



Third Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Seventh Legislature

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TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 22, 2001

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the following three copies, pursuant to section 13 of The Trade Practices Inquiry Act, being Chapter 110 of the Statutes of Manitoba 1970. I have the honour to report that no inquiries were commenced subsequent to the last report dated December 5, 2000.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Transportation and Government Services): I have a number of reports to table: the Annual Report ended March 31, 2001, Materials Distribution Agency; the Land Management Services Annual Report, 2000-2001; the Fleet Vehicles Agency, 2000-2001 Annual Report; the Mail Management Agency, 2001 Annual Report; and the Transportation and Government Services Annual Report for 2000-2001.

* * *

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Could I ask leave to make a statement, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, there has been no consultation on this one. I just wonder if the member could describe the nature.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition wish to respond to the request of—

Mr. Murray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: No, I am just asking if the honourable member wishes to respond to the question of the honourable Government House Leader.

Mr. Murray: I think one of the honourable members from the other side described it as a labour issue, Mr. Speaker. He was quite accurate.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition have leave? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Murray: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you members opposite for allowing me to give exciting news, I believe, for those of us who sit in this Chamber. The good news is that Heather Stefanson and her husband, Jason, are now proud members of a bouncing 9.1 pound baby girl under the name of Victoria Diane Stefanson.

*(13:35)

She was brought with a great amount of excitement into this world at 20 minutes to the hour of midnight last night. I think it was a special day for a number of reasons, obviously for the parents and I think for those of us who know Heather in our caucus. I also think it was a bit of an anniversary date as it was the Member for Tuxedo's (Mrs. Stefanson) first year anniversary as an MLA in this Legislature. So no one is prouder than those of us on this side and of course the parents and all those who are involved. I think on this side we would like to welcome Victoria Diane Stefanson into the wonderful world and to this great province of Manitoba.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): We would also like to add our words of congratulations to Victoria on her birth and to Heather and Jason, her parents. We know that the child was, as I have been advised, born just before midnight last night. Of course, there have been mothers and fathers that have had children or new babies in

this House before. It, I think, gives it a little more of a human touch.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I ask for leave to comment on the Leader of the Opposition's statement.

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

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make this an all-party unanimous congratulations to Heather and to Victoria.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us from Athlone School, 47 Grade 5 students under the direction of Mr. Ed Hume and Mrs. Renee McGurry. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray).

Also, I would like to welcome from Minnesota State University of Mankato five students under the direction of Ms. Cindy Miller from Minnesota, United States of America.

I would also like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today Mr. Keith Goulet, who is a member of the Legislative Assembly for the constituency of Cumberland in the province of Saskatchewan.

Also, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the loge to my left where we have with us today Mr. Brian Pallister, who is the former Member for Portage la Prairie.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Adult Learning Centres—Funding Premier's Position

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, the very serious issue before the people of Manitoba is the transaction between

the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), his deputy and a school division that allowed a half million dollars to flow for 200 students who did not exist.

My question for the Premier is: Does the Premier agree with the process of this transaction?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I am extremely disappointed that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) did not rise in his place today to ask the lead question, as is his responsibility and role. Given the fact that yesterday he made very serious allegations in this House, unsubstantiated allegations in this House, and today we have an unprecedented situation where the Provincial Auditor, a servant of the Legislative Assembly, has accused the Opposition or stated that the Opposition party misrepresented his comments, I would have expected an apology here today right at the start.

Provincial Auditor Independence

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): My question is: Does the Premier believe that the Provincial Auditor is an independent servant of this Legislature and is not only independent of the Government but should be perceived as independent of the Government?

* (13:40)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I believe the independent Provincial Auditor, who provides advice to this Legislature, who provides advice and comment to the public, to the departments in Government, to the various administrations of Government, is entitled to respect. I think when the Provincial Auditor states that his statements were misrepresented by the Opposition, any self-respecting leader of an opposition party in this country would stand in this House and apologize to the Provincial Auditor.

Mr. Tweed: Then I would ask the Premier: Who from his government contacted the Provincial Auditor after the Auditor stepped beyond the boundaries of his report and brought into question the legality of the actions of the

Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) and his deputy in this specific transaction?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, again members opposite continue, as they did 10 times in this last week of the Legislature, to misrepresent the truth.

Point No. 1, if you have an Opposition party and a Leader of the Opposition who the Provincial Auditor has stated has misrepresented his views, the first point of business in this House is for the Leader of the Opposition to be a leader and apologize to the Provincial Auditor.

Provincial Auditor Independence

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in a live interview, after being asked about the situation in Agassiz and Morris-Macdonald, the Provincial Auditor stated, and I quote: Okay, well, I have never said that any transaction of either the Morris-Macdonald or the Agassiz School Division was fraud. The question of whether something is fraud or not is something that it takes lawyers and courts to determine.

When he was asked: But you wanted the Department of Justice involved because it might be fraud, the Auditor replied: Right.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) whether he or whether anyone in his office directed his deputy minister, Ben Levin, to contact the Provincial Auditor to clarify his statements.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, let us make it very clear that the Provincial Auditor makes his statements in reports that are before this Legislature. We accept the reports. We do not misrepresent his reports. We do not misrepresent his findings. I would like to ask the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray), who today we heard the Opposition party misrepresented the statements made by the Provincial Auditor, I would like the Leader of the Opposition to stand up and apologize for those comments.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) whether he or anyone from his office directed his Deputy Minister, Pat Gannon, to contact the Provincial Auditor to clarify his statements.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, again, members opposite should know and many ministers know that conduct between the Auditor and officials in various departments happens on an ongoing basis without "direction from a government." *[interjection]* You know, you better be careful. You have been wrong so often; you are wrong again. You are wrong, wrong, wrong.

* (13:45)

We learned of this conversation this morning on radio. It comes back to a fundamental point. The Provincial Auditor, who is free of fear and favour—

An Honourable Member: Really.

Mr. Doer: Oh, now we have a new allegation here. Now we have a new allegation—has stated that his comments were misrepresented. The Opposition has a choice. They can apologize and do the right thing. I think they should stand up and have integrity in the House today.

Mrs. Mitchelson: My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, did the Premier or anyone from his office or anyone from Cabinet Communications direct Ben Levin or Pat Gannon to call the Provincial Auditor to clarify his statements?

Mr. Doer: I just answered about hearing about the deputy minister on the radio this morning. Having said that, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) is in charge of a caucus and himself made a number of erroneous statements in this House. He was willing to put partisan politics ahead of the integrity of this Chamber.

We now hear—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, when we heard of a number of allegations, which by the way members opposite were clearly aware of prior to 1999, we did the right thing and sent that to the Provincial Auditor.

When the Auditor's report came out, we accepted action that was necessary in terms of financial accountability, policies that had to be put in place, the follow-up with the Justice Department which was made on October 4, results from the Justice Department that were reported. It took place on, I believe, November 9, and the follow-up with the RCMP.

We also clearly have accepted both the criticisms of the previous government and the criticisms made on our Government. We have stated, where there have been criticisms, action will be taken. Where there is need to pass new legislation, new legislation will be passed. Where there is need to deal with financial controls, we have already begun the process of ratcheting down the spending from \$17 million to \$14 million under this category, but we have not and will not misrepresent the Provincial Auditor. Members opposite have. It is time for the Leader of the Opposition to stand in his place and apologize to a servant of this Legislature.

Provincial Auditor Independence

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I remind all of us—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I remind all of us, although we surely should not need this reminder, that the Office of the Provincial Auditor is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly established under The Provincial Auditor's Act. The Provincial Auditor plays an important role on behalf of the citizens of Manitoba in the process by which the Legislature holds the government of the day accountable for its actions.

A more specific quote directly from section 13 of the Auditor's act: "to secure an

effective check on the assessment, collection and proper allocation of the revenue." That is what this issue is all about.

My question to the First Minister: Is it appropriate that two senior associate deputy ministers visit the Provincial Auditor on this very issue that is under controversy and discussion?

* (13:50)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): This member knows that yesterday in this House, and I quote, the Leader of the Opposition said—a statement by the way that nobody would repeat out in the hallway, not any member opposite would make the same statements out in the hallway—the members opposite said, and I quote the so-called Leader of the Opposition: The Provincial Auditor, that he believes the conduct of the minister and the deputy minister in their transactions with the Agassiz School Division should be reviewed by the Justice Department for criminal fraud.

Mr. Speaker, that is a complete misrepresentation of the Auditor's statement, and I demand the Leader of the Opposition apologize.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I repeat my question to the First Minister: Is the objectivity, the absolute independence of the Provincial Auditor, not in danger of being perceived to be compromised by being contacted by Mr. Levin and Mr. Gannon, two senior members of this Government?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor, and the member knows this, and they are trying to twist and turn the issues to try to get out of their responsibility of misrepresenting the Auditor's statement. They are trying to twist and turn the facts. They know that deputy ministers deal with the Provincial Auditor on matters all the time.

In fact, it was recommended by the previous Deputy Minister of Education that he in fact conduct an audit, something that, by the way, did not happen in 1998. The Provincial Auditor has commented on the previous administration's behaviour in not going ahead in 1998. We have a

paper trail showing that administrators in the Department of Education, after that fact, routinely asked the Department of Education why there was no audit, why there was no investigation, why some of the affairs of Morris-Macdonald were not reviewed.

Mr. Speaker, the only perception problem here in this Legislature is the perception that the leaders or the Opposition party misrepresented the statements made by the Provincial Auditor. I demand the Leader of the Opposition stand up and apologize.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, my final question: Why has this minister now in the last 10 minutes stood up seven or eight times and refused to acknowledge and answer the question? Who got to the Auditor? The Auditor said so. The Auditor says it is Mr. Gannon and Mr. Levin. Why is this minister afraid to acknowledge who got to the Auditor?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): I would like to table an e-mail I received at 1:20 p.m. this afternoon with the House.

I received a copy of the transcript over the lunch hour of a radio broadcast this morning where the Provincial Auditor indicated he had been contacted. He said, I quote: Yes, I have been contacted to clarify what I am alleged to have said, and I am happy to have that opportunity. I think my remarks were truly misrepresented.

* (13:55)

It was indicated there the Deputy Minister of Finance was potentially one of the people who contacted him. I asked my deputy to clarify what happened, and this is what he wrote in the e-mail: Further to reports on CJOB this morning, I wanted to provide you with a brief note on my contact with the Provincial Auditor late yesterday afternoon. Given the serious nature of the allegations, I contacted the Provincial Auditor to find out whether he had any such concerns about criminal fraud and Agassiz

School Division and the Department of Education. He indicated that the sentiments attributed to him in Question Period about fraudulent activity were inaccurate and unfounded. He also indicated the reporters had already contacted him about the matter and that he was responding to a number of media inquiries to set the record straight.

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

Provincial Auditor Independence

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): The Minister of Finance just missed out a very key word from the Auditor's remarks, and that was whether or not he had been called to clarify or revise, Mr. Speaker—or revise. Convenient that that is forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Premier why he would order two senior deputies who are in a power relationship with the Provincial Auditor to call and ask him to revise his statement.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member invents and invents statements that are absolutely not true; scurrilous comments made by the member opposite day after day.

The members of this House have two choices: To accept the fact that the Provincial Auditor writing his comments or making his comments to the media does so absolutely as a servant of the Legislature, and, therefore, should not be misrepresented. Or, if they misrepresent his comments, and he states clearly the Opposition misrepresented his comments—you could tell that in the House with the Hansard—you have no other choice but to have the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) apologize to this Chamber.

Mr. Praznik: I would like to ask the Premier: Why, then, when he was asked this question earlier in the House about two deputy ministers, one of whose actions is under investigation, is brought into question, I would like to know why he would not come clean and admit that, why his answer was simply that this was in the normal course of business.

What was he hiding, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Doer: The member opposite, two questions ago, made a statement that was again totally false about my involvement with deputy ministers, absolutely without any foundation in fact.

Point No. 2, members opposite chose to invent statements yesterday in the House, and I quote the statements, Mr. Speaker, about the allegations of fraud. Then the Auditor said today, and I quote: My remarks were truly, truly misrepresented, and I would have to say the Opposition in Question Period misrepresented what I had to say.

When is the Leader of the Opposition going to apologize to the Provincial Auditor, instead of members opposite creating a lot of noise to hide their own responsibility? They have no integrity; they have a leader with no integrity and they should apologize.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, the Premier now wants us to believe words after two deputy ministers went and visited the Auditor.

What does he say to the Auditor? When the Auditor says on public radio before he is talked to by two of this Premier's deputies, when asked about the relationship of Agassiz and Morris-Macdonald, about whether it should be investigated and when asked: Do you want the Department of Justice involved because it might be fraud, the Auditor said: Right.

What does he say to the truth?

* (14:00)

Mr. Doer: The members opposite will also know throughout that interview a number of times, at least on one occasion I can recall, the Provincial Auditor said: Let us wait for the Department of Justice's findings. We had a report from the Attorney General on the Department of Justice's findings. Members opposite may not like the findings of the Department of Justice and they probably will not like what eventually—I do not know what the police are going to find. They are going to be investigating it as well. I am sure they will be,

maybe they will be the next ones attacked. Maybe their integrity will be attacked next. I hope not.

We have the Provincial Auditor's integrity being attacked by members opposite. We have the Justice Department officials being attacked. We trust the police, we trust the Justice Department, we trust the Provincial Auditor, and that is why you should apologize.

Adult Learning Centres—Funding Independent Investigation

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): The minister and the deputy minister hatched a plan to give half a million dollars to a school division for students that do not exist. Since this issue was raised in this House, the story has changed every day, a hundred times. First the minister claimed he had Treasury Board approval; then he claimed he did not need it as the Premier has refused to take any action to assure Manitobans that he views this as a serious matter. He has refused to fire the minister. He has taken no action with respect to the deputy minister.

When legal questions are raised around the actions of a minister or a deputy minister, the appropriate course of action is to appoint an independent Crown attorney to handle the matter.

Will the Premier do the right thing? Will he do the right thing and have his Attorney General appoint an independent Crown attorney from outside the province to investigate the minister and the deputy minister, his actions rising to this transaction?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): The Deputy Attorney General has already stated that the full report, and every matter contained therein, is already before—it was before the House even opened. Let me go through the sequence again. Allegations made in '98, nothing happened; allegations made in 2001, matter referred to the Provincial Auditor; Provincial Auditor reports late September, early October, matter is immediately transferred from the Deputy Minister of Education to the Deputy Justice Minister; investigation takes place in the Justice

Department appropriately, again, a response and then the report is moved on to the RCMP even before this House sat.

Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition made a statement that the deputy minister and minister should be reviewed for criminal fraud. Now you are asking questions. Now you are climbing down from that position and using the word "patched." Well, Mr. Speaker, when is this Leader of the Opposition going to take responsibility for misrepresenting the Provincial Auditor and apologize in this House?

Mr. Murray: The Premier made a comment about let us be clear. Well, let us be clear then. The Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), the Deputy Minister of Education, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), the Premier, have all said that he did something wrong. He did something wrong. They have all admitted that. Well, what was that? We know that they falsified the enrolment numbers. We know that they forced the school division to hide the money.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier again: Will he do the right thing and ensure that we get an independent investigation through an outside Crown attorney to investigate this very serious issue, which is the transaction that took place?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the member opposite does not think the RCMP are independent. I believe that they are independent, and I am surprised the member opposite would take a different view of that finding. That is a very disrespectful comment again.

