Leader is losing his cool over there. I have a document, and he assumes it is the one that I have not tabled as yet.

Mr. Speaker, my response to the member's question is no different from the many I have given previously. I suppose I can embellish my response somewhat by saying—and I say this in response more to the Leader of the Liberal Party, who gets kind of slippery with respect to remarks, because this is what page 49 said of the Roblin report, and I quote: Viewed in their totality, the ACCESS programs have clearly been successful in pioneering the integration of aboriginal people into post-secondary education. We note, however, that in important respects, the programs represent temporary solutions to larger- and longer-term matters.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member refused to read that into the record, did he not? So the point—the

smooth member, of course, from St. James, slides off the path—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Manness: My responses hold, that I have made several times.

Mr. Ashton: One of the most unfair aspects of this government's policy, Mr. Speaker, is that it has in midstream cut off students who have been taken into the program under the original criteria.

There is nothing more unfair than this, and I would like to ask the minister—and if he wants the opportunity to find out the impact this is having, he can talk to many of the people who are here today in this building who are part of the ACCESS program.

Will he now do the right thing, Mr. Speaker, and at least, at a bare minimum, immediately reinstate all the existing students under the same criteria as when they entered the program?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I assume and I would believe our government would reconsider if the federal government will help us in this program and re-establish some of the level of support they used to provide. Under those conditions, I am sure our government would want to look at this funding issue in a new context.

Mr. Ashton: I have one final question, Mr. Speaker. We have heard a lot about the Winnipeg Jets the last few days, and one thing the people always say is that professional sports players provide a role model in our society. Well, I am wondering if the Minister of Education might consider that the real role models in our society, particularly in northern Manitoba, are the many people who have completed the ACCESS program and do the right thing, not spend \$43 million on professional sports players, but at least reinstate the money to the ACCESS programs to provide the real role models for northern people.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I know if the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) were here, he would insist on answering that question.

Mr. Speaker, there was a time in Estimates, and the record will show, when the NDP Leader indicated their party did not want to make the Jets

a political issue, and the member opposite, the Leader, said that as part of the record.

So, Mr. Speaker, obviously, the Leader of the NDP, his word is not worth very much, because he said that on the record.

* (1040)

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the comments made by the Minister of Education are clearly unparliamentary. In the context of us asking him to live up to his commitments to the ACCESS students, that he made in this House, I would ask him to withdraw that and live up to his own word on the ACCESS program.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member does not have a point of order, but, indeed, again, for the watching public—you know, there are many up here in the gallery, indeed there are many watching on this TV, I would caution all honourable members, pick and choose your words very, very carefully.

MTS Yellow Pages

Adult Video Advertisements

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I took as notice on Tuesday a question from the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) on coupon books that MTS had distributed.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the House that MTS certainly has very stringent guidelines on the Yellow Pages and the kind of advertising in the Yellow Pages, but this is a coupon book we are talking about. I can tell the member that MTS has indicated to me that they will be more diligent in the future in terms of those guidelines, in terms of moral responsibility and the kind of copy that is used in advertising in any fashion.

ACCESS Programs Funding Reduction

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I remind honourable members who continue the debate that the federal government, six weeks ago, increased the student loan limit for the first time in eight years from

\$3,600 to \$5,400. This government clawed it back. I also remind honourable members opposite that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), in January of this year, had nothing but praise for the federal government's approach to transfer payments and indicated it was a refreshing start of a new era with the five-year planning on transfer payments.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Manness), his colleague, has just said and put on the record, and I believe I have the quote correctly: There are incredible fiscal and revenue shortfalls, and as a result, difficult decisions have to be made. That was his statement.

My question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) is, will he make one of those difficult decisions in this time of incredible revenue shortfall and go to the committee governing the Winnipeg Jets and ask them to find ways to cut back from the \$43.5 million speculated loss on the Jets and find \$2 million, one-twentieth of that amount, to put back into the ACCESS program to help the people in this province who want to become educated and work in our society?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as we totally expected when we tabled that information on the projected losses of the Winnipeg Jets Hockey Club, certain members are taking advantage in trying to score political points by pointing to the long-term, worst-case scenario as opposed to what has realistically happened to date in terms of the actual costs under that agreement.

I think if they look at that agreement, which I am sure they will, they will know what the costs to date are, in fact, and that to date, to the end of March 1994, there has been a cost to the province of some \$2.4 million. During that same time frame, we have received direct taxation revenues to the three levels of government of some \$35 million.

Really, in answer to the Leader of the Liberal Party's question, I think we are all waiting for the Burns committee report. That is a report that is mandated to deal with the long-term viability of the Jets, the need for a facility in Manitoba, the ability to address a facility in Manitoba. So all of

that can have an impact on these longer-term projections of what these losses might ultimately be as it relates to the Winnipeg Jets.

I do want to correct the Leader of the Liberal Party on one particular issue. He talks about the enhancing of the Canada Student Loans Program by the new federal Liberal government. My understanding is—and certainly the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) can provide much more information on this—in effect what they have done under that decision, Mr. Speaker, is to offload more of a cost onto provincial governments because now the provincial governments are in from dollar one under student loan assistance—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Edwards: My further question is for either the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) or the Minister of Education.

The minister has made much of the \$11,000 per year per student that is government grant. The average player's salary of the Winnipeg Jets is \$440,000. So let us talk about the—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member is trying to put his question.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question for either of those ministers is, will this government now acknowledge that the \$11,000 per year that goes to those students, supporting them going through school, is very quickly recovered, given the success rate these students have in getting employment. In fact, on average, in two years of employment they recover that \$11,000.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, what do we say to the rest of the students in the province, many who have, upon graduation, without much of a guarantee of work, total student loan and debt to pay off anywhere from \$30,000 to \$40,000? What do we say to them in the name of equity and fairness when there is not anywhere close to a guarantee of employment?

We have made this move with great deliberation. We have done it in the name of equity.

Mr. Edwards: It is clear that by these cuts there is now a guarantee of unemployment.

My final question for the minister: The minister appears to put all students into the same basket and suggest that they should all be treated equally and the same, and it would be unfair to the other students.

Is he questioning the principle that those who qualify for this program are indeed different and that they go through two panels and a two-day workshop in testing to even qualify for this program? Is he questioning the principle that we should have special treatment for those who come into the system with disadvantages, which means that they never will get a decent education—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put his question.

Mr. Manness: The Leader of the Liberal Party is at a slight disadvantage because he does not have before him the ACCESS review that was done. I am making every effort to try and have that made available to the House before we rise. But that would point out that the preamble, indeed, the rationale that he uses with respect to his question is not correct.

There are a growing number of individuals who are in that program, probably none that are in the gallery today, but certainly—in spite of the two-day criteria that the member talks about, the judgment by way of those criteria—there are a growing number of individuals in the program who do not merit the level of support, the \$12,000 per year. So that is a dimension to this decision also.

ACCESS Programs Federal Funding

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education and Training has, for the first time, said in this House that the government of Manitoba would reconsider cuts if the federal Liberals lived up to their election commitments from last fall.