I recall, I did not go back and get Hansard, but I recall one other time in this House where a person named Mr. Charlie Curtis, who was Deputy Minister of Finance, and the former Leader of the Opposition, now Senator Carstairs, made a very inappropriate comment about him. She had the integrity the next day to stand up and apologize.

The Leader of the Opposition yesterday made allegations against the Minister of Education. He has politicized for his own purposes the comments of the Auditor. Then to be told that those comments were

misrepresented in this Chamber and to not have an apology from the Leader of the Opposition, he has no credibility with anybody on this side and no credibility with the public.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, clearly, you see it in the public, you see it in the media. What is happening here is a fiasco. This is a fiasco. Clearly, it has incredible implications, because this fiasco is now reflecting on this Legislature.

Clearly, the Premier has the opportunity to do the right thing. He has the opportunity to do the right thing and make this thing right by simply appointing an independent outside Crown attorney to investigate the minister and deputy minister on the transaction that took place.

Mr. Doer: The decision to deal with outside counsel has traditionally been made by the deputy minister and Mr. Slough in the Department of Justice, who also was involved in this file, when they made a certain decision on the allegations out of another Auditor's report that I am aware of, Mr. Funk. The investigation took place appropriately. There were no criminal charges that were necessary, and thankfully for that.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: You know, members opposite are throwing everything and the kitchen sink to try for whatever desperate reason to create something that is not there.

Mr. Speaker, the police have the information. They may require other information. There is, I would suggest, lots of evidence in the Auditor's report. There are lots of areas for them to review. The Deputy Attorney General appropriately said today in the media that it has been his experience that the police always err on the side of investigating anything in an Auditor's report for the public perception of justice and the reality of justice. We accept that. I am disappointed members opposite have not accepted that.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition made a statement—[interjection] Well, you do not like this, do you?

Point of Order

Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I am sure *Beauchesne* would say that the Premier is provoking debate when he says it is the perception. We know for a fact that two deputy ministers visited the Auditor—

* (14:10)

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, it is not a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Is the honourable First Minister to conclude his comments?

Mr. Doer: Again, yesterday and 10 other occasions, members opposite made claims and invoked the Auditor's words. The Auditor has now said, on the record, and for the first time that I can recall—the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) may have a longer history here—but I remember reading Auditors' reports right back to Mr. Ziprick, long before I was elected to this Chamber. For the first time that I can recall, a Provincial Auditor has stated that a political representative has misrepresented his comments in this Legislature. He specifically states the Opposition misrepresented those comments. I suggest it is time for the Leader of the Opposition to do what is right and apologize to the servant of the Legislature, the Provincial Auditor.

Minister of Education, Training and Youth Resignation Request

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): My question is to the Premier. The situations in Morris-Macdonald and Agassiz school divisions both resulted from funding of adult education based on September 30 enrolment, an approach which was totally inappropriate for adult learning. When there were concerns related to the numbers in Morris-Macdonald School Division, the Government has acted in almost unprecedented fashion to remove the elected trustees from the school division. When on the other hand the Minister of Education

(Mr. Caldwell) learned of incorrect numbers in Agassiz, he applied these incorrect numbers to augment the funding for the school division.

I ask the Premier to apply the same standard that was used for the trustees of Morris-Macdonald School Division to his Minister of Education and ask his Minister of Education to step down.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues wrapped into the question of the Leader of the Liberal Party. The issue in Morris-Macdonald with the school trustees, when there was a finding of the numbers being wrong by the Auditor, there was not a "change in the administrative structure of the school division." There was an attempt for 30 days to get a resolution. The response to have another audit of the Auditor's findings was a regrettable development. To spend more money to argue with the Auditor's report we thought was inappropriate.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say something about something that has been missing in this House for the last week with all the innuendo thrown around here.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Doer: The truth will set us free. It will set us free. We are confident of that.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, there was a question again in the media about the money in Morris-Macdonald, and one of the statements I have made, and I want to make it in the House because I think it is very important, that we were very concerned that any transition dealing with the adult education program in Morris-Macdonald would not have a negative impact because of the way the programs are administered on the K to 12 programs and students in the Morris-Macdonald area. There has not been a kind of immediate demand from us that would put student education at risk.

In the Agassiz School Division, a comparable motivation was in place when it was deemed the million-dollar deficit would result and the half-million-dollar overexpenditure that was identified by the school division itself, by

the way, not by the Auditor, but by the school division itself, that oversubscription would have a devastating effect on special needs students.

Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable in this House, while members opposite are throwing around a lot of mud, that students never become the first issue.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate. We have been allowing this First Minister to use unparliamentary language throughout this entire debate. We have been allowing this First Minister to throw accusations, which is not beholden of a Premier, but I ask that you call him to order.

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

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the remarks of the Opposition House Leader point out the misdirection of the Opposition here. What was very important in the remarks of the Premier was that this issue and the issue of public education in Manitoba is about children. Somehow the Opposition has missed that during the whole debate.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, he does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Adult Learning Centres—Funding Government Accountability

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the Premier: I ask the Premier again why he is using one standard for the trustees of Morris-Macdonald School Division and a totally different standard for his friend, the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), when the minister has been

caught and has admitted to funding students who did not exist in Agassiz School Division.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Again, Mr. Speaker, invention is the most lazy form of politics when you invent something to make it easier to ask a question instead of doing something properly. The minister has admitted the department made an error. He has admitted the department made an error. It has already been identified that the motivation for the accounting error, which we have acknowledged, was for the children of that division. We have not acted in a different way toward the students and children in the Morris-Macdonald School Division.

Mr. Speaker, we put credibility in the Auditor's report. We put credibility in the Auditor's wording. The audit, on pages 99 and 100, states, for purposes of the members opposite, that improvements were made, more improvements would have to be made, and we accept that.

Today we just announced at the University of Manitoba a program that was begun by the Minister of Education to have a \$50-million investment in capital funding.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate. The honourable First Minister had the opportunity to do a ministerial statement at the beginning. He has had an opportunity to remove the words that he has put on the record that have been unparliamentary. He has refused to. He is continuing to drag on and abuse the rules of this House.

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

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, it is not just the points of order but the questions from the Opposition that, first of all, never deal with the interests of

children in the respective school divisions, but it is their approach that only serves to deflect from their financial flubbing of adult learning in this province and their scandalous cover-up of millions upon millions of tax dollars.

* (14:20)

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

Mr. Doer: No, no, I thought—

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, he does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a new point of order?

Mr. Laurendeau: Regrettably, Mr. Speaker, we do not agree with your point of order. We challenge it. We challenge your ruling.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged. All those in support of sustaining the ruling, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

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

Formal Vote

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

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

Division

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

Yeas

Aglugub, Allan, Ashton, Asper, Barrett, Caldwell, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Friesen, Jennissen, Korzeniowski, Lathlin, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Mihychuk, Nevakshonoff, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Smith (Brandon West), Struthers, Wowchuk.

Nays

Cummings, Dacquay, Driedger, Dyck, Enns, Faurshou, Gerrard, Helwer, Laurendeau, Loewen, Maguire, Mitchelson, Murray, Penner (Emerson), Penner (Steinbach), Pitura, Praznik, Reimer, Rocan, Schuler, Smith (Fort Garry), Tweed.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 30, Nays 22.

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

* * *

Mr. Speaker: We will revert to the rest of Question Period.

* (15:00)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, just to complete my answer to the question, there were a couple of comments made, or allegations made about the Premier ordering people to visit the Auditor. I am informed that the Auditor phoned the Deputy Minister of Education to clarify the allegations made by Opposition members in the House.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, my second supplementary to follow up the concerns related to a double standard in dealing with Morris-Macdonald versus the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell).

I ask the Premier why, in opposition, he called for better fairness and justice in

government, and today he is using an unfair, unjust, inappropriate double standard.

Mr. Doer: I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that when members make comments and allegations of a serious nature against an individual no matter what their position is in this Legislature or otherwise or the administration of government that are misrepresenting the truth, that is a serious issue of justice. All of us have our integrity. None of us should take it for granted, and nobody in this House has the right or privilege to disabuse the integrity. *[interjection]* The member from Lac du Bonnet stated that I ordered deputy ministers to visit the Auditor. Perhaps he wants to correct the record and apologize, along with his so-called leader.

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

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Oak Park Raiders

Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia): Good day, Mr. Speaker. Today I had the pleasure of attending the Oak Park Raiders recognition assembly with the MLA for Charleswood. It was a wonderful event. The colour guard from the legion, representatives from Assiniboine South School Division, the City and the Province, Joe Poplawski, a football legend, and officials from the High School Football League were in attendance.

This team, the Oak Park Raiders, had three wins out of four years of the city football championships. This team has won two times in a row. I would like to commend the coaches, the youth, and the volunteers who have worked very hard in this community. They have done a great job. I would like to commend the administration for their commitment to youth, and their hard work in supporting the team, the parents for their commitment to the children and to the future of our province.

We look forward to this weekend with the Bisons and the Bombers winning, the next week, to continue the Oak Park example. We hope that

in the future the Oak Park Raiders will do the lead for the Bisons and the Bombers.

Just to give you a little bit of history, here are some of the scores. Oak Park to Grant Park, 41-0. Oak Park to Fort Frances 37-0. Oak Park to Kelvin, 31-7. Oak Park to St. Paul's 25-15. Oak Park 48, River East 7. This is an amazing team with amazing individuals and good luck to our future.

Golden Links Lodge

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): On Tuesday, November 20, I had the pleasure of participating in the 20-year anniversary celebrations of the Golden Links Lodge on St. Mary's Road. Eighty-year-old Helen Knight, a long-time resident of St. Vital and now a proud resident of Golden Links, was present for this celebration. Twenty years ago, Mrs. Knight had participated in the sod-turning ceremony for the facility as president of the Rebekahs Assembly.

The Golden Links Lodge has a long and proud history in our community. When the sod was first turned on this project, the site was surrounded by exclusively agricultural land. Our community has grown considerably since that time with housing now surrounding the Lodge, but the importance of this care home has not waned.

The Lodge is committed to providing excellence in care, and in keeping with the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs motto of "Friendship, Love and Truth." I would like to commend the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs for their ongoing involvement in the Golden Links Lodge, and all of the volunteers who have dedicated their time and resources to this wonderful facility. Because of their strong sense of caring, they have provided excellent service and a warm, caring and compassionate environment for the residents and their families. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Brummitt-Feasby House

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): I rise today to speak about the new hospice that has opened in Winnipeg for people diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease. ALS is a

degenerative and fatal neuromuscular disease. It does not affect mental functions or memory, but causes progressive muscular weakness leading to paralysis and death, usually from respiratory failure, within two to five years.

The ALS Society of Manitoba says that there are currently 78 Manitobans diagnosed with the disease. It is therefore great news to see that the new centre, called the Brummitt-Feasby House has opened on Kirby Avenue in St. James. What is also of note is that this is the first hospice for ALS patients in Canada, and possibly the first in North America. The building was donated by sisters Lynn Brown and Faith Johnston in memory of their father and their stepmother who died of ALS last year. Administered by the ALS Society of Manitoba, the care facility benefited from \$135,000 worth of labour from students from the Manitoba Renovation Contractors Association. As well, building supply companies donated materials to the project.

Today the new hospice offers comfort and peace of mind for both people with this devastating disease and their families. It provides space for four advanced ALS patients and two spaces for either respite patients or family members of rural patients who have come to Winnipeg for medical assessment.

Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to see that this new service has been made possible for the people of Manitoba who live with ALS. I would like to thank both Lynn Brown and Faith Johnston for donating their home to this project. Also, I hope that all members here can join me in thanking Diana Rasmussen, Director of ALS, and all those staff and volunteers who worked hard in order to make this great task a reality. I wish the new hospice success in the future.

Women's Television Network

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I rise today to put a few words on the record about the loss of another Winnipeg business, the Women's Television Network. This speciality cable television network will be relocated to Toronto, early in the new year, with a loss of nearly 50 full-time and part-time jobs, many of them held by women.

Mr. Speaker, this is most unfortunate. Since its inception in 1994, the Women's Television Network has played an important role in the community, providing information and entertainment programming of special interest to Canadian women.

WTN has also been active locally, taking part in a number of projects that have benefited the community. For example, in 1997, WTN received a Crime Prevention Award for its "Open for Discussion" program. A 1-800 referral service staffed by women at the Portage Correctional Institution was used to support on-air discussions on a range of topics. The skills gained at the call centre help incarcerated women make a successful return to the community.

Mr. Speaker, nearly 50 people will be out of work as a result of this decision. Winnipeg has lost another head office, and Manitoba's role as an important media centre has been diminished. It is essential that an environment be cultivated in Manitoba that is conducive to doing business, to being a location that head offices would choose to call home.

The loss of WTN would suggest that this is not the case.

* (15:10)

Lake Winnipeg

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to tell the Assembly of a fascinating excursion I went on in the company of a natural resource officer named Larry Buhler, who is stationed in Riverton.

As MLA for the Interlake, I have all of Lake Winnipeg in my jurisdiction and thus have to deal with numerous fishery concerns. When I was offered a tour of the lake in the 22-foot ZAG-FAB aluminium yawl, powered by twin 190s, I jumped at the chance. We departed from Matheson Island and over the next two days patrolled the lake and met with a number of commercial fishermen plying their trade. That night we were offered hospitality at the MacBeth Point fishing station, owned and operated by the good people of Fisher River. The following day we pushed further on into the north basin and

eventually met up with a group of Dauphin River fishermen at their base camp.

That afternoon we headed back south, into the wind this time, and had quite a rough ride, as it was blowing at roughly 25 knots. As we passed Wicked Point, Larry told me the origin of its name. Apparently, one way or the other, you are either travelling into or leaving some pretty wicked weather, and that day was no exception.

I am thankful I had this opportunity to experience Lake Winnipeg first-hand, because it has given me an appreciation for the hardship and the danger that the people who work these waters have to experience on a daily basis.

Lake Winnipeg is a truly bountiful resource, the crown jewel of our province. But the broad expanses and the shallow, rock-infested waters are certainly deserving of a healthy respect, as are the people who make their living there.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all the people who made this adventure possible for me. Thank you.

* (15:10)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am rising under Rule 2(7), which permits the Government House Leader to interrupt the debate on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne for up to three days to call government business.

I am interrupting the Throne Speech debate today in order to deal with the second readings of Bill 3, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act, and Bill 6, The Fortified Buildings Act. I also seek leave of the House to deal with Bill 7, The Local Authorities Election Amendment Act, for second reading as that bill is not listed on the Order Paper for second reading yet.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I ask that, under Orders of the Day, Bills 3 and 6 be called for second reading debate and that leave of the House be sought to deal with Bill 7.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to calling Bills 3 and 6 for second reading, I would like to ask the House for leave to deal with Bill 7, The Local Authorities Election Amendment Act, for second reading. Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

SECOND READINGS

Bill 3—The Highway Traffic Amendment and Summary Convictions Amendment Act

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Transportation and Government Services): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), that Bill 3, The Highway Traffic Amendment and Summary Convictions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route et la Loi sur les poursuites sommaires, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ashton: As part of our Government's safety agenda, we are introducing this legislation again today. I want to stress this because in the two years that we have been in office we have already introduced a number of very significant legislative initiatives that we believe will make a real difference in terms of traffic safety in this province, starting with graduated drivers' licensing, which was introduced last session, provisions in terms of licensing for operators of heavy equipment, and today through Bill 3 we are introducing the ability for local police authorities to have additional mechanisms to enforce in this case our speeding laws as well as prohibitions against running red lights.

I want to indicate that we believe that this is very important legislation, and I want to give the members of this House a background on it. First of all, this legislation will bring into force the provisions that are currently in legislation but remain unproclaimed, brought in by the previous government, that would allow for what are called red-light cameras. This legislation was brought in in 1997. I want to stress that we will be bringing this in as part of that particular legislation. What is interesting is at the time the government of the day chose not to look at other types of additional enforcement, rejected photo

enforcement of speed limits but did bring in the red-light cameras. So that is part of it.

This legislation will provide a supplement to but we believe not a substitute for traditional police enforcement. It is very important to stress because one of the reasons it is targeted is that we believe there are specific areas in this province where there is a statistically proven higher rate of accidents, and where speeding is a factor we have outlined that in the bill, but it by no means is intended to be a substitute for the best type of enforcement of traffic offences, which is traditional police enforcement.

I note recently, for example, and the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen) may want to listen to this because there was an individual who was arrested for doing more than 200 kilometres an hour, a case of traditional enforcement by the police. This individual is now before the courts. I will not comment on the specifics, but one of the key things that traditional enforcement can do is not only stop people for speeding but it can also play a key role in our efforts to prevent drinking and driving and also a key role in our efforts to identify the 20 000 or so Manitobans that we estimate are driving either without a licence or with a suspended licence. So I want to stress that, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to stress the importance of maintaining traditional enforcement. I put on the record my concern as the Minister of Transportation that there has been a 45% reduction in the enforcement of traffic offences in the city of Winnipeg in the last decade. By comparison, the figures outside of the city are approximately 15 percent. That has to be of concern. I realize that there are other significant policing priorities, but if we do not have proper enforcement, Mr. Speaker, we are not going to get the compliance with our traffic laws that is necessary. I want to stress that I think this is an important aspect. We believe it will provide for a supplement to, not a substitute for, traditional enforcement.

* (15:20)

I want to stress where we are targeting this and why. First of all, at intersections. We have,

through our review, determined that upwards of two-thirds of accidents in urban areas occur at intersections—two-thirds of accidents. Now, it varies from year to year, but that is I think an indication of the degree to which intersections are the greatest at risk. Speed is indeed a contributing factor in those accidents. In fact, if you combine the lack of red-light cameras with the normal situation in Winnipeg, unfortunately there are far too many drivers who entering an intersection—and this is from my own experience of viewing this in the city and in other urban areas—actually speed up to go through what they see as an orange light, rather than slowing down and stopping. So it is a very important area.

So we have included the ability in the legislation for cameras to be used at intersections to detect both speeding and red-light violations. We have also built into the legislation the ability to use photo radar in school zones, playground zones and construction zones as well as rail crossings. I want to stress in that particular case we will be very clearly spelling out by regulation the specific parameters we are dealing with, but I think that only makes sense. When you are dealing with construction workers, when you are dealing with children, the addition of any degree of speeding, Mr. Speaker, I think obviously does compound the risk that is involved in those areas. I want to indicate those are specifically proscribed in the legislation.

I realize there may be some disagreement as we proceed in the debate on this. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) has said that he wants city-wide, open photo radar enforcement. That is not the approach that we have followed in this bill because wide open use of photo enforcement, we believe, could also significantly impact on traditional enforcement. This is a supplement to, not a substitute for, traditional enforcement.

I also do want to indicate that despite that very real difference—and it is somewhat surprising since the Conservatives in government chose not to even look at this type of enforcement. But notwithstanding that, we have taken the exceptional step in this particular case of briefing both opposition parties prior to the introduction of the bill in the Legislature on the basic facts behind the bill, because we are

going to be requesting this matter be dealt with at this sitting of the Legislature, and we did want the ability to have some discussion, not only publicly but also with members of the Opposition in terms of amendments that do not deal perhaps with some of the basic fundamental principles of the bill but could allow us to look at that potential passage.

I do want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the context we are introducing this in is a safety context. We are not anticipating a huge amount of revenue. Certainly, we are indicating that the current fee structure will be in place in terms of fines. That is a structure that returns a significant portion to a municipality. There is a surcharge for court costs and a surcharge for victims of crime. There will be no difference in terms of the fine structure.

We indicated we did not anticipate this resulting in any additional revenue for the Province. What I want to indicate is that we will, at committee stage, be actually bringing in amendments that will recognize that both at the provincial and at the local level there will not be revenues, that in the case of the Province, that would go to general revenue.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that we will be indicating that we see revenues as going for traffic safety and policing—traffic safety and policing because, once again, this is very much driven by safety. It is not being driven by revenue, and we will bring in amendments that will make that very clear in the legislation.

I want to indicate some of the other provisions very briefly. Municipalities must apply to the Province for authorization. Once authorized, they will be identified in regulation. Municipalities are authorized to use photo enforcement devices only in the areas that are prescribed and only for the purposes that are prescribed. This is not going to lead to any significant questions in terms of use of photo surveillance. This is not about that. It is photo enforcement of our highway traffic laws. Persons will be prohibited from obstructing vehicle licence plates in a manner that would inhibit the plate number from being captured. Registered owners will be responsible for the

offence. Defence has been provided where the vehicle was used by another person without the expressed or implied consent of the vehicle owner. I think that is important we recognize there may be cases where that occurs.

Mr. Speaker, once again, we do have a responsibility when we own a vehicle to ensure that if we do lend it to someone that it is operated in a safe manner, and this will involve that. That, by the way, is the same provision that is used in most other jurisdictions.

The offence notice will be issued by regular mail. It will be mailed within 14 days after the violation occurred. The Registrar of Motor Vehicles may suspend the vehicle registration and owner where the fine is unpaid. This is parallel to some the provisions that occur in terms of other traffic offences which are incurred against the individual.

I want to highlight again why we feel this is important. We recognize not only the higher risk in intersections, for example, in school zones, construction zones, playground zones, but also the difficulty of the police in enforcing, using traditional enforcement in those areas. It is very difficult for the police to intervene. Even in the case of red-light cameras, it is a question of not only being on site when it occurs but also intervening in a safe way in terms of stopping the offender and issuing the ticket. We believe that is fairly significant. I want to stress, Mr. Speaker, again, that this is safety driven, safety driven first and foremost.

I look forward to the debate on this. I want to admit I was somewhat surprised by some of the comments from members opposite, but I can say on the record, Mr. Speaker, that there will be, I believe, a difference at the end of the day. We do not believe in citywide use of this type of technology, because it then would not be targeted to safety. We believe that this needs to be blended in with traditional enforcement.

I look forward to that debate, but I want to once again urge that we consider it during this part of the session. We have gone out of our way to accommodate the Opposition. We made the announcement about this legislation prior to the session. We briefed the Opposition before the

bill was introduced in the Legislature. We have the opportunity under the new rules now to interrupt the Throne Speech to have this matter dealt with. I would suggest that at the very least we try and get this in place so that we can start using the kind of red-light camera enforcement that was passed by the previous government but never introduced and add one extra degree of safety.

I want to stress again, Mr. Speaker, I think all of us in this House, and certainly as the Minister of Transportation, we would all love to be in a position where we issued no traffic offences. I would be quite happy, and I will put this on the record, if there were no offences issued under this, but we all know that what happens is there is a small percentage of people who habitually do not follow our traffic laws. Quite frankly, we could all learn to slow down sometimes, to be extra cautious about red lights. Receiving a traffic ticket in this province is something in a lot of cases could be a bit of a reminder.

An Honourable Member: Speak for yourself.

Mr. Ashton: The Member for Steinbach (Mr. Jim Penner) says: Speak for yourself. I am sure he knows nothing about receiving a traffic ticket. I am sure that is what he is referring to. But, quite frankly, the whole point of issuing tickets is not to penalize drivers. That is one aspect, obviously, in terms of any penalty. It is to give people a bit of a reminder and a bit of a wake-up call sometimes that we all can improve safety on our highways.

I want to end on this because we face a challenge in this province. In this province we have the highest rate of injuries per 100 000 accidents of any province in the country. We can do more, Mr. Speaker. We are going to do more. This is a government that is committed to safety. We have done that in the first two sessions of this Legislature, and I would urge members opposite to show their commitment to safety, as well, by passing this legislation which we believe is targeted on the right dimension here which is safety, not on revenue but on traffic safety, and we believe this will make a difference for Manitoba motorists. Thank you.

* (15:30)

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the Member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 6—The Fortified Buildings Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen), that Bill 6, The Fortified Buildings Act; Loi sur les bâtiments fortifiés, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Mackintosh: I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to introduce this legislation. It establishes a scheme to deal with fortified buildings that pose a threat to public safety.

The legislation is not intended, of course, to prohibit reasonable security measures commonly taken for a home nor is this legislation intended to prevent commercial establishments from taking appropriate measures to protect their buildings and businesses. This legislation is intended to deal with buildings that have unacceptably high levels of fortification. Manitoba's communities deserve legislation that speaks directly to the threat that some fortified buildings pose to public safety, peace and harmony in their communities.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

In some cases, buildings are fortified in a way that poses a risk to the safety of its occupants and to its neighbours. This is often because they are intended to be havens for people or organizations who threaten the harmony of the community. These buildings invite danger and are often magnets for other kinds of behaviour that disrupt communities in ways that challenge public safety.

In essence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this legislation gives the provincial government the authority to appoint inspectors and to allow those inspectors to enter and inspect buildings

where there is a reasonable basis for believing that the building is fortified.

The inspectors would be able to take measurements and photographs and take tests as necessary and require that documentation that contains information relevant to the fortification be produced for inspection and copying. Inspectors may not enter properties except with the occupants' consent or in the absence of that consent a warrant issued by a justice.

The judge must be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the building is a fortified building, that entry to the building or the property on which the building is located is necessary for the purpose relating to the administration of the act—and that is very important—and that a request to enter the building or the property has been refused or that there are reasonable grounds to believe that entry will be refused.

Under this legislative scheme the director of Public Safety may designate a fortified building as a threat to public safety. In reaching that determination the director may take into account a range of considerations. Factors the director may take into account include but are not limited to: the number and type of fortifications in or on the building or on the property on which the building is located where the fortifications could significantly impair the ability of emergency response personnel and law enforcement officials to gain access to the building; whether the fortifications could significantly impair egress from the building; the nature of the neighbourhood or area in which the building is located; and the proximity of the building to schools, playgrounds and other places where children are likely to be present. The director may also consider the purpose for which the building is being used and whether the fortifications are reasonably necessary for the designated purpose for which the building is being used.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the director may take into account whether any criminal activity or other disruptive behaviour has taken place in or around the building previously. The legislation allows the director, after designating a building as a threat to public safety, to issue an

order requiring that the fortifications must be removed from the building and directing the owner or occupier of the property, or both, to remove the specified fortifications by a specified date in the future.

Should an owner or an occupier of a property fail to comply with the removal order, the director shall issue an order closing the building for a period of not more than 90 days. In that 90-day period, the director will remove the specified fortifications from the property, and cost for the removal will be assessed against the owner of the property. The closure order will include a provision requiring all persons to vacate the building and not to re-enter until the order ceases to be in effect. The closure order shall be vacated as soon as all fortification specified and the removal order have been taken down.

In order to ensure fairness and to provide oversight for the operation of this legislation, removal orders may be appealed within 14 days to the Court of Queen's Bench. The court, under this legislation, will be obliged to hear the appeal on an urgent basis. The court will hear the matter as a hearing *de nouveau*, that is a new hearing, and not merely as an appeal. After hearing all of the evidence, the court can confirm the original order of the director, quash the order or vary it in any manner it considers appropriate.

When a Notice of Appeal has been filed, the operation of the removal order is stayed and no further action can be taken, except as provided by the court.

This legislation created offences and penalties that are proportionate to the consequences of non-compliance with the lawful order.

This legislation is a measured and balanced act and is intended to ensure that communities are as safe as possible while providing a scheme to eliminate those fortifications which pose risk to those very same communities.

The legislation provides for an oversight and appeal through an independent judiciary that will hold the director and the owners of buildings accountable under this legislative scheme.

In closing, this bill provides communities throughout Manitoba with appropriate legislative tools to protect themselves from the dangers inherent in some fortified buildings. The bill is the first of its kind in Canada. Along with other measures already taken by this Government, this bill is an important contribution to enhancing the safety and security of Manitobans. We urge the expeditious passage of this legislation hopefully before December 6. Thank you.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I move that we adjourn debate, seconded by the honourable Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer).

Motion agreed to.

Bill 7—The Local Authorities Election Amendment Act

Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs): I move, Mr. Deputy Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), that The Local Authorities Election Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'élection des autorités locales, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Ms. Friesen: Just a few comments on this bill, Bill 7 proposes amendments to The Local Authorities Election Act, which, as members know, provides the legislative framework for local government elections. The purpose, of course, is to ensure fairness and consistency in the franchise across the province. Specifically, these amendments will address issues which arose out of the 1998 municipal elections and which have also been addressed by the courts. To address this election issue, Bill 7 proposes to amend The Local Authorities Election Act to change voting rights in municipal elections for non-residents. I want to emphasize for members that this does not change the residential franchise at all anywhere in the province, but it does deal with the issue of non-resident voting issues.

The bill will introduce a maximum for the number of non-resident owners of a parcel of land who may vote in a municipal election from the unrestricted numbers of the present to two

members. This is similar, as I think many members are aware, to the process which has been put into place in British Columbia. The bill will also clarify the existing authority of election officials to ensure that non-resident electors applying to have their names added to the list of electors are qualified.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Manitobans have been asked to comment on these proposed amendments. In addition to public comment, all Manitoba municipalities, including the City of Winnipeg, were asked to comment on the proposed changes to the act. We have also consulted with associations and organizations, such as the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, the Municipal Administrators' Association and the Manitoba Cottage Owners Association, who also in each case provided comment on the proposed changes.

In general, there is support to limit the number of non-resident owners per property eligible to vote in the municipal elections to two. I should say that some people would go further and some would not go as far as this, but this bill, I think, is a median and fair way to address the issue. It does, in addition, address several specific municipal requests for legislative changes, and it will, I think, continue to strengthen the legislative framework and the direction of Canadian practice in municipal franchise.

* (15:40)

I want to recognize the amendment that the members opposite put forward in the Legislature on this. We discussed it at the time. I indicated that I wanted some time to have some consultation on that, and we have done that. I also thank them for their co-operation in bringing this forward in a timely manner.

So I trust, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when members have looked at this bill, that we will have their support and that we will be able to do what is in the best interest of the municipalities and citizens of this province.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for

Steinbach (Mr. Jim Penner), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE
(Sixth Day of Debate)**

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate on the amendment on the Throne Speech, with the honourable Member for Southdale having 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure to have a few more minutes left to address some of the comments and some of the concerns in regard to the Throne Speech.

It has been an interesting time in the last few days here in the House in regard to some of the so-called transgressions and comments and directions that were taken in regard to Education and Justice and Finance as to clarity in regard to the Government.

I now refer back, as I did yesterday, in regard to the Throne Speech that was introduced on November 13, in which it outlines the Government's direction. I refer to one line particularly where it says, and I quote from the Throne Speech: "My ministers have worked hard to meet their budget targets, to make progress each year on debt repayment and transparency." The word "transparency," when usually throne speeches are very carefully monitored, very carefully edited by the Cabinet and by the Premier (Mr. Doer) as to their content and to their terminology—I was wondering how that word "transparency" got in there, because it would appear that the word "transparency" has again popped up just very, very recently. In fact, it came up today, November 22, in an article that was in the *Free Press* in which the Auditor, Mr. Jon Singleton, was saying in regard to what we have been talking about, in regard to the Morris-Macdonald and Agassiz and the flowing of funds. I quote from what the today's Auditor has said: "I was concerned with the lack of transparency and openness." This was what he was concerned about.