My question to the minister: Would he agree to immediately propose such a cost-shared arrangement with the federal government to ensure the ongoing future of ACCESS?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): This is a very high priority, and this program will continue. There is no way this program will not continue because it is a very high priority to us. But I am prepared to consider making an offer under some of the strategic initiatives put forward by Mr. Axworthy within his \$600-million or \$700-million envelope that is supposed to reach out to all programming across the land and ask him to accept it as a new strategic initiative, although in all honesty, it is not new. It has been in existence for a number of years.

I do not want to create false hopes for anybody, Mr. Speaker, but I have no difficulty in trying to present to the federal government for consideration the ACCESS program under the strategic initiatives that they are providing.

St. Boniface Hospital Reorganization

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, we are informed this morning that yet another plan for St. Boniface Hospital is going to be announced with respect to management changes.

Will the minister table these changes to management that have been announced at St. Boniface Hospital? Will he for once table the plans so the public and the patients can have access to this prior to it occurring?

* (1050)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): I believe the honourable member is responding to radio reports this morning. I have nothing that I can table for the honourable member. It might be wise for the honourable member to let the administration and staff at St. Boniface Hospital look after the matter which is going to be the subject of discussion at the hospital next week. I have no further information than the honourable member does.

Health Care System Reform Co-ordination

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary: We had the \$4-million Connie Curran fiasco. We have provincial reorganization. We have yet another plan at St. Boniface.

Will the minister finally admit that there is chaos and lack of co-ordination in the whole health care system? Will he advise the House what this lack of co-ordination and chaos—what effect this will have on patient care?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): The honourable member seems to have chaos on his mind every day. Maybe it is left over from when Michael Decter sat around the table with the honourable member's colleagues when they were in government here in Manitoba, because Michael Decter was the chief public servant here in Manitoba when the New Democrats were in office. When they were thrown out of office in Manitoba, Mr. Decter went to Ontario to preside over the chaos there. Mr. Decter with his \$140,000 salary in Ontario made sure that 5,000 hospital beds were closed with no regard whatsoever for its effects.

Here in Manitoba, we will take a phased approach to health care reform dealing with the needs of the patients first and with due regard to the sensitivities with regard to the labour issues, Mr. Speaker.

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

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: I have a ruling for the House. [interjection]

Order, please. Hansard is picking up some sort of conversation in the back of the Chamber here. It appears it might be the words being spoken by the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard). I am not quite sure here now.

On June 8, 1994, I took under advisement language used by the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) during Question Period. The minister was responding to a question from the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) who had

commented that the minister had provided half an answer. The honourable Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) stated: "it was only a half-asked question, too, . . ."

The minister, when I indicated that I was going to review Hansard, indicated his hope that Hansard correctly set out precisely what he had said, noting that the word he used had the letter "k" in it.

I took the opportunity to review Hansard and found that indeed the word used was "half-asked" rather than a similar sounding word that, of course, no honourable member would use in this House. Therefore, there was no point of order.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENT

1994 Social Work Gold Medalist

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Burrows have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, today I want to pay tribute to the 1994 gold medalist in Social Work at the University of Manitoba, Ms. Adele Kupp, who achieved a 3.95 grade point average.

Adele is a very bright individual who has been an exceptional A-plus student. She is to be commended for this remarkable achievement since, in addition to studies, she has the responsibility of raising three children on her own. On top of this, she has been a foster parent of special needs teenagers from Child and Family Services and currently has two boys in her care. She remarked that she could have used a good wife to help her with all these responsibilities.

It has been my pleasure to meet Adele at the Winnipeg Education Centre. I wish her well in her new career as a social worker, and I hope that all honourable members will join me in congratulating Adele Kupp.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, first, a matter of House business.

On the Notice Paper is a notice for the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural

Resources to consider the report of the Workers Compensation Board on June 14. I would like to cancel that meeting. One of the critics is unavailable.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable government House leader for that information.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, will you call Second Readings as listed on the Order Paper.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 15—The Law Society Amendment Act

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that Bill 15, The Law Society Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société du Barreau, now be read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill 15, The Law Society Amendment Act. As honourable members know, the Law Society of Manitoba is a self-governing profession whose powers and duties are set out in The Law Society Act.

From time to time, the society requests that changes be made to The Law Society Act. The act was last amended in 1992.

Mr. Speaker, the changes that are proposed in this bill have been proposed by the Law Society, primarily to improve its discipline process. Members will note the several changes contained here in that respect. The changes are designed to improve the society's ability to investigate complaints about lawyers and generally to clarify the complaints processed. The changes have been the subject of discussion in the profession, as the Law Society consults its membership through a process of publication of proposed changes before approaching the Minister of Justice to request amendments to this act.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Speaker, there are a number of changes in the bill that I would like to bring to the attention of all honourable members. First, the bill gives the society broader powers to obtain the files of a lawyer who is the subject of an investigation by the society and more clearly sets out the rights of a lawyer and the clients of a lawyer in a circumstance where the lawyer's practice is taken over. As well, the bill permits the society to release information to the public as to whether a matter is under investigation by the society.

Because the act now provides that the proceedings of the society are confidential, the society has not been able to comment publicly on whether a complaint has been received or a matter is under investigation. This bill will clarify its right to do so. The bill also adds a new provision to require the society to disclose information to law enforcement authorities about possible criminal activity when that kind of information is uncovered during an investigation of a lawyer under the act. This is an exception to the current provision that requires the proceedings of the society to be confidential.

Two other matters addressed by this bill; first, it provides for the operation of prepaid legal services plans in Manitoba by clarifying that such arrangements are not the unauthorized practice of law. Secondly, Mr. Acting Speaker, the bill adds a new section to permit a lawyer from another country to provide legal advice in Manitoba concerning the laws of the other country while giving the Law Society some control over the lawyer's practice in this province. The Law Society will ensure that the lawyer is licensed to practice in his or her jurisdiction. Therefore, it gives some protection to Manitobans who consult such a lawyer.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that these changes to The Law Society Act will result in better service to the people of Manitoba by the Law Society as the governing body of persons providing legal services to the people of the province. I will be pleased to discuss the provisions of the bill in more

detail at the committee stage on the bill, and I will defer any further comment about the bill until that time.

* (1100)

Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): I move, seconded by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 16—The Provincial Court Amendment Act

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), that Bill 16, The Provincial Court Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour provinciale, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Vodrey: I am pleased to move to second reading of Bill 16, The Provincial Court Amendment Act, which amends the procedures of The Provincial Court Act dealing with the handling of complaints of judicial misconduct.

These amendments are based on and largely follow a 1989 report of the Law Reform Commission of Manitoba dealing with the independence of provincial judges. In preparing these amendments, my department sought comments from judges of the provincial courts and other courts in Manitoba, as well as the Law Society of Manitoba, the Manitoba branch of the Canadian Bar Association and other interested groups representing women, aboriginal people and the disabled.