I have got to ask, when the Premier and Cabinet wrote the Throne Speech, whether that word "transparency" slipped in there accidentally, because the Auditor is now concerned about the lack of transparency and openness in regard to the proceedings that we have been questioning.

To take this even a little bit further down the road, today in the House the Premier was talking about the auditors and the past auditors, and he brought up the name of a Mr. Bill Ziprick, who was the Auditor back when the NDP were in government, again at that time. I am sure that the Member for Wellington (Mr. Santos) can remember when the Auditor at that time, a Mr. Bill Ziprick, would not sign the books of the provincial government. The member from Elmwood might even remember when Mr. Ziprick would not sign the books of the then-Minister of Finance, Mr. Vic Schroeder.

You have got to see a pattern developing here again. When they were in government last time, there was this lack of accountability, and as Mr. Ziprick said, and I am quoting, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am quoting. These are not my words. "In no way can I certify \$165 million in net deficit because, if I do, Manitoba will be misled." These are the words from the Auditor at that time in regard to the NDP government in power at that time with the Minister of Finance, Mr. Vic Schroeder.

At that time, the Auditor had problems with the NDP's creative accounting and their so-called manoeuvring of figures of the books. We now see it, this Auditor, is now saying: With this new NDP government, I was very concerned with this lack of transparency and openness. How these things come back to haunt this Government.

This is stuff that is true. This is what the Auditor said. The Auditor said this—which date was it?—November 22, 2001, when the NDP were in power, which is now. The Auditor, back in 1984, when the NDP were in government then with the NDP Finance Minister, he said that he could not certify the books. These are the types of misleading that are brought forward by this Government in regard to how they deal with the books and the situations that are before us.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to be aware of what we are dealing with when we talk about, when the Premier came out with the Throne Speech or the Government came out with the Throne Speech, and they are talking about the transparency. Now the auditors are saying it is not there because of what they have been exposed to. The previous Auditor, under the former NDP government, when they were last in power, said the same thing. We see this type of attitude of using what they can to gerrymander or to mislead the people in regard to the finances of the Province of Manitoba.

A good example, they chastised us for the expansion of the two casinos, the amount of money that was spent on the two casinos: \$165 million. We heard about all of this. A little item in the bottom of the last quarterly financial statement, they transferred that debt out of that Crown corporation, \$165 million, into the provincial debt so that the books now of the Manitoba Lotteries are clean, so that when all of the profits are shown in the Manitoba Lotteries, it is scoopville; that is when they will be scooping that money out of it.

Instead of repaying the debt, they transferred it into the provincial debt so that it is a long term and it is hidden in there, very creative, very, very misleading, because the true debt of Manitoba Lotteries is not reflected. The true debt should have had that \$165 million repaid through Crown corporation, which is the way it should be. Instead, they took it out of the Crown corp and put it into the general debt of the Province. They cleaned the books. I would challenge the members there to look at the financial statements of the Manitoba Lotteries over the last few months, and you will see that that happened. In fact, in the financial statement from the Finance Minister (Mr. Selinger), there is a notation of it there, way back in the back of the books.

So these are the types of little gerrymanderings and the little creative accounting that the Government is now undertaking to try to make it appear that they are in control of the debt and the amount of monies that they are raising and spending.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will watch very, very closely over the next short while as to

what direction the Government starts to take us down the road. We know that they are coming into a period where they are going to have to make some tough decisions in regard to spending because of the economic downturn that we are all experiencing throughout North America.

It would be interesting to see where this Government looks at their way to balance the books. They have indicated and the Premier has said that they are committed to balanced budget legislation. That is commendable, and I commend their Government for doing that, because I think that is the only way that they could manage properly, is by the controls that we put in as a provincial government when we were in power.

If they follow that route, it is going to be interesting what type of decisions they have to make and where the funding is going to go and where the spending is going to go. So with those comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will thank the House for their indulgences.

* (15:50)

Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia): I appreciate the time to talk and pledge my support for the Throne Speech and discuss some of the good, positive things that we are doing in this province and to move the province forward in the future.

First, I would like to welcome all the pages. I am particularly happy to welcome a page from St. James-Assiniboia who will be working in this Chamber this session. I would also like to thank the six interns. I know that I have had the pleasure of working with interns in the past. I know that it is a wonderful experience for us to work with them and them to work with us. It is a good exposure to politics. It is a good exposure to how government works. It is a great program.

I think it is also important to look in a Throne Speech as to the vision. What type of vision? What type of government do you want? I think it is incumbent upon us to look at the future to decide whether we are building for the future with optimism, positive outlook and a growing province or whether we are going to be pessimistic and cry gloom and doom.

I believe that it is incumbent upon government to build and build upon a strong foundation. Therefore, I really look at what we have done and accomplished as far as education, health, safety, environment, and of course, for allowing all people to participate in our society.

First I will talk about health for a minute. It is really nice to have a society where all people have access to health care, not just the people who have money, not just the people who can walk into a medical area, and say: Here is my VISA card; I will pay anything for a treatment. What is important is that we have to have a health care system based on need. It has to be a health care system that all have access to. No line jumping. No special services. What you have, all people have.

If you have a system which is private and public, what will happen is that there will not be a huge group of outside professionals coming into Manitoba to staff the private system. What will happen is the public system will lose staffing. Nurses, doctors, technicians, technologists will leave the public system to work in a private system because you are running duplicate systems. You have duplicate administration.

What will happen is that there will be longer waiting lists. There will be longer waiting for tests, and then the whole health of all will suffer except for a few small elite that have the money to pay. I say, rather than have money as the basis by which you decide who goes first in the queue, you do it on need, and you do it based on sound medical judgment. I believe that is why we need a single-tier health system where all people have access.

Now how do you support that health care system so that it improves? First, what you have to do is have consistent training, staffing and education. Former government cut technicians and technologist programs. They cut nursing programs. They cut all sorts of training programs, and, lo and behold, we have a shortage in all of those areas. Anyone who has been in education knows that if you want to have a decent program, you have to continue year after year training people and having new people, new Manitobans, trained for your

positions. Therefore, I really like it how now we have 1200 new nurses in training, 1200 nurses in training. That are almost three times as many as previously were trained prior to our taking office.

The diploma nursing program was expanded a great deal. What that means is that we will have nurses in the university program. We also have the normal RN programs being expanded. We have LPNs being expanded, and we also have training programs for technologists, technicians, et cetera. Now, rather than just train them and let them leave, what we have done is we have done some very imaginative things. We have tied loans and grants to their remaining and working in our province. So what we are doing is we are allowing these young professionals to get trained at a reasonable cost. That is important because you have to make education affordable.

What we are also doing, though, which is important, is we are planning for the future. We are getting those professionals to actually stay here, and stay here they are. It is really nice to see that most of the graduates from the U of M program stayed here. We have more doctors staying here. We have more professionals in all areas staying here. Why we are doing that is we are providing them the incentive to stay for the first few years. It is our hope and our belief that once they settle here, they start their careers here, they buy homes here, they settle with their families here, they will remain here. They will remain in Manitoba and increase the amount of medical people available.

Will it work? Well, it is important to note that we have 25 more doctors now than when we took office—25. That is a significant number. We also are working very, very hard to fill the needs in others and fill them with Manitobans, with young Manitobans who want to grow old, work here and raise families here.

Other things that we are doing in health, preventive health. I am very pleased to say that I had the privilege of opening a wellness centre. You say: What is the importance of a wellness centre? Well, this is a centre that three levels of government, the civic, the provincial and the federal government, got together and worked on setting up a recreation facility. All studies show

that it is important to have recreation to prevent illness. People stay well longer, and, more importantly, if they stay well longer they have longer lives, more productive lives, they live better, and it of course saves health care dollars. Some studies have shown that you save up to \$750 per year per senior if they are physically fit. So I hope that this wellness centre, which is an expansion of the St. James Centennial Pool, will really make a difference in the seniors population in St. James, because in St. James-Assiniboia almost 30 percent of the population is 55 years and older.

So it is important to work in health care and improve health care a great deal. Do we have work to do? Yes, we do, but we have fewer patients in hallways. I am happy to see that we actually have established or are establishing a new registry to make it easier to find a family doctor. I know a couple of doctors who are actually looking for patients. It is important to make sure that people can get a good physician when they need one. So that is also important.

The other thing that is important to mention is the fact that Pharmacare and the health care dollars are important. I recently attended a social, and the social was held at Heritage Park Community Centre. What it was designed for was to raise money for a lady, who needed a specific drug that was not quite yet funded. I was very pleased to see multitudes of people who were willing to pay money out of their pocket to support this new drug so that this family could get the drug that might make the difference between quality of life or no life. So it was neat to see how the community of St. James-Assiniboia came together to raise thousands of dollars to provide this drug.

So, after researching, I found out it would cost about a million-and-a-half dollars to have this new drug approved. It was interesting to see how many of those people were willing to drop \$20, \$30, \$50 out of their own pocket to support this lady in her health.

What we have to do is realize that when we do cuts to health care, when we do cuts to Pharmacare, what we are doing is we are having people suffer. So what we have to do is draw a direct correlation between income and

expenditures in Pharmacare and drugs that are accessible for people who need them.

I think that St. James-Assiniboia and this wonderful event—and I commend the organizers. I commend all the people who attend because it showed that people do care about each other. We want a society that cares about each other, supports each other and, more important than that, that will give to others.

So I think what we have to do often as politicians is educate people, that this \$1.5 million might translate into \$3 a year, \$3 a year per taxpayer. When you take that and you say would you give up this person's life for \$3 a year, the answer is no. If you say would you give up Grace Hospital for \$35, \$40 a year, the answer is always a resounding no.

So what we have to do is draw the correlation between having services such as health care to the whole issue of paying taxes and supporting the health care dollars. It is important that we take these dollars and spend them very wisely.

I really commend the Minister of Health for introducing the number of initiatives that have shortened waiting lists and used the systems better. He has done a wonderful job, and I am proud to have him as our Minister of Health. Thank you.

* (16:00)

I would also like to mention economics for a minute. We will keep education to a minute. Anyhow, I would like to talk about optimism in economics. It was really interesting to read the paper a few days ago. It was interesting to read because what they said is in this economic conference, they said one of the biggest flaws in our province is we have pessimists. We do not look at the bright future that we are going to have. We should be optimistic, and we have a great future. We have a great workforce, educated workforce and trained workforce. We have great skills. We have good capital. We have a good hydro-electric system so that we can really offer plants a good, dependable system of cheap power.

I look at some of the industrial investments in Manitoba to date. It is just unbelievable to see

how this province is progressing. CanWest Global Communications, an investment of \$27.7 million, 400 immediate people being employed and a possible 800 new employees.

You have Simply Natural Spring Water, and I had the pleasure of going to the opening—investment was great and 25 new people. What I liked about this one was it was voted the best water. It was just wonderful to see that it is in Manitoba. It is a Manitoba product creating Manitoba investment and employment.

Next we have Simplot. You have to think of the inputs of this. We have \$120 million, an employment of 230 direct, plus over 500 indirect jobs on Simplot in Portage la Prairie. We have Palliser expanding with almost 1200 to 1400 new employees, Kitchen Craft, with 300 to 500 new employees and a \$26-million expansion. That is impressive.

We have an expansion in Steinbach, for my fellow member opposite. Loewen Windows is investing \$20 million for 250 new jobs. That is wonderful growth in a smaller community. Steinbach has a great history of growth.

We have Nexen Chemical expansion in Brandon, investment of \$55 million. We have Naylor Publications, investment of \$5 million. Vansco Electronics, and this is a wonderful success story for Manitoba, investment of \$12.4 million and 340 new jobs. We have Gage Marketing, \$1 million and 226 new jobs in Selkirk, Manitoba, for my honourable colleague.

We have 40 new jobs in IBM customer service. We have new Convergys expansion of 1200 existing jobs plus 80 new jobs. We have a Winpak expansion in the wonderful constituency of Assiniboia of \$15 million and more employment. We have Air Canada expanding. We have numerous new investments such as Standard Aero, Cambrian Credit Union, Hampton Inn. It is wonderful to be in a province that actually has building cranes on the horizon. I really would like to note the difference. In the two years since we have been in power—and I can remember Winnipeg for many years. I can remember for the previous 12 years there was scant, any construction.

We have taken course, we have taken power, and it is just wonderful to see all the building construction. We have Red River campus, we have the new arena moving forward, we have all sorts of building and construction.

I look at just Assiniboia by itself, and I look at Unicity Mall being built. We have a new seniors centre being built on the corner of Sturgeon and Ness. We have a new swimming pool expansion on Centennial swimming pool. We also have a new, expanded Superstore complex. We have all sorts of building going on, and it is a spirit of optimism.

So, when people say what kind of province you want, do you want an optimistic province that is growing, or do you want one that is pessimistic and throwing mud? So I am pleased to see that we are doing well in economics. Our aerospace industry is doing wonderfully, et cetera.

People have often said: Do you have a plan? What is your plan? Well, the plan is easy. What you do is you tie your economic and education and financing all together in a bundle. What we have done is we have lowered the cost of education. We have improved a lot of the courses that are allowed and tied it directly to employment vacancies within the province. What we have done is we have meshed the two to create a skilled, talented, educated workforce that can have good, decent jobs.

You have two types of education systems. You can either go race to the top, and that means you have good, quality, skilled jobs paying high wages, or you can race to the bottom. If I have a choice I want to increase the size of the pie. I want to make the pie bigger. I want everyone to share in the fruits of our labours and the benefits of our province and grow the pie so that then we have a larger tax base to support the systems that we need but at the same time what you do is you have a better quality of life.

Now let us talk about taxes for a moment. Our friends opposite always comment on the wonderful tax system. I am proud to be part of a government that lowered the middle taxes 9 percent. That is considerable. We have also taken the property tax from \$250 to \$325 to now

\$400. Now, that is important; \$400 is a huge benefit for those on fixed incomes, for those seniors who are trying to stay in their own homes. So what we want to do is we want to continue to focus on keeping people in their homes, supporting them and looking after them. So I look at this taking a number of people off the tax rolls, the decreasing of 9 percent for the taxes and keeping seniors in their homes. That is very positive for quality of life. That is what our province stands for, good quality of life.

For the members opposite, we were also the government to remove the surtax for those people earning over a certain amount. The other thing that I like about taxes is that we are not a government for few, like the members opposite, we are a government for all. We have lowered corporate taxes, the first time they have been lowered since the Second World War. That is good for our economy. We have lowered the small business tax. Small business is the major driver of our economy. So that is good for our economy and our future. We have also looked at creating pools of investment, and that is wonderful.

So the tax plan, what we are doing is we are creating good, fair taxes. Now, sometimes people say, oh, we are taxed too much. They may be hearing from the members opposite who say, oh, we do not get value for our money. But I will take some numbers. If you are making \$50,000 you basically pay about \$10,000 worth of tax. Out of that \$10,000, the provincial government takes about \$3,800. That \$3,800 covers health care, education, roads, natural resources, environment, et cetera, \$3,800 for an average family to cover all those services.

How far does it go? A heart attack costs somewhere between \$20,000 and \$25,000 to treat a person for a heart attack where they have a heart attack and they go into a health care facility and they get rehabilitated. If that is the case, that is about eight years total tax bill for the average family. That is important to note. That means there is no money for education, universities, et cetera.

You have to look at what type of government you want to have. You want to have the access to health care. I know that

people are amazed at the cost of health care, but if you go to the States and you walk into an emergency room, it costs about \$5,000 a day in American to walk in. That is before major treatments. So that would make people go broke.