In introducing this topic, the Manitoba Law Reform Commission said, and I quote: The basic reason for any type of judicial discipline is to maintain public confidence in the judiciary by assuring the public that judges will abide by the duties of their office and that they will be brought to account if they do not. A legal system can function only if the public accepts and abides by

decisions rendered by the courts. Anything that tends to weaken the public conviction that judges are fair and impartial must be avoided.

We believe that these amendments accomplish that goal. The major innovation in these amendments, again following the recommendation of the Law Reform Commission, is the severing of the investigative prosecutorial function from the adjudicative function of the Judicial Council.

Under this act, complaints will first go to the chief judge of the provincial court who can resolve a complaint only if both parties agree. The chief judge may also advise a complainant that there is a more appropriate avenue to follow such as an appeal or refer the matter to the next stage of the proceedings which is an independent board of investigation.

If the chief judge dismisses a complaint or advises the complainant that there is a more appropriate avenue to follow, a complainant may ask the judicial inquiry board to review that finding. That board, composed of three persons, has the function of investigating and, if appropriate, formulating a charge of judicial misconduct and prosecuting that charge.

A separate body, the Judicial Council, composed of three out-of-province provincial court judges, a representative of the Law Society of Manitoba and two lay persons will hear charges laid by the judicial inquiry board. The composition of this Judicial Council is a major innovation in its use of out-of-province provincial judges.

We believe this to be a step forward, as it will remove any public perception of bias and will not put Manitoba provincial court judges in the position of having to judge the conduct of their colleagues.

Although the council will contain three judges and three nonjudges, the chair of the council must be a judge and will have a casting vote. This procedure will meet the requirements of judicial independence that a majority of the votes be those of judges. In addition, the council is of a manageable size as our advice was that a council larger than this would become difficult to convene.

The range of dispositions available to the council is much broader than those available at present.

Mr. Acting Speaker, these amendments will allow costs to be ordered in favour of or against a judge and will also provide for possible order of cost against a judge after resignation. The amendments also allow for a hearing to continue following resignation in a broader context if the council feels that it can make recommendations that would aid in the administration of justice.

These amendments open the process up to the public. Once a charge is laid, that charge will be public. Hearings will be public, unless there is a good reason to have in-camera hearings, and the decisions of the council will be public. The amendments require that information about the process for filing a complaint be available in courthouses throughout the province, and that persons who have difficulty be given assistance in preparing a complaint. Finally, an annual report will be tabled summarizing information about the complaints to further enhance accountability.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I will be pleased to go into greater detail on all of these amendments at committee. Thank you.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 17—The City of Winnipeg Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 17, The City of Winnipeg Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg et apportant des modifications corrélatives, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am pleased to introduce for second reading Bill 17 to amend The City of Winnipeg Act.

The bill has several components. The most significant components of the bill are amendments dealing with civic elections, property tax credits for home renovations, the collection of taxes and public convenience, and welfare. The other amendments in the bill correct minor typographical errors and other similar housekeeping changes, moving things from one section to another section that is deemed to be more appropriate for that category.

Some of the substantive amendments I will describe. We have amendments, as I indicated, to the civic elections procedures. During the 1992 Winnipeg civic election, concerns were raised by voters and candidates about existing election procedures under provincial legislation.

Following the election, the former Minister of Urban Affairs initiated a review of the election procedures prescribed for Winnipeg under The City of Winnipeg Act and The Local Authorities Election Act. In support of this initiative, Winnipeg City Council was requested to identify changes they considered necessary in order to make the election process more efficient and more accessible to the citizens of Winnipeg. We have dealt with a number of those requests from city councillors and from candidates in the previous election in the hopes of making the whole process more efficient and more accessible.

Winnipeg City Council established an ad hoc committee to prepare a report on required election-related amendments. The committee's report was the subject of a public meeting on July 15, 1993, and the final report was adopted by council and forwarded to my department in October of 1993.

Based on the department's review of civic elections legislation affecting Winnipeg and the City Council's request for changes and discussion with decision makers, the bill will contain the following amendments. One is changing the nomination requirements for mayoralty candidates by requiring mayoralty candidates to obtain the signatures from at least 250 electors and to make a deposit of \$150 which will be repayable to the

candidate if the candidate receives 5 percent of the votes on election day.

* (1110)

The existing legislation, as members know, only requires mayoralty candidates to obtain 25 signatures from 25 electors in order to be nominated and the result of that is, Mr. Acting Speaker, during the 1992 civic election, there were a record number of 17 mayoralty candidates and only four of those received 97 percent of the votes.

So those who were involved in the election and those of us who are witnessing the kinds of things that happen during an election with that number of candidates who really do not have the support of the electorate in terms of the balance of the vote, this amendment was proposed to strike a balance between attempting to defer frivolous candidates, but keeping the candidacy open to persons who have serious intentions and the support of the public, obviously.

The signatures for councillors will remain at 25. They do not need to get more than 25 signatures in order to be able to run. Of course, the \$150 deposit for the mayoralty candidates is fully returnable if they get 5 percent of the vote.

We have also put in the provision for more advanced polling. That was a concern that was raised and expressed, is that there was not enough advanced polling. So we are going to be providing more opportunities for advanced polling by requiring the city to permit electors to vote at City Hall every day between the closing day for withdrawal of nominations and the day before election day.

Another change is to move the closing for nominations back one week from the first Wednesday in October to the last Wednesday in September. That provides more opportunity for the full electorate to be able to exercise their franchise.

The city will also be given the authority to establish additional polling places in central locations any time it chooses to after the closing date for nomination—after the closing date, pardon me, for withdrawal of nominations. As well, Mr. Acting Speaker, the period during which

electors can mail in their ballots will begin after the closing of nomination withdrawals occurs.

We are going to be increasing the time period during which candidates can raise funds and spend monies on their campaign. I noticed with interest in the paper this morning some comments from one councillor who obviously did not realize what the legislation said, because it was very badly interpreted and reported as if the incorrect interpretation was fact when it was not, because we are extending the opportunity for all candidates to raise money.

We are doing it in two ways; one, the mayoralty candidate having, of course, to campaign across the entire city will be given more time upfront. Mayoralty candidates will be able to begin raising funds and spending them on May 1 of an election year and conclude raising funds on March 31 of the following year.

The present period of time during which mayoralty candidates can raise and spend money on their campaign starts 120 days before election day until January 31 following the election. With respect to candidates who are running as councillors, the period for raising and spending funds will begin as currently specified in the act, 120 days before the election, but will be extended after the election from January 31 to March 31, giving councillor candidates a considerable length of time beyond which they currently have to raise funds to cover their campaign costs.

The article was wrong in the Winnipeg Free Press. The councillor who spoke of it and said that nothing in this bill would allow them extra time was wrong. The reporter who covered it was reporting wrong information.

We will also be giving the city the opportunity to speed up the process of ballot counting by permitting the use of automated voting. That is a technological change. We see a lot of changes coming into legislation in all areas of government, not just here but across the country, that will reflect the technological age and the ability to do things with computers and with automated means.

In order to permit the use of automated voting, council will be able to pass a by-law prescribing the form of the ballot, the procedure for voting and the counting of ballots and other related matters associated with electronic voting devices. This automated voting, Mr. Acting Speaker, is relatively new in Canada, and because it is, the bill includes a provision which would enable the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to pass regulations pertaining to automated voting, should it become necessary to do so.

We will at the same time and in light of the moves towards technology permit the city to keep the voters lists on computer and to make that list available on diskette for a fee in electronic form. They will still, of course, have to provide candidates with two printed copies of the voters list free of charge, and they will be permitted to charge a small fee for a diskette if the list is preferred in an electronic form.

We also, Mr. Acting Speaker, are going to clarify the requirements. The requirement to fill in an audited statement of election expenses and contributions applies not only to elected and defeated candidates, but also to registered candidates who are not nominated or who withdrew their nomination previously. Those people, we are not filing audited statements. We are saying they were registered candidates and if they have any expenses, those must be put forward.

Those civic election changes I have described are ones that have City Council's support, and collectively these amendments are designed to modernize election procedures to increase voter participation in civic elections by expanding the opportunity for advanced polling.

We also have amendments, Mr. Acting Speaker, as I indicated, dealing with property tax credits for home renovations. I am very surprised that Councillor Murray says there is nothing in this act that he likes, because this was one that he personally spoke to me about and said they very much wanted, but perhaps he has not read it all and does not know what is in it.

Notwithstanding, Winnipeg City Council has indicated they would like to establish a property tax credit program. I have not heard them tell me that they have now changed their minds on it contrary to their original intentions, but if they have changed their mind I suppose they could let us know at committee. They seemed to have indicated to the Free Press they do not like this anymore, which surprises me. Bill 17 does contain an incentive for homeowners to undertake renovations and provide an economic stimulus in creating jobs for various trades.

Bill 17 contains legislation which will permit council to issue tax credits for home renovations and to determine by by-law the amount of credit, eligible renovations and eligible property types. The tax credit legislation will be in effect for five years, and during the fifth year the city will be required to review the impacts of the program and decide whether to approve continuation of the program.

Given that one of the key proponents of this program has now said there is nothing in this bill that he likes, they may not bring it in in the first instance, but still we will pass the enabling legislation that would permit them to make that decision. If they do not wish to proceed with it, of course, they do not need to.

Amendments dealing with the collection of taxes are contained in Bill 17, Mr. Acting Speaker. The City of Winnipeg, as you know, has procedures relating to collection of taxes, partly under The City of Winnipeg Act and partly under The Municipal Act. The City of Winnipeg requested that we amend The City of Winnipeg Act to consolidate into one statute all the tax collection procedures pertaining to Winnipeg.

Just to give you one example of the kind of patchwork on legislation on tax collection: Winnipeg is authorized under The City of Winnipeg Act to charge a penalty—interest—for late payment of taxes and is authorized under The Municipal Act to compound penalties and add them to taxes at the end of the year if the taxes remain unpaid. So what we have done with these in a similar situation is simply just to combine the

legislation and place it all under The City of Winnipeg Act for convenience.

The City of Winnipeg also requested an amendment to a provision which currently prohibits the city from charging a fee for the cost of preparing a statement of taxes or arrears.

Currently The City of Winnipeg Act allows a fee to be charged for tax certificates which will be binding on the city in the sense that if after issuing a tax certificate the city discovers an error was made and there are arrears, the city cannot recover those taxes.

* (1120)

The city has pointed out, in relation to all these procedures, that there has been a great increase in demand for tax statements which takes staff time to prepare in the same way the tax certificates do. So the amendment in this bill permits the city to charge a fee for preparing a tax statement requested by any person other than the owner of the property.

In other words, the fee will apply to third parties only who do not have the request being made on behalf of the property owner. So the property owner will still get it for free. The property owner can still send a person on his or her behalf to get it for free, but if a third party who does not have permission of the property owner wishes it, there will be a cost recovery or partial cost recovery fee permitted, should the city so desire.

The provisions on tax collections will also be amended to include two provisions—[interjection] Mr. Acting Speaker, I shall not laugh when the members opposite mutter funny little things under their breath, which incidentally is contrary to the rules of our House because they are interrupting, which we know is not allowed and we never, never do in this Chamber. [interjection] Back on track quick, says my colleague. Indeed.

We will have other provisions in here which will assist the city in clarifying issues around tax collection. We have, for example, the provision which will prohibit the removal of a building, moving a building off a lot, if there are still tax arrears, without permission of the tax collector. If

the tax collector wishes to allow that to be moved, they can do that.

There is another change that is being done that we feel will help the City of Winnipeg and the clarification of taxes. Right now we have classifications changing mid-year but no ability to make adjustments to the tax rolls at the time. We are going to be introducing a section which will permit the city, should they desire, to be able to act upon tax classification changes as they occur rather than having to wait until the following year.

For the most part, the rest will be modernizing the language, being less prescriptive, trying to get rid of redundancies and inconsistencies, and reorganize the provisions in order to put things in proper place and follow logically as a unit in the act.

We are shifting, for example, parts of the act into Part 12 because they relate to Public Convenience and Welfare. Such legislation as for mosquito control and Dutch elm disease will come under Part 12, because they fit there more appropriately than they do under Buildings, Works and Services. They are not Buildings, Works and Services; they are essentially Public Convenience and Welfare.

Along with that, there is one change being made to Part 12 which is considered under Public Convenience and Welfare. It is a change that regards—and is mentioned again I noticed in the paper as well today, although the full rationale was not presented with it. We have, as you know, for many years had regulations empowering the city, if they desire, to prohibit and regulate against litter, untidy premises, noise, removal or pruning of trees which interfere with utility poles, pipes and sewers and that type of thing.

There has been a concern expressed that grass, after it grows to a certain length, can harbour mosquitoes and things of that nature. Aside from just a cosmetic thing, there can be a nuisance value created by the proliferation of things like mosquitoes and ticks and so on in long grass. Where there is a nuisance being created because of the growth that is occurring on vacant lots or households where the vegetation has not been contained, if there is a nuisance problem created

by items such as I have identified, the city would have the power to go and cut the grass and charge the owner for the cutting of the grass if there are concerns of that nature. This would not be purely just a cosmetic thing.

Mr. Acting Speaker, those are some of the changes in the bill. We hope we will be helping to assist the City of Winnipeg in improving its operations and methods of procedure. I look forward to debate on this bill, and I thank you very much for giving me the time to put these comments at second reading on the record.

Thank you.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 18—The Insurance Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), that Bill 18, The Insurance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am pleased to speak today to Bill 18 and to provide members with some of the underlying principles behind the suggested amendments to The Insurance Act.

Under this act, the uninvested funds of an insurer, that is, the day-to-day operating funds, are presently required to be kept on deposit in the name of the insurer in a bank. We have received a request from one provincial insurance company to be allowed to maintain these uninvested funds in a credit union.