You hear stories from the States where people who are working, and even in our own country we have the province of Alberta, where people have to pay a health surtax, a surtax to pay for health. In the States, what happens is you have business, and when businesses sit there and say, oh, lower taxes, they do not comment that they get a huge benefit by having universal health care.

In the States many companies pay \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000 per year per employee for a health plan. Then what happens when the person retires? If they get sick, if they get diabetes or a heart attack, then they are cut off or their premiums go way up the roof.

I think it is much more fair and equitable to have universal health care rather than have people lose their houses, lose their investments, and lose their health care because they have left the work and they no longer have health care through their employers.

* (16:10)

Other things, it is important to look at what we have done as far education. We have done some wonderful things as far as education. I am proud of our Education Minister. I look at some of the things that have happened. I look at the early years programs where what we are doing is we are working to establish child care centres and parent care centres which will increase the literacy, nutrition, and parenting skills of young Manitobans and help support the mothers when they need it the most.

I look forward to the joining together of some school divisions. I look at the cost savings. As a former educator, I say: Should we put the money into schools and into education programs or into students, or should you put it into administration?

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

I thought it was interesting that the Minister of Education, I came to him with an idea which

was going to join the purchasing of all the computer learning systems. What we did was we got MERLIN to funnel all the education purchases through MERLIN. What happened? Well, it is interesting to note that, previously, the government was paying big money for it. We got a 60% discount by joining the purchasing of all school divisions, and that money can go to schools. That money can go to teachers' aides, teachers and actual education.

When we are arguing these issues, what we have to do is look at the kid, look at how the money should be spent. Now, the members opposite might say, oh, I am surprised at some of the honourable members who actually have learning centres in their programs and schools in their constituencies that our Government was trying to support.

We were looking at the education system and what we could do to help children. I find it very frustrating to sit there and say, when you have your No. 1 goal to look after the education of students, you look at that first. I am proud of the minister for trying to keep good quality education in our schools.

I also like to say it is really important to look at management as far as what we have done to support teachers. Teachers are the people who look after our students, and we have to look after them. We have supported them so that there is true bargaining in good faith. We believe that teachers are a good, strong partner in the education system. We believe in actually funding the pension liability. What that means is that the teachers can be assured, after working for 20, 30 years in our system looking after our students, that we will look after them, and there will be money there.

What we are also doing is putting money into infrastructure. The members opposite were pennywise and pound foolish when they stopped fixing the infrastructure. They need to look after infrastructure. Buildings were falling down. U of W, the front of it was falling down. I am really proud that we are actually putting money into schools.

I was proud to hear the announcement this morning on the Building on Strengths

fundraising campaign for the University of Manitoba. It was neat to hear that this Government contributed \$50 million in matching funds for capital renovations at the U of M. We had criticism, negativity from the members opposite. I am pleased to hear today that so far the Building on Strengths campaign has raised a total of \$132 million towards the goal of \$200 million. We can leverage. Our \$50 million helped to initiate this project and is raising almost \$200 million towards needed capital infrastructure at the U of M.

We are also working in the U of W, Brandon University to make critical infrastructure needs, along with other school divisions. So that is all very, very important, and it is important to look at.

Let us talk about environment. I am proud of our Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin), who has done a number of initiatives that will make a difference in the long term. I look at the hazardous waste system where he has now set up a system where we are going to have expanded disposal of hazardous waste within the province and within the city. We have expanded recycling, and I think recycling is very, very important. We are looking at the flood prevention so that we will not have to suffer a tragedy if there is another huge flood.

I look at the Livestock Stewardship Panel. What this will do is, prior to our Government taking power, we had total uncontrolled hog development, hog developments which will hurt our environment, which will hurt our future, and we need clean water. We do not want to have a Walkerton happening within Manitoba. The Livestock Stewardship program will increase inspection of manure storage facilities. We are also improving the groundwater maps. We are expanding the role of the technical review agency so that we know where expansion of agriculture can take place on a sustainable basis. We are also improving the planning by-laws. We are also expanding the amount of planning districts that we have in the province so that we have legitimate sustainable development in our agricultural industry. We must plan not just for today but for the long term, and that becomes important.

I think it is incumbent upon us to look at what type of society we want and where we are

going. I think it is important to look at having a steady, good, surefooted method to move forward. That is very important.

Now as a city MLA, I am particularly impressed with how we have dealt with topics such as Neighbourhoods Alive!. What happens is that we had a city whose core was deteriorating. It was falling apart. People were afraid to go downtown. It was becoming an empty shell. That hurts us two ways: one, it decreases tourism; two, it decreases the tax base on which all of us have to rely on services that are necessary for our city. I am pleased that we are working with the City. I say with the City, in partnership with housing agencies to set up a number of programs, the housing programs, where what we are doing is allowing people to take back their neighbourhoods, and by "take back their neighbourhoods," that is called the physical take back of their neighbourhoods, fixing up the houses, fixing up the buildings, cleaning up the area. We are also fixing up and helping support people by giving them a hand up. We are providing more job training. We are providing Lighthouses where kids can go.

The previous government kept on saying more enforcement, more beating on them, more cops, thank you very much. What we are doing is we are saying we want to create alternatives. We want to provide good, clear alternatives for kids to keep out of trouble. That is important. You want to do prevention, not punishment.

An Honourable Member: How do you keep the Tories out of trouble?

Mr. Rondeau: Well, keeping Tories out of trouble is one of the ways of keeping people out of jail. Anyhow, the Lighthouses will keep kids busy. Busy kids are good kids, and that is how I go at it. I believe in it.

The important part in the history is that you want to keep kids active, busy and in legitimate activities, and then they are okay. I used to coach a senior men's volleyball team out of the core of Winnipeg. There would be about 30 kids that would play volleyball three times a week. These kids that played volleyball, there were 30 kids, and those kids helped support each other, they

helped rely on each other, and they kept busy. They were not in trouble.

Now, I look at that group and there are some people with their masters of environmental studies, there are some people who are teachers, there are some cops, and what they have done is they help support each other by keeping those kids busy, keeping them focussed on positive achievements. They were able to move far ahead.

I am really proud of those guys, because they have made huge accomplishments. This group of Aboriginal athletes represented this province time and time again in volleyball competitions and won the provincial tournament a number of times, but, more importantly, they became a wonderful group that kept them out of trouble. I think this Government is doing the right thing by taking Lighthouses and making that a positive system to keep kids out of problems and with good role models.

* (16:20)

The Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative is also important by giving people a place to go and support to live. I think that is important. So what we have, we want to have a system where all the people are included. We want a government that governs for all, not just the few. I look at some of the things that have happened in the past like the MTS. The MTS was really interesting to see, because not only did the Government sell it, when they said do not worry about your rates, they will not go up, well, they have almost doubled.

I looked at it and I said, well, who got the money here? Where were all the benefits for selling MTS? Well, what happened is if the previous Crown corporation doubled rates, there would have been money for development. Where would the money have gone? Would it have gone to Bell Canada? Would it have gone to the few shareholders or the board? Would it have gone to its new employees? One must question sometimes of how certain people got to be on the board of the company that sold MTS.

In fact, one must question how the hiring practices of Wellington as far as having certain members leave this Chamber and become

employed right upon their resignation. I think it is important to say: Who got the money? Was it to the benefit of all Manitobans to take this company and sell it for a quarter of what it is worth now, or was it to the benefit of a small group of people who bought shares? The small group of people benefited. All of us are now paying. We are all paying big time. I look at my telephone bill, and it is astounding.

So I think what has to happen is we have to use our Crown corporations for the benefit of all. All of us, not the small group of people who made lots of money as shareholders, all of us are paying them now. They always keep on talking about return on investment. We as Manitobans paid for that company. We as Manitobans built that company over almost a hundred years. When it was sold, it now goes to shareholders, now mostly to Bell Canada, and that scares me, because now they are exporting the money, next the jobs. So not only are we going to pay higher rates but we lost all the benefits.

Now when you are talking about the future of Manitoba, you are talking internet, you are talking high internet connectivity systems. We do not have the method of delivering them, so a lot of our communities in the North, in rural Manitoba do not have the support.

We look at how we use hydro and people say, oh, it is wrong to equalize rates. I cannot believe that the members opposite fought us and spoke against equalizing hydro rates. They wanted us to put it to the Public Utilities Board. What is funny about it is we wanted to equalize rates. They were fighting against supporting their own constituents. They were fighting against lowering the rates, and they say: Well, why would you want to lower the rates? Well, what they did was they sold without any support. They sold MTS. What we tried to do is equalize rates so that all Manitobans benefit equally from having a wonderful Crown corporation like Manitoba Hydro.

Manitoba Hydro is also doing some wonderful things. They have just announced great programs that are in alternate energy sources. Myself, I have just built a house, and we installed a geothermal heat system. That is heat coming out of the ground, and so we are

taking energy from the ground rather than burning resources that could be consumed. Rather than consume our natural resources, it is important to use renewable resources. We are looking at wind power. We are looking at how we can support public buildings in using these new energy sources to save money, save energy, et cetera.

What can we do with this saved energy? Well, what we can do is we can market it, either within our province to increase economic expansion or we can use it so that we can sell it and make money and then invest in our province that way.

So Hydro becomes a wonderful thing—this year, almost \$400 million worth of exports. That is a lot of money. In the future, with the Kyoto accords and some other things that are coming down, hydro-electric energy becomes more and more important. I think what we have is the next oil wells of the future, and that is our hydro. I think that this is the party that continues to build hydro, continues to build our future.

That becomes important because we always have to plan for the future, and it is nice to see that hydro is being used as a tool for economic development. It is also a wonderful company that will benefit all of us in the future. I am pleased that we passed legislation where no future government can sell Hydro without a public mandate, and I think that is critical, because it belongs to all of us and it should benefit all of us.

In closing, I look at the Leader of the Opposition's (Mr. Murray) motion, and I look at what we have done. We have equalized Hydro rates. We have long-term strategies for economic growth which is very important. We have meaningful tax reductions, and they are long-term surefooted tax reductions. We have an economy which is performing the best or second best in Canada, and we have building cranes all across Canada. We have students in university and college all over the place in this province, and it is wonderful. We have good environmental policies that are being implemented now. We are addressing the health care, and I look at it now, and I think we have a wonderful spirit of optimism.

What we have to do is say: What type of province do we want? Do we want a province that looks to the future, looks optimistically and works with people to stay and build this province and build it strongly. Do we want that or do we want a province that governs for the few, that benefits the few rich individuals? I say that Manitobans are caring. We are the No. 1 province for volunteerism of younger people. We are the No. 2 province in the country for volunteering of older people. We are the No. 1 donors to legitimate charities and important work. We care.

So I think what we want is a province that has caring, compassionate people that help each other and build each other to have a great future. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting our Government's Throne Speech.

Mr. Jim Penner (Steinbach): Well, I too want to welcome the interns and the pages; Allison Abra, John Crookshanks, Julie Goertzen, Gregory Kristalovich, Ciara Shattuck, Matthew Enns. Just a great bunch again. We are so pleased to have them here, and it is good to be back with the rest of the clerks, the Speaker and the staff. I welcome them.

I want to put a few things on the record in reply to the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, and that is because I have a concern for all Manitobans. The previous speaker was saying that anything that had happened good or positive was to the benefit of one party. I think we have to remember that all Manitobans are governed by this Government, this Parliament and that we should be recognizing all Manitobans.

The Speech from the Throne references the devastating activity by terrorists on September 11 of this year. The scenes of devastation televised to the whole world will be forever burned into our minds. This devastation and loss of life was an attack on peaceful co-existence between people in our country who are of different ethnic backgrounds, different religious persuasions, different social values and different racial origins. The perpetrators of this crime misunderstood what a civilized relationship is. They miscalculated the determination of the free world. They lit the fires of war. They had not learned the lessons of history. Violence and war

results in unnecessary death and destruction. It only deepens the resolve of the free world, and on both sides innocent people are killed, maimed and placed into situations of fear.

At a time like this, other governments are putting on record a determination to defend their people from destruction and mindless terrorism. Above all, governments are fighting the element of fear. Fear has affected our economics. It has affected our lifestyle, and it has taken away some of our freedoms. At a time like this, the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba put forward a resolution that needed unanimous consent. The resolution would send a clear signal from Manitobans to the federal Government of Canada and the U.S. that we were on-side to protect the freedoms, freedoms that we fought for in previous wars and commemorated on November 11.

* (16:30)

The world changed after September 11, and some people are still in mourning. Many have had their lives affected, lost relatives, and many people just disappeared on that Tuesday morning. Our feelings of security changed. However, the motion that was put forward on November 14 by the Official Opposition in this House was talked out.

We recognize that terrorism is a global issue, and that must be combated by all freedom-loving nations. We recognize that the United States of America was the target of a horrifying and deadly terrorist attack. We recognize that thousands of people from 60 countries lost their lives. We recognize that there were many selfless citizens donated to disaster relief funds and volunteered their services in the relief effort. We recognize that these terrorist attacks were engineered by a small radical faction, who do not represent the Muslim faith or the Middle Eastern population as a whole.

We recognize that the Legislative Assembly condemns discrimination and racist attacks in any form. The President of the United States has vowed to find those responsible. The Prime Minister of Canada has publicly committed the Government of Canada's support, and we resolved hopefully that this Assembly would

unanimously send a letter of support to the federal Government of Canada and to the President of the United States. Instead, petty politics had their way.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the whole world is changing constantly. In fact, it is now frequently said that constant is the only change. We are told that info-technology doubles every six months. In many respects, we have accepted this change, but in this age we have accepted that change may be the only constant. But the Doer government has not changed. After the Throne Speech outlining the Doer government's plans for Manitoba we clearly see the NDP philosophy of the previous Pawley government is still alive and well. Nothing has changed for them. They have blindly bought into a tax-and-spend way of governing. We see what they did to our children and grandchildren in the previous government, giving us a huge debt in 1988. Mind you, we have seen this from other NDP governments in Canada. We saw it happening in B.C.

So, while the world around us is filled with change, our present government is firmly entrenched in its blind ideology. I call it blind because they are not open to changes that are happening throughout the industrialized world. I will make further references to that throughout my speech. Countries that have been in serious economic difficulty like Ireland and New Zealand have found that their citizens could bring prosperity to their nations when they were allowed to manage their own money. Tax cuts in those countries actually increased the revenue to government coffers. This is one case where less is more. People who want to read about it could read the book written by Sherry Cooper on taxes.

Tax cuts created jobs. Tax cuts caused nations to prosper. Even Ontario in uncertain economic conditions is showing wise leadership at this time by keeping their tax cuts on program. Federally I do not know. The NDP still do not get the need for change in security laws. We are wondering what the Province will eventually do with Bill 2. I hope that the federal and provincial people getting together this weekend do not demonstrate by burning the flag.

Our Doer government has not seen the light. They avoid change and stick to their roots by

putting socialistic spending favouring their union leaders, as outlined in Bill 44, and even negating criminal behaviour on the picket line. The Doer government has been able to spend or waste every nickel available to them, every nickel that once belonged to a taxpayer. They have spent almost \$1 billion more than the previous Conservative government two years ago. They have spent almost \$1 billion more than ever was spent before in the previous government, and what have they got to show for it? Health care has deteriorated. Oh yes, they have renamed hallway medicine to avenue medicine. When people awaiting urgent treatment have died in waiting rooms instead of hallways, at least in the hallways they got treatment.