As you are aware, Mr. Acting Speaker, the uninvested funds of an insurance company are those funds that are received from day to day in the form of premiums, et cetera, and must be maintained in a financial institution while the insurer is determining the type of longer-term instrument the money should be invested in. As

well, the insurer requires liquid funds to pay claims and other operating expenses as they arise. These uninvested funds make up a very small portion of the assets of an insurance company.

In order to facilitate insurance companies in their banking procedures, we are submitting an amendment to The Insurance Act to expand the type of banking facilities to include trust companies, credit unions and caisses populaires in cases where insurance companies desire to make deposits to those institutions. This will increase the options available to insurance companies in regard to their uninvested funds.

It is common practice for people who have claims under their personal insurance policies to contact their agent to report a claim. The Insurance Act presently prohibits the superintendent of insurance from issuing a licence to an insurance agent to act as an adjustor. In many instances, it is inefficient for insurance agents to simply receive the report of a claim and pass the details on to the insurance company and then for the insurance company to either carry out the adjustment procedure or hire a licensed adjustor to carry out some minor investigation prior to settling the claim.

In order to facilitate the settlement of small claims and provide generally quicker, more efficient service to the public, we are proposing to allow insurance agents to adjust claims without requiring an insurance adjustor's licence to facilitate quickly the settlement of these small claims. The amendment will allow licensed general insurance agents to adjust the claim of a policyholder where the value of the claim is \$2,500 or less, the policy has been sold by that agent or the agency of which the agent is a member and where specific authorization has been granted by the insurance company. We believe, Mr. Acting Speaker, this will allow insurance companies to adjust these small claims in a most efficient manner.

* (1130)

It is very important, however, for members to understand the conditions under which this amendment applies. It does not allow for an agent

to become a public adjustor, but rather to adjust claims up to \$2,500 where the policy has been sold by the agent and where authorization has been granted by the insurance company.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have consulted widely within the industry, with brokers, with insurance companies, with insurance adjustors, and it is my understanding there is general agreement for this change amongst all parties. I believe these amendments are in the interest of the public, will facilitate a more effective insurance marketplace, and I look forward to the comments of members opposite in the debate on this bill.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I move, seconded by the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 19—The Mental Health Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 19, The Mental Health Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. McCrae: I am very pleased today to introduce Bill 19 for second reading. In addition to a few housekeeping amendments, this bill will amend The Mental Health Act in two specific areas. The first significant area has to do with the operation and functioning of the Mental Health Review Board. As you no doubt are aware, the review board is charged with the responsibility of hearing appeals from patients regarding any aspect of their admission and treatment in a psychiatric facility.

In the past, in order to inform itself fully of the facts of the case, the review board has typically spoken to the patient, as well as to his or her treatment team members. On November 5, 1992, however, the Court of Queen's Bench ruled that the review board could not compel a patient to speak at his or her hearing, even though he or she had initiated the application in the first place.

While this lower court decision has already been appealed, and we are awaiting a decision from the Appeal Court, the review board has now found itself in the uncomfortable position of oftentimes having to reach a decision without being able to access all the necessary information. In the interim, therefore, in order to at least partially compensate for this inability to speak to the patient directly, the first major amendment of this bill would permit the review board to seek a second psychiatric opinion, should they feel it is necessary in order to reach a decision regarding the matter under review.

The second specific area that this bill addresses is the broadening of the access provisions to permit the sharing of clinical information with some of our external agencies. As you are no doubt aware, Mr. Acting Speaker, one of the central thrusts of our mental health reform in Manitoba is the provision of funding to a variety of agencies to permit them to deliver some of the necessary mental health services in the community. Thus, for example, the Grey Nuns and the Salvation Army are both operating crisis stabilization units in Winnipeg which have significantly reduced our previous overreliance on acute-care beds.

Currently, The Mental Health Act provides that the psychiatric facility may share confidential clinical record information only with consent or in a limited number of exceptional circumstances. While our funded agencies can typically function within these current access provisions of The Mental Health Act, the possibility exists that situations could arise where access to a psychiatric facility's clinical information is required and consent has been denied.

In order to ensure that this information can be shared, the second major amendment adds another clause to the exceptions to disclose provisions of The Mental Health Act. This amendment would permit the sharing of information from a clinical record of a psychiatric facility to an external agency if the following conditions are met: First, the agency receives some funds from government; second, the agency is providing direct care to the

patient and; third, there exists an emergency situation which precludes the obtaining of consent.

Naturally, in order to ensure that these agencies who are in receipt of such information treat the material in a confidential manner, yet another amendment is suggested that will make it an offence comparable to that which already exists for others for the agency to disclose the information.

With these brief remarks, Mr. Acting Speaker, I commend this bill to the serious contemplation and support of all honourable members of this House.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 21—The Manitoba Medical Association Dues Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 21, The Manitoba Medical Association Dues Act (Loi sur la cotisation de l'Association médicale du Manitoba), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Speaker, today I am introducing Bill 21 for second reading.

The Manitoba Medical Association is an organization representing physicians in the province of Manitoba. This legislation will provide for the statutory payment of dues to the association by physicians. This legislation reflects a commitment originating from the new agreement with the MMA. The bill is substantially the same as the former MMA dues act.

The recent signing of the five-year agreement between the Province of Manitoba and the Manitoba Medical Association signals what I envision to be a new beginning to a co-operative relationship between the two parties. The agreement recognizes that the association's various activities extend beyond the role of

bargaining agency and that those activities are of direct benefit to all physicians in Manitoba.

Manitoba is adopting a number of broad and innovative approaches in co-operation with the MMA in the management of the publicly funded insured medical services program. It is my hope and expectation that this relationship will be characterized by mutual respect and trust as the parties work to a common goal, the preservation of a fiscally sound universal health care system for Manitobans.

This legislation will provide the association with the security necessary to undertake the additional responsibilities contemplated by the new agreement. These new initiatives include the formation of the Manitoba Medical Services Council to ensure co-operation and management of the insured medical services program. The Physician Resource Committee will develop a physician resource plan to meet requirements for the province of Manitoba.

These initiatives represent a unique opportunity for Manitobans to work co-operatively to ensure a fiscally sound insured medical services program. This legislation is an integral part of the government's commitment to a co-operative relationship with the MMA.

With these brief comments, I recommend the bill for second reading. Thank you.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Acting Speaker, I wonder if I might have leave to ask the minister a question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there leave for the honourable member for Kildonan to ask the minister a question? [agreed]

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Acting Speaker, the minister indicated that this bill is similar to the former act that was repealed. I wonder if the minister might outline for me when that former act, that former bill, was repealed.

Mr. McCrae: The precise date I will have to make available to the honourable member. Perhaps we can do that in committee.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I was wondering if I also might have leave to ask a question, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there leave for the honourable member for Thompson to ask a question of the minister? [agreed]

* (1140)

Mr. Ashton: It is interesting that this bill comes in under the 50th anniversary of the Rand Formula, which is the compulsory payment of dues by many labour organizations. I would like to ask, and for clarification again, not in debate, whether the minister can indicate whether this bill proposes provisions similar to the Rand Formula—in other words, whether it will bring in the MMA in very much the same situation as many unions in this province.

Mr. McCrae: Unaccustomed as I am to all of the procedures and machinations of the union movement, I will reserve my answer to that question to the time when we get to the bill before the committee.

The honourable member is asking me to, I think, maybe go beyond answering his question to get into a little debate today. I do not think that this is the appropriate time to do that. I feel that this particular measure is something that I think Manitoba Medical Association needs to help put all of the various initiatives in the new package—

Some Honourable Members: Solidarity forever, solidarity forever.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. Could I ask the honourable members who want to carry on a conversation or a song to do it in the halls?

Mr. Ashton: I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 23—The Manitoba Historical Society Property Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr.

Enns), that Bill 23, The Manitoba Historical Society Property Act; Loi sur les biens de la Société historique du Manitoba, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Speaker, Bill 23, The Manitoba Historical Society Property Act, is before the House for the purpose of transferring property back to the Manitoba Historical Society. This property was vested in Her Majesty in right of the Province of Manitoba on November 14, 1990, as the result of the appeal of an act to incorporate the historical and scientific society of Manitoba. That private act was repealed on the assumption it was no longer required. As it transpired, the act was required, and the result of the repeal was to leave the society without corporate status, thereby resulting in the vesting of its property in the name of the Crown.

It is important, therefore, that we remedy this situation which has arisen purely as a result of inadvertence. The effect of Bill 23 is to reinstate the property in the society and to ensure that the corporate decision making with respect to the property in the intervening years is validated.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this bill comes into force on the same day Bill 302 comes into force. As honourable members know, Bill 302 is the private bill currently before us, the purpose of which is to re-establish the corporate status of the Manitoba Historical Society.

I will be pleased to provide any other information that members may require at committee stage on this bill, and I thank you, Sir, for your attention.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I move, seconded by the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Acting Speaker, I wonder if you would canvass the House to see if there is unanimous consent to consider on Monday next, for Estimates in the Chamber, to set aside all other Estimates consideration in favour of considering the Estimates of the Department of Highways and Transportation in the afternoon and the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism in the evening. That will necessitate a switch from committee room to Chamber as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there unanimous consent of the House to do what the minister has requested? [agreed]

Mr. Ernst: Let us be clear as to what we propose to do. Currently, the Department of Justice is in the Chamber dealing with their Estimates. We propose to set aside that, and any other set-asides that are required, in order to accommodate the consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Highways in the afternoon and the Estimates of the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism in the evening.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there unanimous consent of the House to set aside all other business in the Chamber and go to the Department of Highways and Transportation in the Chamber in the afternoon, and then Industry, Trade and Tourism in the Chamber at night? [agreed]

Mr. Ernst: I wonder if you would see if there is unanimous consent of the House to set aside the consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism in the committee room in favour of the Department of Environment Estimates for both Monday afternoon and Monday evening.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there unanimous consent of the House to set aside Industry, Trade and Tourism in the committee Room 255 and consider Environment, both in the afternoon and the evening? [agreed]

Mr. Ernst: Debate on Second Readings, Mr. Acting Speaker, would you call Bill 9, followed by Bill 4, followed by Bill 3, followed by all the other

bills as listed in the Order Paper in the order in which they are listed.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 9—The Convention Centre Corporation Amendment Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey), The Convention Centre Corporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Corporation du Centre des congrès, standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there leave that this matter remain standing? [agreed]

On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard), Bill 4, The Energy and Consequential Amendments Act—

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Acting Speaker, Bill 9. Do I need leave?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there leave to revert to Bill 9? [agreed]

* (1150)

Mr. Martindale: It is a pleasure to be able to speak on this amendment and all 11 clauses, although I know that I cannot refer to clauses because this is second reading. I would not do that as deputy House leader. I know what the rules are. So I will keep my remarks very general, extremely general.

I think it is important in speaking on this bill to talk about the significance of convention centres and, in particular, this convention centre, particularly to the economy of Winnipeg. We know that people come from all over the country and all over the world and, indeed, from other parts of Manitoba to use the facilities of the Convention Centre, and that is to the benefit of Winnipeg and Manitoba, but particularly to businesses in Winnipeg because this brings considerable revenue to hotels and to restaurants and to the Convention Centre itself when people are attending conventions.

It is not just the individuals who are attending a convention, but quite often they bring spouses and family members with them and frequently conventions arrange for events for the spouses and family members. The individuals themselves attending a convention often have free time at which time they take advantage of local amenities and things to see and do in our fine city.

There are many things to see and do. We have excellent restaurants, many of them located close to the Convention Centre, and this benefits the provincial coffers and the City of Winnipeg and the employees who work there. This money circulates and recirculates, and benefits continue to accrue in terms of creating employment and tax revenue to various levels of government. Not only restaurants, but people take in movies; they take in many different kinds of entertainment. We have many excellent theatre facilities here; for example, the Warehouse Theatre; Prairie Theatre Exchange, which my wife and I have subscription tickets to; MTC, another excellent theatre; the IMAX, which I think is the only one in Canada or maybe the only one in western Canada.

An Honourable Member: Edmonton has one.

Mr. Martindale: Edmonton has one. The only one in Manitoba. Anyway, it is quite an experience to go to the IMAX and take in a movie there. It is the only one I have seen, and, of course, ours is the best.

There is the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, which is world famous. I hope all honourable members here will have taken in ballet at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. I hope all honourable members have heard of some of the principal dancers with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Evelyn Hart, for example, is one of the principal dancers; this is an individual whom I met many years ago in Peterborough, Ontario.

In fact, I have a little quiz for honourable members. Which manse produced two nationally famous individuals who grew up in the manse at George Street United Church in Peterborough? Well, the first famous Canadian is the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson who was a resident of the manse there. His father was a Methodist preacher.

The second one is Evelyn Hart, whose father was a United Church minister. I knew him and I used to visit with the family at their home in Peterborough. I just saw Evelyn at a rally in front of the Legislature about a year ago, and I reintroduced myself to her and had a good chat with her. I have had occasion to see her dance as well.

In fact, not only do they dance at the Concert Hall, but they have Ballet in the Park at Assiniboine Park. My wife and I have taken that in, for example. I hope all honourable members will have a chance to take in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Ballet in the Park. I think this year they are moving from Assiniboine Park to Rainbow Stage, which is very convenient for me since we live in the north end and convenient to our constituents in the north end. We will not have as far to go. They do have a roof there which is handy in case it rains, although the roof leaks quite a bit. They have had some problems there. You almost need to take an umbrella when you go to Rainbow Stage. [interjection]

I think the honourable minister missed the connections I was trying to make here with the Convention Centre, the point being that when people are attending conventions, they take in many other functions in the city of Winnipeg. They spend their money in the city of Winnipeg which is to the benefit of employees and business owners and the coffers of the provincial government, the city government and the federal government which—

An Honourable Member: Is this sort of like the Jets, Doug?