They have renamed frozen food to rethermalized food, and then they actually bought the facility where the food is prepared. Obviously, it was not as bad as they told the electorate, and we do not hear complaints today. Furthermore, we do not go to the hospital for fancy meals. I do not think. The hospitals need nutrition and safety in their food program. Why are there no complaints about the food today? Maybe the union has changed things. Why did taxpayers get their money invested in the central kitchen? Why do the taxpayers have their money invested in the Pan Am Clinic? These are difficult questions.

But there was a promise about doing something about prostate cancer. I remember in the Throne Speech there was a statement made, and I quote: In the past two years waiting lists have been reduced for, and then blank, blank, prostate cancer treatment. Then on the 14th, the day after the Throne Speech, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) says: Waiting lists have been reduced dramatically for breast and prostate cancer treatment and bone density testing. Well, yesterday I visited with two doctors, and they totally disagreed with that. They said that the province of Manitoba should ideally have, if it was average in North America, 22 urologists. We have 12. Four of these are also oncologists. By the end of next January, this coming January, we will only have 10 urologists in Manitoba. That means we would be 12 short. Over 50 percent would be missing. These 2 doctors assured me that there were more people waiting and that there was a lack of consultation between the administration and the caregivers.

In the year 2001, prostate cancer will account for one-quarter of all cancer diagnosis among Canadian men. One in nine Canadian men will develop prostate cancer during his lifetime, and one in twenty-seven will die for it. Fifty-eight hundred Manitoba men currently suffer from prostate cancer. The Canadian Cancer Society predicts that there will be seven hundred and eighty new cases of prostate cancer diagnosed in Manitoba in the year 2001 alone.

On September 13, 1999, the provincial government promised to establish a prostate cancer screening program within their first year in government and has thus far failed to do so. That was probably just as ridiculous as the promise to solve hallway medicine in six months with \$15 million.

On July 18, 2000, the Minister of Health appeared to renege on his election promise when he stated, and I quote: "With respect to prostate screening, prostate screening is available from physicians for individuals. The concept of an overall province-wide prostate screening program is still being reviewed."

That is quite a switch. The men affected by this devastating disease, and their families, deserve to be informed about what the status of the proposed prostate cancer screening program is. I trust that this Legislature will address that very serious issue.

* (16:40)

In the same vein, who is driving the elimination of school boards and the amalgamation of school divisions? Is it the citizens of Manitoba? I think not. Is it the teachers' union? Maybe. Merging, says former councillor Al Golden, creates more problems than it saves and increases cost. If the quality of education deteriorates, if the control of tax dollars is lost for a small percentage of the education budget, then we are sacrificing common sense for ideology. The rainy day fund can be raped and plundered by unscrupulous spending.

Good management reduces spending. Bad management increases spending. We do not expect the government of the day to change their

spending habits and change to a program of good management. In fact, how can a government of anti-business practice demonstrate management skills? I do not think they can.

As in the two previous throne speeches written by the NDP, they are more notable by what they did not say. Agriculture is facing huge challenges, but the present government is not willing to change to accommodate these challenges. So we are losing towns. We are losing services. We are losing farms. The loss of the farming is significant because farming is the biggest industry in Manitoba.

Now we are being challenged with eco-law in regard to pesticide spraying. It more or less would indicate that, if I had a mosquito sprayer in my garage at home, I might have to get supervision in order to use it. I do not think we have thought these things through properly. We have seen this happen before, where there have been unenforceable laws and impractical laws because of a lack of experience.

Turning to business, business is the engine that drives the economy. I have that kind of statement even from the former Premier, Mr. Schreyer. But business got nary a mention in the Speech from the Throne. So the Government is true to its roots.

The previous speaker indicated that there was some progress in investment in Manitoba. He did not mention Brett-Young Seeds planning to move to Alberta. He did not mention Strongco engineering going to Alberta. He did not mention the jobs lost at Buhler. He did not mention the Isobord Enterprises job losses. He did not mention Schneider corporation cancelling their \$125-million expansion. He did not mention Medichair leaving. He did not mention Moffat. He did not mention Simmons. He did not mention Melrose Coffee.

Yesterday we read in the papers that 40 jobs were disappearing in Manitoba on Corus industries, WTN. Yesterday we read in the newspapers about 500 jobs leaving from New Flyer, so we are very selective, I guess, on what we want to see. On March 1, 2001, there was an article in the paper that quoted some of the

chamber people as saying that over 50 percent of businesses are considering leaving Manitoba. They demand tax relief.

Well, I have had some personal experience with people working at Buhler. Some of my friends are employees there. I have a lot of friends working at Granny's Poultry, which was unionized without a vote. It seems to me that when we talk about all Manitobans, we exclude employers. We exclude investors, and we exclude people who are willing to risk capital. We exclude people who are willing to manage. We are talking about all Manitobans need to be benefited, but where is the all-Manitoba thing?

What is the ability to attracting capital of this Government? We have to attract capital. What are the spin-offs of attracting capital? Definitely economic growth is a benefit for the province. It increases the tax revenues, and it makes it possible for us to properly fund education, health and social programs.

Also, the spin-off of attracting capital is that youth will stay when there are opportunities for them to move up in the system. We so much would like our teenaged grandchildren to stay in the province. At this point, they are not thinking about that. We feel that, when we attract capital, we increase competition very often in our communities. This keeps business sharp, and this makes sure that consumers get a fair deal. Without attracting capital to the province and if capital is leaving the province, then the competition element gets weaker. When the competition weakens, then we have a domination in the industry, and we have monopolies.

If we want to be helping the cause of our businesses, we need to bring people into the province. We have seen businesses in Altona and Winkler and Steinbach offering jobs to people in foreign countries, and that stimulates immigration. I have not seen one thing done by the current provincial government that would stimulate immigration. It has been businesses that have stimulated immigration, not government.

Also, when we attract capital and attract people to invest in capital, it changes lifestyles. I

was brought up in a family business. It was just mom and dad and three kids. All of us had to work every day. We lived in a converted chicken barn behind a little grocery store that was only 20 feet by 30 feet, but that was a family business just like a family farm, and family businesses are a lifestyle. We destroy that lifestyle, I think, when we discourage people from investing.

Now, MTS was brought up before. What a hokey statement. The example of how to run a business is MTS. The Premier of this province just recently on a Tuesday night at the Convention Centre here in Manitoba presented MTS with a Business of the Year award. This was a tremendous honour. Now, I do not think the Premier enjoyed doing that, but I can tell you—and I watched him; I was sitting at a table right close—he realizes that if we had kept MTS we would have not been competitive. MTS is a technological company in a wild world of competition, and governments are not good managers of business. MTS needed to be run as a business, not as a government enterprise.

I am very thankful that the previous government had the foresight to cause this industry to survive and grow and not only to survive and grow and pay taxes, but look at it now. It is a leading business in Manitoba. It is a leading employer. When you attract capital, you also attract expansion of existing businesses. Now, members opposite may not realize this, but 80 percent of growth, economic growth, comes from business expansion. It does not come from new business. It comes from business expansion. Over 80 percent of employees are employed in small companies, under 50 people.

So if we want to make this province grow, we need to allow people to keep some of the money that they have earned so they can invest it and reinvest it. I think, in the long run, that would benefit the province's coffers, as well. If we attract capital for investment, inevitably there will be consumer benefits. One little community in my riding, the community of Grunthal, lost its only grocery store, but then the community got together and many people putting money into it have caused it to reopen. I was able to cut the ribbon on a reopening, and although the farming community is struggling, this town is willing to risk capital, unlike people who are living off of the avail of taxpayers.

So the family farm, farming families form a strong society, a strong base. It has long been recognized by sociologists that the family is the basis for society, and we will attract people willing to develop their homes and families in this province if there is an opportunity to invest without being taxed to death. It seems ridiculous that we would have such high taxes that when our universities train people they are training them for export.

* (16:50)

I would like to see us compete with other provinces, but first we must be competitive with taxes. Allowing people to keep more of their own money that they earn has been shown to increase revenue to government coffers. Only short-sighted people not familiar with good management practices and good investment opportunities and having outdated thinking would not recognize the opportunities we are missing on tax-and-spend regimes.

The business of health, the need for private investment has been recognized by many jurisdictions, but instead of conserving our tax dollars, this Government bought the central kitchen, bought the Pan Am Clinic, and denies health care through private clinics. Private professionals are thriving in countries like Sweden and France, where it has proven to be a lifeline for waiting lists and for proper care for all of the citizens of those countries.

Governments have been traditionally noted for their poor management capability, but we have reached new lows in this province. The Throne Speech mentions, and I quote: "Building together to strengthen the services all citizens depend on." What does "together" mean? When the government of the day has shown an anti-business bias, who is the other party mentioned in "together"? Well, somebody answered the question for me. They felt it was the trade union bosses. So it is the Government and the trade union bosses that are the "together."

Then the Throne Speech talks about a better future for our children through access to education. By the way, catering to trade union bosses has not always seemingly been very favourable to the employees. The employees

deserve better than they often get in those settlements. The Throne Speech talks about a better future for our children through access to education. Well, that is a noble thought, but there is no respect from this Government for diversity. Home schooling has been shown to produce better-than-average results, but as we have seen in the first two years of this Doer government—I have had a lot of phone calls from home schoolers who feel intimidated—private schools, some of which are faith-based, have felt threatened in that they wonder about their long-term funding.

We should look at the quality of education and the product of these schools, and we should really look at the savings to the taxpayer. If a student in Grade 11 costs \$6,000 to the taxpayer in Beausejour, and that student decides to go to MBCI on Henderson Highway, that student's grant is \$3,000 from the Government. That means that the taxpayers, through using the private school system, save half the tuition. The formula is half the tuition it would cost in any other part of the province. So a student going to Providence, a student going to SBCI, a student going to MBCI, these private colleges save the taxpayers money because they work off of donations, and the quality of education is unquestionably good.

I can cite statistics showing that in post-graduate schools the students out of the private schools are in the top 25 percent of the post-graduate schools. So I think that we are missing the boat when we intimidate the private schools by saying that maybe we should not finance them. Giving them half of the normal amount of money is a real saving to the taxpayer.

Maybe some of these schools are not all that well unionized, but the teachers choose to teach there, and they should be respected for that. I do not know. What is wrong with choice? My ancestors came to Canada because they were offered freedoms: freedom to teach their own kids, freedom to pray in school, freedom to practice their faith. Now we are wondering about the future of the Hebrew, Catholic, Protestant and other schools. There is no evidence that these alternative forms of education create a disadvantage when these young people go on to higher education. In fact, most of them do better.

Then we talk about stewardship of our resources. Stewardship of our resources is also mentioned in relation to sustainable growth in the Throne Speech. What is stewardship? I think that stewardship is good management. Stewardship is somewhat different than ownership. I learned very quickly in Russia, where it was illegal to own things, to talk when they wanted me to talk about business. I always talked about stewardship, not ownership, because ownership was against the law. A steward wisely manages resources available to her or him. Ownership is like buying the Pan Am Clinic. We can all be good stewards if we set our minds to do that, whether it is our time that we give, our talents that we share, or access to capital. Everybody is going to leave this Earth with nothing, so ownership can be kind of an ego trip that does not strengthen our communities and province. Whether a person is in business using finance money, whether a person is in government, I think stewardship is really acting responsibly if it is practised well.

Responsible people care about sustainable growth. Ownership of the RHA's central kitchen and clinics does not seem to serve a common good. We do not need to be control freaks to grow the benefits to citizens of this fine province. Control does not mean stewardship. Control does not ensure stewardship. I would really like to see our Government, all 57 people in this House, really understand stewardship, because we are responsible to all Manitobans in this province.

Security measures in a democratic society should be balanced to respect the rights of the majority who are law-abiding citizens. One of the ridiculous things that a government did was put in a registration law for rifles. Well, I registered my rifles, and I still have not heard whether or not—[interjection] It is not this Government, and I recognize that it is not this Government, but I want to draw a parallel. Why do we make laws that kick people in the behind who are law-abiding citizens? After all, the federal government imposed a law on us to register our guns. I was happy to take the courses and to get the licence and to register my guns. But, really, that is not going to change any crime rate, because people who want to commit

a crime will do so whether I register my guns or not.

So, in this security anti-terrorist bill that we are looking at, I think it is Bill 2, we should be careful not to target the law-abiding people who look after this province, look after their families. We should not cripple them and handicap them with laws that are ridiculous, and we should not make laws that we cannot enforce. We have seen this in our own province, where frequent public announcements about fighting crime have been accompanied by an above-average growth in crime. These bold, ineffective announcements, which are politically motivated, do not deter criminals. Security for our province and country requires common-sense measures targeting the perpetrators of crime and the environments that spawn criminal activity.

The Throne Speech speaks of advantages in our province that will protect us from the economic downturns in North America. Well, I believe we have advantages, particularly because we do not live in a boom-or-bust province. However, the Doer government wants to take credit for this, and that is kind of preposterous.

Talking about low hydro rates, hydro is a natural resource of Manitoba, and no government can take credit for low hydro rates. The water that flows into those rivers and lakes is really important. Otherwise, we would have to say that Alberta, with its lower-than-average fuel rates, was a government blessing. Well, it was not the government of Alberta that put the oil there, and it is not the governments of Manitoba that made the rivers that we use for hydro.

* (17:00)

It is the skills and resourcefulness of our people that have grown out of this challenging four-season climate to challenge in trade environment in the global economy, a dedication to family values and goal-oriented stewardship. This did not start two years ago. The progressive thinking of Manitobans was encouraged under governments other than the NDP and survived the NDP regimes.

Then the speech talks about laying foundations for future growth. If the action of the Government's negative behaviour towards

new growth was not so ridiculous, we could laugh at this statement, but it is not laughable. It is scary. Those of us with children and grandchildren are deeply concerned about growth which will sustain our ability to provide opportunities for our young people.

When we heard that the Government wants to revitalize our communities, we suddenly became aware of how little they understood about the communities. They do not even know that we are out there. The communities that are being challenged are those that rely on healthy farming industry, and this Government will not revitalize those communities. In fact, when they organized the Cabinet, the rural development portfolio actually disappeared. So the fact that rural development disappeared when the Doer government was elected shows a lack of understanding.

Agriculture is still the biggest business in Manitoba. Mining is second to agriculture, and mining also has tremendous opportunities and challenges. I would suggest that in our concerns for the workplace safety, the mining industry has performed marvellously. Although it is more dangerous to work on a farm, and most other industries are more dangerous, the mining industry is the leader in occupational health and safety. This pattern is consistent across Canada and the world. Mining has the lowest accident rate of any industrial sector in Manitoba. The lost-time injury rate has steadily declined over the past 10 years and is now at a level that is lower than the average workplace.

I am holding in my hand a sheet of paper that indicates that in 1989, 8.8 man days were lost per 1000 workers. That 8.8 figure by the year 2000 has been reduced to 2.3. That is the lowest loss of man hours in any industry in Manitoba. Business recognizes that good safety is simply good business. Industries do not have to be legislated, regulated and forced into providing safe workplaces for their employees. There has been a shift in the safety culture of the workplace. Initiatives work best when they come from within an organization, not forced upon the organization from the outside.

Workplace safety and health is not just a mining industry issue. Industry wants

sustainable business, job creation, investment. Legislation, regulation and police in the workplace may hinder the ability of the industry to continue to do its business. While safety is of utmost importance, any initiatives should be subject to a discussion of factual information, and programs or policies should be implemented only where there is a difference. There should be consensus from inside the industry, management and employees to implement and carry out safety programs. Employees need to know that they are part of the safety program, not just subject to it.