Mr. Martindale: The honourable minister would like me to talk about the Jets. There are similarities in that there is the Winnipeg Enterprises board and it has city councillors on it. The Convention Centre Corporation Amendment Act talks about the number of councillors: four members of the council of the City of Winnipeg appointed by the council of the city and also seven persons from the city of Winnipeg appointed by the council.

I am sure the honourable minister knows much more about this, having been a member of a

particular caucus at City Hall, about which appointments are considered good—[interjection]—some people would say he was a member of the gang, yes, indeed—which appointments are better appointments than others at City Hall.

We know that quite often they have a caucus in secret or in camera, and they decide which councillors are going to go on which committee. In fact, our Acting Speaker today would have some familiarity with that, having been a former city councillor, so some day I should talk to him and find out what those secret meetings are really like when they divvy up, when they decide which councillors are going to go on which committee, because city councillors may sit on 10 or 15 different committees. In fact, they probably sit on more now that there are only 15 councillors as opposed to the previous 29, so their workload has probably doubled. I think we—[interjection] Well, I am told that it may have quadrupled, but at least doubled.

It is actually quite an onerous responsibility to be on these committees. Some committees are more onerous than others. Some committees require more time. Some committees meet more often. Of course, some committees have more prestige than other committees, because some require that the councillors handle millions of dollars, and that is why the government House leader raised the Winnipeg Jets.

These are very important decisions to the taxpayers of Winnipeg, the taxpayers of Manitoba, because sometimes we know that councillors and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) sign agreements which have implications of multimillion dollars of public expenditure, particularly if things do not go the optimal way, if they go the other way. We know, for example, that the Jets deal could cost the taxpayers of Winnipeg and Manitoba \$43 million, something that we did not know until the Auditor, fortunately, on behalf of the taxpayers of Manitoba and Winnipeg, ferreted out this information which had been withheld from the Legislature and from the taxpayers.

It is very interesting to talk to people about whether they think the taxpayers should subsidize

the millionaire owners of the Jets and multimillion-dollar hockey players, not just on their operating losses, but on building a new arena. I would say that, as time has gone on since this deal was signed, the level of public support has declined, declined significantly, and now I do not talk to anybody who supports either subsidizing the Jets on an ongoing basis or using public subsidy to build a new arena.

Just yesterday I had a discussion with a gentleman at the North YMCA. We were in the locker room there, and we got talking about the Jets deal since they got so much publicity, and this individual was going to run against me as the Tory candidate in Burrows constituency. In fact, I have been encouraging him to do that for the last four years. But, regrettably, the Conservative Party nominated the doorman at the Manitoba Club—or so I have been told—as my opposition candidate.

I think I could have a lot of fun running against the doorman at the Manitoba Club and talk about this elitist club for rich individuals. Since I represent many, many poor people in Burrows constituency, I think they would like to hear about the Manitoba Club. I was hoping that the Conservative Party would put up a good candidate, somebody who lived in Burrows, as this business person and friend who worships at the same church that I do does. He lives in Burrows constituency. We need a good strong Conservative candidate in Burrows constituency, but the Conservative Party disappointed me and they nominated the doorman at the Manitoba Club.

We do not know who the Liberal Party has nominated yet, but we are waiting. [interjection] Well, that is what I am told. That is what I am told. [interjection] Well, maybe it suggests that the Conservatives have written off Burrows constituency. If they have, I am disappointed. Historically, the Conservatives finished second in Burrows over the last 25 years until 1988, and now, of course, the Liberal Party has replaced the Conservatives as the opposition to run against in Burrows.

An Honourable Member: One day we will win Burrows.

Mr. Martindale: Well, the honourable minister says one day we will win Burrows. I think what you need to do is start by nominating a candidate who lives in the constituency and you—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. This is not a time for debate on that issue. I think I would ask the honourable member to remember that he is dealing with The Convention Centre Corporation Amendment Act. If we could just be a little bit more relevant, I would appreciate it.

* (1200)

Mr. Martindale: Thank you for that reminder. I did get off my list here of things that people see when they attend conventions at the Convention Centre.

Of course, there is the Museum of Man and Nature. They were involved in some controversy a few years ago about having a sexist name. There was an attempt made to change the name, but that has not happened yet. Anyway, it is an excellent museum. I hope that all honourable members have been there and that you will go and see it. Of course, the St. Boniface Museum is a very interesting museum. I have been there, and it is housed in one of the oldest buildings in western Canada that is still in use.

Then there is The Forks and the Children's Museum. We have one of the best, maybe the best children's museum in Canada and children just love going to the Children's Museum and so do adults. I have been there many times when the adults are helping the children on the computers and the kids move on to some other area and the adults are all stuck on the computers having a good time.

Of course, there are many things to do at The Forks besides the Children's Museum. There are the walkways. We can walk now from the Legislature to The Forks and from The Forks north along the river. It is a very pleasant walk and a good thing to do for people attending the Convention Centre events.

I think I have just about outlined all the things that somebody might do while they are attending a

convention at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. I even managed to talk about council appointments to the Convention Centre Board. It would be interesting to know whether this is one of the higher priorities or higher status appointments by City Council or whether it ranks down there at the bottom. In any case, I think it is one of the more important ones because they do have a multimillion-dollar budget that they are responsible for, so we hope that the best possible councillors and the best citizens from the city of Winnipeg are appointed to this board. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): I am also rising to speak in this debate, particularly following on the scintillating and interesting discourse entered into by my honourable friend from Burrows (Mr. Martindale), and I rise to speak on this bill, The Convention Centre Corporation Amendment Act.

The member for Burrows has covered a wide range of topics with respect to some of the advantages and some of the purposes of the Convention Centre, and I am going to use my discussion to focus on some of the other aspects of this particular amendment. The amendment deals almost exclusively with the composition of the board and with respect to the board, as I read the bill, basically expanding and changing some of the individuals who participate on the board.

I believe the board now has eight members—and I stand corrected—and now it is expanding, I believe, to 16 or 17 under this bill, secondly, dealing as I understand it, with the staggered terms of the board and the method of appointing.

Now we tend to deal with these matters, that is board appointments, directorships and the like, as a sort of pro forma on occasion, but I am sure all members of the House will agree with me that matters of this kind are significant because the board basically is responsible both in law and in fact for the functioning of the Convention Centre Corporation. That is no small task when one considers that the Convention Centre serves as a focus of activities for the city of Winnipeg and serves as a focus for the attraction to the city of

Winnipeg of conventions and much needed tourism.

(Mr. Brian Pallister, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

The role and the responsibility, Mr. Acting Speaker, of the board of directors is a significant one. It is something that should be dealt with, with great detail. We deal with a myriad of issues in this Chamber dealing with governorship and dealing with control and direction of various organizations and various bodies. We do that on a regular basis, and sometimes we tend to not understand or to place perhaps enough emphasis on the significance of the responsibilities of a director of a corporation, be it profit or nonprofit.