I was discussing this with some people in the mining business a few weeks ago. They said that in the past three years there have been half a billion dollars of new long-term capital investment in the mining industry in Manitoba. But Canada is one of the richest, the highest-taxed regions in the world. In one year alone, Inco, the plant in Thompson, paid \$54 million in taxes. Manitoba's mining industry faces the third highest tax load in 2001 while in 1997 Manitoba was in the middle of the pack. Manitoba is quickly losing competitive ground as the other provinces reduce the tax burden. Manitoba's industry may soon face the highest tax burden in Canada. I am even aware of the fact that iron ore and various types of ore have been shipped into the province instead of mined here for processing here because the cost of mining under this tax regime is prohibitive.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that I will have to support the amendments to the Throne Speech, and, hopefully, this will be taken into consideration in future throne speeches. I thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples): First of all, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join in this Throne Speech debate. I would like to put a few statements on the record, but before I do that, I would also like to welcome our new pages, the interns and staff who will be assisting us as we go about our legislative duties. I also want to thank the residents of The Maples, the constituency that I represent, for their continued support and confidence in me.

Up in the gallery is a good friend of mine, I hope he is still there, who helped me a lot during the 1999 election campaign. He comes from

Ontario. I would like to welcome him to Winnipeg. His name is Ian Bawden. That is Ian up there in the gallery.

Mr. Speaker, the day before yesterday, one particular phrase from the Lieutenant-Governor's speech echoed in my mind. I was at the Seven Oaks, in the constituency, together with the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), the MLA for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) and our Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) as he unveiled a new city scanner and computerized virology equipment. The phrase that resonated was, and I quote: "maintaining critical investment in health, education and security."

There I was, seeing one of the many results of our Government's critical investment in health. The city scanner at Seven Oaks is certainly a critical investment. Some 260 scans will be performed there a month, scans which are used to diagnose life-threatening conditions, such as spinal cord and head injuries and diseases of the liver, lungs, kidneys and other abdominal organs.

Exactly one year ago to this very day, I was at Seven Oaks Hospital, as well. The occasion was the sod-turning ceremony for the \$7.4 million dialysis and oncology clinic. The clinic was part of the Manitoba Health's capital budget plan for 2000 and 2001. It was something that I proudly referred to in my response to the Speech from the Throne of last year. Now, one year later, we have the satisfaction of seeing that the construction is nearly complete and that the clinic will be opening its doors as scheduled at the beginning of the new year.

Again, here was another critical investment realized on track. I cannot refrain from noting that what a contrast this is to the penchant of the previous government for announcing capital funding, then cutting it, announcing it again during the next election, and then cutting it again, as the case was in the infamous Oakbank personal care home.

For me and my constituents, the Speech from the Throne is a reassurance that, despite the uncertain times, the tremors that continue to shake us, we have a government that we can trust and that we trust, a government that can be

trusted to move ahead in critical areas, to act on priorities of Manitobans just as it is in the case of the Seven Oaks Hospital.

Our slogan has been: Working hard today, preparing for tomorrow. Our Government has been living up to that slogan. That is why Manitobans can look into the coming months with a justified measure of calm and confidence. Some members opposite try to dismiss the Speech from the Throne as a laundry list or a collection of disjointed announcements, perhaps because the Tories have no vision of their own. They stubbornly fail to recognize vision when it is presented to them, because the Throne Speech was about our visions for Manitoba, a vision that we share with the vast majority of Manitobans.

* (17:10)

It is about putting health care on the sustainable track. It is about making our colleges and universities and university education more accessible for the sake of our children and our economy. It is about maintaining a resilient economy. It is about building on Manitoba's many advantages. That is our vision.

The Lieutenant-Governor's speech was about our plans for realizing that vision. If the Tories see these plans as disjointed announcements, perhaps they saw last week's game between the Bombers and the Tiger-Cats, as just a bunch of guys out a for casual stroll on a nice fall afternoon.

As I talk with my constituents, what I am aware of is a broad sense of trust in our Government's vision and our ability to deliver on it. Take health care, for instance. They appreciate the strides that we have made in health care. They know that despite spiralling demands and costs, we have brought Manitoba down from the highest per capital spending on health in Canada to the fourth. They know we have opened up hundreds of new health care training spaces in our colleges and universities.

They can see the new clinic taking shape at Seven Oaks. On the other hand, they are also aware of the challenges in our system. They share, for instance, our Government's concern about dramatically increasing Pharmacare costs,

but at the same time, they trust that we will be doing our very best to address these concerns. Trust is what I see behind their comments in our education strategy.

My constituency, The Maples, is a predominantly young community, and as such, is very appreciative of the increased funding that we have been putting into our public schools. They appreciate that post-secondary education has been made more affordable for our children and has allowed them to expand their dreams. We did this while reducing the amount of education property tax. Each household pays with our 150 increase in education property tax credit, but when people talk to me on their doorstep, they also entrust me with their concerns about education spending and its effects on taxes. They trust us to find means to raise the quality of education without raising costs. They trust that we will work hard with the school board and local government to ease the burden on property owners. This is just what the Speech from the Throne promised our Government would do.

The Speech from the Throne provides reassurance to our constituents about our will and our capacity to deal with another area that turns to us for improvements, and that is neighbourhood security. I quote: "Your Government is committed to addressing security issues in our neighbourhood. Citizens need to feel a sense of ownership of their own communities."

The announcement in the speech that citizens patrol would be expanded and provided with new training and co-ordination support is especially welcome for residents in The Maples. The Maples Tenants Association is currently trying to organize foot patrol for our area. The association recognized that this is an excellent way of giving residents a sense of ownership of their own community and building a sense of security. The Lieutenant-Governor also announced that the Lighthouse program which keeps the school gyms and computer rooms open for evening activities would be expanded. This expansion will help address concerns my constituency has expressed about youth gangs, drug use among youth and late night disturbance from squealing car tires and the like. In fact, The

Maples can take some pride in this announcement because the decision to expand this program can be attributed to its success thus far, and perhaps none of the Lighthouses can be said to be more successful than the one that we have in The Maples.

At The Maples, we have the youth activity centre. Our Lighthouse centre is attracting more kids than we had planned or even hoped for. We are blessed with a vibrant Lighthouse co-ordinator, Devi Sharma Rocan, who was a recipient of this year's YWCA Women of Distinction Award for community and voluntary service. In addition to offering a range of recreational activities such as sports and art work, our Lighthouse program has a strong contingent of university student volunteers who mentor at-risk youth. It will soon be able to offer computer access and training thanks to our Government's sponsorship of the community connection program.

The Throne Speech noted that immigration to Manitoba last year was 24 percent higher than in 1999. This is a cause for optimism among the many new Canadian families in The Maples who are anxious that their relatives overseas have the opportunity to join them here and contribute to the Manitoba economy. In this connection, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Labour and Immigration (Ms. Barrett) and the splendid group of people she appointed this week to the Ethnocultural Advisory and Advocacy Council. Indeed, the 21-member council represents an impressive cross-section of Manitoba's cultural diversity. They bring a wealth of professional experience to advise and advocate government matters relating to ethnocultural affairs.

In closing, I would like to say that for my own part I will be doing all that I can to deserve the trust of my constituents in our Government's ability to move ahead in the critical areas of health, education and security. As our Premier (Mr. Doer) said at the conclusion of the previous session of the Legislature, we do not pledge perfection, but we promise to get up every day and work as hard as we can for the people of Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): It is a pleasure to rise to say a few words about the

Throne Speech. I must admit that it is not one of the more inspiring throne speeches that I have been sentenced to listen to. It was less than inspiring, I am afraid, and it does give me some cause for concern, so I will address some of the things that I feel that the Government should have addressed and perhaps should have given us more leadership on during their presentation of the Speech from the Throne.

First of all, I want to welcome our new pages to the Chamber and to their jobs. This is certainly, I am sure, an interesting moment in their lives, and I hope that, after they have finished their tour as pages in this Chamber, they will feel that it has been worthwhile and not be disappointed by their experience, because this is, while imperfect, still one of the pillars of our democratic society.

One of the things I have always reminded myself of when a new session opens is that, to be able to serve the constituents of my area, it is certainly a privilege and an honour, but I always hope that all of us remember which is which once we are into the Chamber here and dealing with our responsibilities.

Certainly, before I deal with the Throne Speech I want to comment on what occurred during the first day of the debate when a motion was presented by this side of the House, to express unanimous support, we felt, on behalf of this Chamber to leaders of our country, to those in our armed forces who might be called upon to serve, and certainly some of them are, and most importantly, expressing our support to the leadership in our country to express our fellowship with our neighbours to the south and our horror at the events that happened on September 11.

*(17:20)

While I suppose it could be argued that the Government managed and the government benches managed to slide around this issue enough that the big percentage of the public will not have noticed, they actually, while they stood up and mouthed words of support, managed to talk this resolution out so that no unanimous motion was sent from this Chamber to Ottawa, to Washington and to the people of America and

the families that were so impacted by those events, events that in fact will leave their marks on the face of history in the world for a long time, a time that we cannot as yet predict.

So I am extremely disappointed, and I will try to make my remarks non-partisan as much as we tried to make the motion non-partisan. The fact was that I think we all missed an opportunity. I would like to remind my colleagues across the way that they should not always assume that there is a motive that would be necessarily embarrassing or a problem for them or us to put together a unanimous position.

Obviously, opposition is always a little bit skittish when the government of the day says: Well, let us hold hands and do this in an all-party way—a great way to smooth over the waters and get through some difficult policy decisions that they might be making. I would suggest that this was one of those situations that fell outside of those normal parameters.

My first intent would have been to have given the members of the Government, and their Premier in particular, a tongue lashing for having approached it in this manner, but frankly, after having thought about it, I think I make my remarks more in sorrow than in anger, because this was meant to be a unanimous expression of concern on behalf of the members of this Chamber, who represent all parts of this province, all walks of life, all races, all different endeavours that are represented in our province. I think we missed an opportunity and, Mr. Speaker, that was a sad moment in the history of this Legislature and one that, I hope, we will remember if we are ever presented with that type of a situation again.

The Speech from the Throne is probably going to be remembered more for what it did not say than for what it did. The Speech from the Throne, probably very interesting in the way it is crafted and put together because it, I would argue from a distance and from looking at the content and trying to discern what message the Government wanted to send out, that this Throne Speech was cleverly crafted not to disturb anyone, not to make anyone too concerned about any radical approaches the Government was going to take.

In so doing, what the writers of the Throne Speech did was probably inadvertent, because I know they did not want to leave this impression. They left the people of this province wondering: What really does the current administration intend to put in front of the public? What direction do they intend to take this province, or are they hoping they can continue on autopilot for a while and sort of ride out some of the bumps that are starting to show up in the road without having to make very much corrective action?

I suggest that is not going to happen, Mr. Speaker. We are, unfortunately, going into some difficult and uncharted waters for this province. What annoys me more than the hard decisions that government is going to have to make and that people in this province and country are going to have to make over the next six months, as a result of events that have overtaken us, what annoys me more is that there are many of the economic impacts that are being put forward as potential impacts on our economy, potential impacts on the Government.

It is all too convenient right now because of the acceleration of a series of events that have followed the September 11 tragedy, that that is far too convenient a target, or far too convenient of an excuse, to be a little more harsh. It is far too convenient to simply say that is the reason for decisions and problems, solutions to problems arising, that government has a convenient bogeyman to hide behind in terms of explaining what tough decisions they may be faced with over the next year or 18 months.

Hard as they may try, this Government does not have an income problem. This Government has an expenditure problem. Their track record since coming into government has been likened to kids in a candy store, never met a dollar they would not enjoy spending. There are all sorts of ways of describing what has happened, but we have seen revenues that we predicted would come into this province over a four-year span; they have found and expended them within a two-year span.

They inherited an economy, coming into the fall of 1999, that was probably more active, generating more revenues to government than—

not more than what has been seen in a decade, not more than what has been seen in two decades, frankly, not more than what has been seen in the last generation, probably a faster rate of growth in revenues to government than several generations have seen. Unless the Government realizes that or, I think more appropriately, unless the public realizes it and calls this Government to task about where they are spending these new-found revenues and, more importantly, how they are spending them, because if I were to think about it, even in the one area of responsibility that I have, the fact is that it is a pretty good example of what is happening across government. There are programs being developed, many of them well-intentioned, many of them being delivered in areas that need to be delivered, but it is always the easy job the first year to make the announcement—you know, six months funding, maybe three months funding by the time it gets in place before the end of the year.

Then the second year, the bureaucracy starts to take hold. They are charged with the responsibility of the administration and only naturally they are expected to make sure that it is delivered to the maximum. So the second year it becomes a pretty significant growth, and all of a sudden, by the time you get to the third year, you have a built-in base cost to the Budget of the province that is far, far greater than may have even been anticipated in the implementation of the program in the original year.

* (17:30)

When this Government is all of a sudden faced, as it is and will be, with potential constriction of revenues down the road, you can see that the Premier is already starting to talk to the media and the spinners are starting to come into action to try and dampen down some of the expenditures and dampen down some of the expectations that people have begun to have around how this Government can or could or should deliver programs across the province. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that as that unfolds, we will find more and more that some very difficult decisions are going to come to rest on this Government.

At the same time as they are facing this issue, they are dealing with the school

boundaries issues. One of the things that they are pointing to, you know, sort of like that old nursery rhyme where they stuck in their thumb and see what a good boy am I. In this case, they stuck their foot into the waters of amalgamation, but the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) making the pronouncement and supported by the Premier and his colleagues saying: Well, you know, there are \$10 million worth of savings in the amalgamations that have been put in place.

I will be, and I am sure an awful lot of trustees and an awful lot of parents will be looking to see where that \$10 million is and where it is going to go. If you are going to say that there are \$10 million worth of savings, if you are going to increase the budget of the Department of Education for K to 12 across the province, is it going to be increased to reflect that? Are we going to see a stand-pat budget that says, well, there is \$10 million in there that is being saved so the school divisions are going to absorb it?

Already those school divisions, even those who are not being amalgamated, are starting to ask: Wait a minute. This looks a little bit more like a steel fist in a velvet glove, because, all of a sudden, we are talking about a percentage of administrative costs and that is a good place to start. Everybody hates administrative costs. If there is going to be \$10 million worth of administrative costs that will be saved, no one, to my knowledge, has indicated yet whether or not there are going to be priorities set and where dollars will be placed within the broader scope of the educational field.

What I fear is happening, Mr. Speaker, and I want to as clearly as possible put it on the record, that I believe that to some extent, this Government has put the political fix in, in terms of doing its amalgamations, because the Minister of Education—just to give you an example, he indicated in public forum: Well, any school division that has 2000 population, that that is probably a convenient size or an appropriate size. I think the word that they thought was appropriate was an appropriate size, and efficiency could be achieved at 2000 students or more.

Well, there does not seem to be any rhyme nor reason in terms of the imposition of the

boundaries that occur. There are still a lot of divisions out there who were not affected by the amalgamation who are hearing, and in fact, they would tell you that they are hearing from pretty good sources, that this is the first round, that there will be another round of amalgamation. I believe this is what some of the professionals in the field are saying. This is not an announcement. It is just sort of a whisper campaign. Do not worry. This is just the first round. There will be more amalgamations.

But let us look at where the amalgamations are and are not. It seems to me that you do not need to be a political wizard to know that the Government decided there were certain areas that it would be politically unpalatable for them to make changes, that they could live with the criticism that perhaps there were small divisions that should have been amalgamated.