By way of example, the boards of directors of hospitals have significant responsibilities for their institutions. Hundreds of millions of dollars and the expenditure of those millions of dollars, the balancing of the books, the liabilities and the various directions and changes in the health care policy, are determined by the board of directors of hospitals and other institutions.

That same scrutiny and that same requirement is required by the board of directors of the Convention Centre Corporation. The Convention Centre Corporation, and I recall the initial establishment of the Convention Centre, its very functioning role is integral to the economy of the city of Winnipeg and to a large extent to the economy of Manitoba by way of the attraction of business, the attraction of events and the facilitating of those functions in the province and in the city.

One must very carefully review the role and responsibilities of this board of directors. We will be, of course, examining that, Mr. Acting Speaker, and as we go through this amendment I pose some questions to the board that will be established should this bill pass, and the members that will be responsible for the functioning of that Convention Centre.

I pose a question to them, and that is: What is the role and responsibility of the Convention Centre? What is its focus going to be in the years to come

in the city of Winnipeg? What is the strategic plan that has been developed for not only the Convention Centre but for the other tangential attractions that are focused on the Convention Centre that deal with the city of Winnipeg? I believe that it is an integral part of the overall tourism development plan for not only the city of Winnipeg but for the province of Manitoba as a whole.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

I think we have to very seriously consider where Winnipeg fits in the niche of the Canadian experience as to the attraction of tourism and how the Convention Centre should and could focus as a hub for expanding Winnipeg's involvement and Winnipeg's attractiveness to communities and to individuals from outside of Winnipeg, thereby bringing in much needed revenue and investment to the city of Winnipeg.

When I look at the city of Winnipeg and its present development, I think we are all justifiably pleased in this Chamber as to what has happened at The Forks, Mr. Acting Speaker, in terms of development there. I am very pleased that The Forks was developed, a long-range plan that they commenced a long, long time ago, back to the time—

An Honourable Member: Axworthy again.

Mr. Chomiak: The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) brings up the name of Lloyd Axworthy.

I can bring up names like Ed Schreyer and I can bring up names like Gary Doer who were all involved in the establishment of what is becoming the jewel of attractiveness in terms of the centre of the city, and members opposite as well who were supportive.

There was an example of a joint effort to bring about a development that serves as a hub of activity and has become a focus for individuals who visit the city of Winnipeg and for individuals who reside in the city of Winnipeg.

I think by all accounts The Forks is a resounding success. I think that members in this Chamber

ought to look at The Forks experience and some of the other experiences in terms of how we move the Convention Centre and its activities that function through the Convention Centre into the planning for the development of tourism, for development of business and for the development of conventions in the future.

I do not know what role convention centres play, how Winnipeg stacks up against other centres. I have the impression, Mr. Acting Speaker, and this is only an impression, that our Convention Centre has fallen behind developments in perhaps other centres, that it needs to move into a new stage of development. Shall we call it a first-generation Convention Centre, and we need to develop second- and third-generation models? From some of my visits to other cities, I have seen some developments in other cities that focus around other convention centres, and I think we may have fallen behind. I would hope the new board will provide some impetus to developing a new generation, a new plan for the development of the Winnipeg Convention Centre.

I also have the impression that the Convention Centre has served the city of Winnipeg quite well and has filled its role fairly well. It is a layperson's impression, and it is not based on any great deal of research or development but it is certainly an impression that I have as someone who has been a long-time resident and relatively active in this city. I do look to the development of the Convention Centre with a new focus and with a new mandate to develop into the next century.

* (1210)

Let me make this perfectly clear, Mr. Acting Speaker, that I believe the development of the Convention Centre is tied very integrally, deeply to the heart of the development in the city of Winnipeg, to the attraction of business, to the attraction of tourism, to the development of a strong centre and to the establishment of a vibrant Winnipeg that could develop into the 20th Century much like the Winnipeg that was seen at the turn of the century as the Chicago of the North and as one of the fastest, if not the fastest developing city on

the face of this continent when there was a vision for this city.

There were hopes and aspirations that this city would become one of the great cities in North America. Perhaps that is what we have lacked. Perhaps the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) is correct; perhaps we have lacked some vision in terms of this city, in terms of this province and where we should and ought to be in the future. [interjection]

The member for Inkster says, whose fault is that? I suggest it is the fault of all of us. No blame can be attributed, but perhaps we do need a vision in this city as to where we are going and how we are going. It is more than simply dealing with diverse or smaller issues, but it is talking about what the strengths are of our city and what the strengths are of our province and how we capitalize on them.

Certainly, I can suggest several areas and several sectors, and the first one that comes to mind is our people, our diverse, educated, talented and capable people. That brings me to my own community, the community that I live in and the community that I have the honour to represent, the Kildonan area which is comprised of West Kildonan and Garden City where street after street, Mr. Acting Speaker, we see a community that has been long committed to this province. We see an ethnic and a religious mix that is second to none in North America and perhaps the world, and I think what serves as a model of development and a model of a community living together, as well as a community succeeding, a community that has been brought together not only by adversity, but by commitment and hard work.

Perhaps some of that vision that we see in the community that I have the honour to represent can be translated and can be harnessed and channelled into new directions and to the development of a vision for this city and for this province that we all can work together to achieve and will take us out of some of the lethargy that has been introduced into our society by a very, very acute and difficult economic downturn that has not been helped, I dare say, by the actions of the present government,

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am sorry to say, but perhaps we can rise above that particular lethargy and we can move into the 21st Century.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I note that my comments have generated debate amongst the members of this Chamber—and I am pleased to see that—have generated debate about what comprises this vision, about what documentation went to cabinet, what documentation did not go to cabinet. Already we see debate prompted in this Chamber about where we should be in the 21st Century and where this city and this province is going. I welcome that discussion. I hear it in my own home community. I hear it on a weekly basis as I go door to door, and I welcome discussion by members opposite in the Chamber about what our goals are in this province, in this city, and where we intend to proceed into the next century.

As the galleries fill, Mr. Acting Speaker, I will continue to discuss this future, because it is important. At one time, there was more of a vision. We seem to have lost that in this city, in this province, and I think it is sad. I think it is something that we all should work together. I do not say this in a partisan way. I think it is something that is felt probably by all members of this Chamber. It is something that perhaps we have to get back and work towards, because it fits with the development of the five-year strategic plan or the 10-year strategic plan for the Convention Centre.

Despite encouragement from members opposite and despite the demands, as I can see from the comments and the faces of members opposite, I

will be concluding my remarks, Mr. Acting Speaker. Even though members opposite are encouraging me to continue, I do not want to dominate totally this discussion, and I want to allow other members who are anxious I know to discuss this bill, to have the opportunity. With those short brief comments, I will conclude my comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for the member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger); the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) for the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme); the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) for the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst); the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) for the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson); and the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) for the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae).

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30? [agreed]

The hour now being 12:30, this House now stands adjourned until 1:30 Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, June 10, 1994

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