In other areas, they know that it is unpopular with the public at large to have school elections that are uncontested, to have education tax issues that are blamed on the municipality, in fact, caused by the school divisions needing to pass additional requirements for local taxation to fund. These issues are less than popular in a number of areas. So they can say, on the one hand: Well, see what we did; we are going to generate \$10 million worth of savings over here, a number that I disagree with and I would challenge anybody to demonstrate that it is actually will be produced, because I had a fair degree of confidence in the work that was done by the Norrie commission. They did a lot of work to bring forward the recommendation. I did not buy it all, but the one thing they did say and the one thing they were fairly clear about was that there was only minimal amount of actual dollars that could be saved.

So the only way that you can actually, from that perspective, justify amalgamations is that you need to look at benefits to children, benefits to the classroom, benefits to facilities, benefits in materials, computerized programs, all the things that go with a larger, more broad-based tax base within individual communities or school divisions.

The fact is that this amalgamation will not deal, in the main, with the differences that show

up between school divisions, where there are school divisions with a modest tax rate and a good tax base, and school divisions with a high tax rate and a moderate or poor tax base, where cases where those two are being brought together this Government has left them to their own devices as to how they are going to smooth out that mill rate, how they are going to create a seamless administration. They have been left to their own resources to deal with those issues.

It seems to me that there is going to be a lot of angst in some of the school divisions that have been more prudent in their management of their budget. Regardless of their tax base, there are some school divisions out there who, frankly, have been very, very prudent in how they spend and how they tax, and, all of a sudden, they may well be the ones that are going to be punished. I would suppose it is quite fair to point out that one, in fact, may be Brandon School Division.

I would be interested to see whether the Minister of Education is able to find a way to sort of fund the shortfall that might occur as a result of a shortfall of Brandon School Division, or the result of increased pressure on the tax base. He certainly has the full support of the Premier and the Treasury bench. So I imagine that there are ways that he will be able to do that, and we will be waiting to see whether or not it is more upright, whether or not it is more transparent, and whether or not the people of this province, the taxpayers as a whole, but more particularly the taxpayers of the various school divisions, be it Brandon or others, whether or not they will in fact be protected in the impacts that may flow from the amalgamation.

Did I hear an agreement across the way there, that the minister might be able to fix this? No, I do not hear it.

As I said, the Throne Speech seems to me to be more famous for what it does not say than for what it does, and I have explained why I believe that there is a deliberate attempt to do that. One of the things that is, of course, very important to the area I represent is agriculture, and, to a huge degree, livestock-related agriculture. I would have wanted to have seen some indication of potential initiatives that would encourage the entrepreneurial aspect of our livestock

production in this province channelled for sure in the area that I represent, increasing demand and interest for hog production opportunity. Certainly, the killing plants, one of which falls in the area that I represent, need and must have a strong supply of continuous high-quality stock in order to be able to fill their markets and continue to grow their employment.

What did we get during this Throne Speech? As near as I can remember, what we got was some increased planning support. It did not mention it, really, in relationship to livestock operations, but that is one of the impacts that is probably going to be very evident very quickly; secondly, more regulatory control.

Now, if that regulatory control means that we are going to continue to set high standards, we will make sure that the standards are enforceable and practical in terms of dealing with livestock operation, particularly where there are large volumes of manure involved. Then I think the industry as a whole would be satisfied with that. I did not see anybody and, certainly, I did not find anything in the speech myself that would make me step out into the hall, or anywhere else in this province, and say: We know now that we should be expanding in this area. We know the Government wants us to expand in this area. The Government did not say whether they did or whether they did not. They just said: These are a couple of things that we think are going to happen.

* (17:40)

I have consistently said, Mr. Speaker, that since this Government came into office, one of the things that has been the most disheartening on this side of the House, and for me personally, is this harnessing of the enthusiasm, the harnessing of the entrepreneurial spirit, the encouragement for people to take pride and to move forward in developing their particular industry, whether it is livestock or manufacturing or any of the other areas, a myriad of areas, frankly, that this province has available to it.

That confidence has been somewhat eroded by this Government starting from day one, when they assumed responsibility for leadership in this

province and for governance of this province. I would suggest that they have begun deliberately or otherwise. I am sure that they would say they would never deliberately do that, and they do not want it to happen. I bet my morning donut on that.

Mr. Speaker, their approach to free enterprise, their approach to encouraging development, their approach to encouraging growth and expansion that we need to make the economy vibrant and to keep our young people here, to help pay for the schools, to help pay for the health of our population—we have got to have a government that encourages, a government that leads by attitude, leads with a good attitude rather than continues to put itself in a position. Individually, members of the front bench and others in this Government put themselves in a position of being lukewarm in terms of their response to people who want to put forward initiative, people who want to spend money in this province.

Well, I see I am getting one member to yawn over there, but maybe he was, I am sure he was simply covering up a smile because he knows I am right. Nevertheless, it seems to me that one of the concerns that—and you know, this relates to my theme, because this Throne Speech seemed to me to be somewhat designed to anesthetize the public and leave them so that they knew there was a Throne Speech, they knew the Chamber was sitting, but they did not necessarily pay too much attention. I think my local editor referred in one of his editorials to Manitoba politics being boring.

Well, boring might be beautiful in politics on occasion. I would even acknowledge that, but the fact is, you cannot be boring and show aggressive leadership and show a leadership quality that would make people confident to invest their monies in this province because they know it is a good place to be, and it is a good place to put those dollars for investment.

Manitoba is not blessed with huge amounts of capital wanting for a place to locate, because what has happened over the years, some of the venture capital that should have been invested in this province has, in fact, wandered off into other more lucrative markets. They have

invested in other markets in North America because, for various reasons, this province did not provide an attractive opportunity to them. You know, is it not interesting that, as I recall, one of the things that we said when we were in government was that changing the attitude in this province and the attitudinal approach of our entrepreneurs and our business people and our professionals, that attitude needed to be encouraged where they were confident, where they were prepared to go out and take on the world and provide quality services of whatever it is that they are doing and be confident that they can compete anywhere? This province can compete anywhere.

Is it not interesting that just in the last three weeks or so, and I do not have the headline with me, but it was recently identified at a conference right here in Winnipeg that the investment attitude, the confidence level of the population of this province has actually dropped? There is an attitude problem again developing in this province. This Government has to take that seriously, the attitude, the approach that people take. You only need to boil it down to your own approach, my own approach, for that matter. If I am confident that I can produce a product, if I am confident I can develop a company that can provide services, not just in my hamlet, not just in my town, not just in my city, not just in this country, there are entrepreneurs out there who will take this onto the world scene. We have a lot of them right now in this province who do, but we need more, and we need a leadership that will acknowledge that and will encourage it.

You know, the economic development policy of this Government seems to fall into one area, Mr. Speaker. The Premier talked loud and long and early in his mandate about improvement to the floodway. Agreed. There needs to be flood protection. There needs to be a development of a responsible and well-managed and well-thought-out flood protection in this province. That is a good thing.

He talks about Hydro and what a great opportunity we have in Hydro. You know, we have a Crown corporation and he stuffed it in our ear hard about how the Crowns in this province, particularly Hydro, should not be sold, that they are our oil. Sounds to me like a few

speeches that were given in here by Conservative members of the benches over the years, but, nevertheless, the Premier adopted that theme.

Then we had the Axworthy report, you know, the greeting of the world. It seems to me, and I say this. I admit that I am somewhat cynical about how it was that Mr. Axworthy developed that concept. I do not disagree with very much of what he said but, to tell you the truth, I admire somebody over there for probably thinking, you know, what a wonderful way to get somebody who has a name of some notoriety on the Canadian scene, even a bit on the national and international scene, to set up a situation so we can now talk about building a dam in Manitoba. We will save the environment. We are going to build a dam. That is good.

You have to recognize the strategy that seems to be unfolding here: public money for the floodway, a lot of it paid for by the feds; public money invested through Hydro. I mean, the debt is guaranteed by the taxpayer, so it is a pretty safe bet that if Hydro builds another dam, it will be my tax dollars and yours that will be guaranteeing the success of the sales at the very time when the Americans are looking around the world and they are saying that nothing is sacred anymore. We have now had an attack right in our backyard. Are we going to pin our economic future in getting our energy from somewhere outside of the boundaries? Maybe.

Then, of course, there is the renewal of downtown Winnipeg, something that no one on this side will argue with. Even members would recognize that there has been a lot of support from rural members who recognize the importance of the capital city of this province, the Capital Region, the importance of the economic engine that resides in the city here and its relationship with rural Manitoba and how important it is that both of them move forward. But the three economic engines of renewal that this Government is talking about—floodway, hydro, arena—and I am not for one minute going to be so naive as to allow anyone over there to tell the public and get away with it that this is an entirely private-sector driven entrepreneurial concept. There is a little over \$200 million worth of money that could be classified as public

money that is going to go into the support of that facility.

So this Government is so bereft of new ideas, it is so bereft of conceiving a plan to develop the opportunity in this province, that the only lever that it has been able to grapple with and to show to the public that it is prepared to pull, is the one of expenditure of public funds. I think, frankly, the members on the government benches should be embarrassed. There is so much more potential across this great province that requires only leadership from this Government. It requires some movement on the part of the Government to develop policies and legislative supports that would allow entrepreneurship to flourish and grow in this province, to come out from underneath the burden of taxation that this province has been fighting for the last two decades, to come out from under what I consider a mood issue, but more one of confidence and self-confidence and aggressiveness that is not being encouraged the way it should be in this province.

It is fine to talk about growth of education and encourage educational opportunity, and I would certainly want educational opportunity for every young person in this family of Manitoba, no matter where they live, no matter where they are resident, that they have an opportunity for an education. But in the end, aside from their personal development, that education is going to be their opportunity to step into the employment opportunities that are available around the world. Those employment opportunities are not just in Manitoba.

* (17:50)

Those employment opportunities, once you have the appropriate education, whether or not you are in the field you are educated in, certainly, the pattern of movement of educated young people across this province has been that they will go where the jobs are, and those jobs are not necessarily shown that they are going to be here in Manitoba. The growth in the types of jobs that a quality young person would seek out with the type of remuneration that they would expect is not growing at the rate that, I believe, it should be in this province, and that is directly on the head of this Government to deal with that.

We have had more announcements under Education and more announcements under Justice, under Family Services. We probably can stack the press releases about a foot high if we put them all together on just those three areas, but where is the job and initiative and development, that leadership that government needs to show, to encourage those types of young people with a quality education, that we are encouraging and we are paying for? We want them to succeed. But do we want them to succeed in Toronto and Calgary, or do we want them to succeed in Winnipeg and Brandon and Portage and Dauphin? That is where we want them to succeed: in Morden, Winkler, the golden triangle south of the city here. That is where we want people to feel that they are welcome, where the opportunity is for them to put down roots, to earn an income that has—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Cummings: Well, you know, the members are enjoying this a little bit across the way, I think. But let us remember one thing. The young educated entrepreneurial generation that is coming out into society now and over the next number of years, is going to be going into a world where it does not have the same type of approach to jobs and careers as many of us did 20 years ago, even 15, 10 years ago. They will be more fluid. They will change jobs. They will look for lifestyle. They will look at the salary and then they will look at what will be left for "me" to raise a family, to establish property ownership of my own, to invest, to even pay for future retirement plans. More and more of them will be in self-generated retirement plans because they will be on contracts. They will not necessarily be lifetime employees of a single organization. Predictions that they will probably change careers—you know, I think when I was young, they told me I would change my career probably three, four, five times before I retired. None of that included politics, of course, but the fact is, the current generation will probably change jobs upwards of ten times, and think nothing of it.

So, as they go through the educational system that we are building, and that we are encouraging them to take part in, for goodness sake, do something more than what is

demonstrated in the Throne Speech, that show us that you have some ability to lead, direct and encourage, and make this a place where they want to stay and work.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is, indeed, a pleasure once again to rise to speak on the Throne Speech. This is my third opportunity to do so and many more to come, I hope. Indeed, it is a pleasure in that, once again, I feel the Government has done a fine job putting together a very constructive, very forward-thinking speech, despite the fact we are entering into some tough economic times.

That has not been a discouragement to this Government, I will tell you that. We are quite determined to continue to move forward, just as we did when economic times were good. I think our Cabinet is doing a fine job and I know that our Finance Minister (Mr. Selinger) is doing everything in his power to make sure the Budget we put forward is balanced, and that we continue to struggle with the recession according to sound socialist, economic principles. We do not necessarily believe the way to go is to just cut taxes and throw it open to the marketplace and hope for the best, that the business community is going to come out in force and drive the economic engine, which seems to be the Conservative approach to things here.

Rather, this Government has a constructive approach toward something like this. We are determined to deal with the needs of the province, and infrastructure, first and foremost, is our driving concern here, especially in light of the fact that the province was left in such dire straits after 12 years of neglect and mismanagement inherent in the past government now sitting across the way in the opposition benches, where they so rightly deserve to be.

I do not have to look very far, Mr. Speaker, to see this lack of infrastructure investment. As members of the Interlake, we are well-acquainted with Conservative policies, feast or famine—feast, south of No. 1 highway, that is, and famine, in general, up in the Interlake. All you have to do is look at the state of our highways. When we came into office in 1991, it was deplorable. Practically every road out there was 19 or 20 years into a 20-year lifespan, and

what was on the program? Not too much, I do not think. Oh, I should not say, not on the program. Certainly, our roads were on the program; it is just that they never managed to get built. I can think of one in particular, that road that goes across from Riverton to Highway 17-329. That is a road that has been on the program for 16 years already, just never got around to building it, unfortunately. Well, we are going to build it. The gravel is stockpiled already. The culverts are waiting in Poplarfield, and this road is finally going to go ahead.

The minister, himself, has toured this road on a couple of occasions, once in my company and, I think, agrees that this is going to happen. When the grater gets stuck on a road, you know, things are getting bad. That is not all that unusual up in the Interlake.

While we are on the topic of roads, you can take, for example, No. 7 highway. This is a critical trunk line, given the neo-Conservative, Liberal approach to privatizing our rail companies. The Interlake has been left with one rail line, left for maybe another year or so, and then we are out of luck, so very timely that our minister came and took care of this.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. When this matter again is before the House, the honourable Member for Interlake will have 36 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 22, 2001

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
		Minister of Education, Training and Youth Gerrard; Doer	292
Tabling of Reports		Members' Statements	
Annual Report of The Trade Practices Inquiry Act for the period ending November 22, 2001 S. Smith	285	Oak Park Raiders Rondeau	295
Annual Report of the Materials Distribution Agency for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2001 Ashton	285	Golden Links Lodge Dacquay	295
Annual Report of the Land Management Services Agency for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2001 Ashton	285	Brummitt-Feasby House Korzeniowski	295
Annual Report of the Fleet Vehicles Agency for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000 Ashton	285	Women's Television Network Driedger	296
Annual Report of the Mail Management Agency for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2001 Ashton	285	Lake Winnipeg Nevakshonoff	296
Annual Report of the Department of Transportation and Government Services for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2001 Ashton	285	ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Oral Questions		Second Readings	
Adult Learning Centres-Funding Tweed; Doer	286	Bill 3—The Highway Traffic Amendment and Summary Convictions Amendment Act Ashton	297
Murray; Doer	290	Bill 6—The Fortified Buildings Act Mackintosh	300
Gerrard; Doer	293	Bill 7—The Local Authorities Election Amendment Act Friesen	302
Provincial Auditor Tweed; Doer	286	Throne Speech Debate (Sixth Day of Debate)	
Mitchelson; Doer	287	Reimer	303
Enns; Doer	288	Rondeau	304
Enns; Selinger	289	Jim Penner	312
Praznik; Doer	289	Aglugub	318
		Cummings	320
		Nevakshonoff	327