

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

Official Report
(Hansard)

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Eighth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSON, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McFADYEN, Hugh	Fort Whyte	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
MURRAY, Stuart	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Carman	P.C.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SALE, Tim, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
SMITH, Scott, Hon.	Brandon West	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 5, 2006

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYER

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Bill 42—The Budget Implementation and
Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2006**

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Mackintosh), that Bill 42, The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2006; Loi d'exécution du budget de 2006 et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Selinger: This implements the measures that were announced in the budget, in addition to excluding the universal child care benefit from the calculation of property tax credits, personal tax credits and school tax credits for seniors. In addition, it extends the Odour Control Tax Credit for three years, assigns the farmland school tax rebate by a landlord is now able to be assigned to a tenant, as well as makes some improvements in labour-sponsored venture capital limits for new funds registered after June '06.

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

PETITIONS

Grandparents' Access to Grandchildren

Mr. David Faurschou (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

It is important to recognize and respect the special relationship that exists between grandparents and grandchildren.

Maintaining an existing, healthy relationship between a grandparent and a grandchild is in the best interest of the child. Grandparents play a critical role in the social and emotional development of their grandchildren. This relationship is vital to promote the intergenerational exchange of culture and

heritage, fostering a well-rounded self-identity for the child.

In the event of divorce, death of a parent or other life-changing incident, a relationship can be severed without consent of the grandparent or the grandchild. It should be a priority of the provincial government to provide grandparents with the means to obtain reasonable access to their grandchildren.

We petition the Manitoba Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Ms. Melnick) and the Premier (Mr. Doer) to consider amending legislation to improve the process by which grandparents can obtain reasonable access to their grandchildren.

This petition is signed by Chris Eichkorn, Herb Eichkorn, Diane Morrisseau and many, many others.

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

* (13:35)

Civil Service Employees—Neepawa

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, a petition to the Legislature for the following reasons:

Eleven immediate positions with Manitoba Conservation Lands Branch, as of April 1, 2006, Crown Lands and Property Special Operating Agency, are being moved out of Neepawa.

Removal of these positions will severely impact the local economy with potentially 33 adults and children leaving the community.

Removal of these positions will be detrimental to revitalizing the rural and surrounding communities of Neepawa.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the provincial government to consider stopping the removal of these positions from our community and to consider utilizing current technology, that is, Land Management Services existing satellite sub-office in Dauphin, Manitoba in

order to maintain these positions in their existing locations.

This petition is signed by Dave Bennet, Margaret Drinkwater, Nelson Jackson and many, many others.

OlyWest Hog Processing Plant

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background for this petition is as follows:

The Manitoba government, along with the OlyWest consortium, promoted the development of a mega hog factory within the city of Winnipeg without proper consideration of rural alternatives for the site.

Concerns arising from the hog factory include noxious odours, traffic and road impact, water supply, waste water treatment, decline in property values, cost to taxpayers and proximity to the city's clean drinking water aqueduct.

Many Manitobans believe this decision represents poor judgment on behalf of the provincial government.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the provincial government to immediately cancel its plans to support the construction of the OlyWest hog plant and rendering factory near any urban residential area.

Signed by Kristal Regier, Kaitlyn Regier, Renee Mason and many others.

Grandparents' Access to Grandchildren

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

It is important to recognize and respect the special relationship that exists between grandparents and grandchildren.

Maintaining an existing, healthy relationship between a grandparent and grandchild is in the best interests of the child. Grandparents play a critical role in the social and emotional development of their children. This relationship is vital to promote the intergenerational exchange of culture and heritage

and fostering a well-rounded self-identity for the child.

In the event of divorce, death of a parent or other life-changing incidents, a relationship can be severed without consent of the grandparent or grandchildren. It should be a priority of the provincial government to provide grandparents with the means to obtain reasonable access to their grandchildren.

We petition the Manitoba Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the Minister of Family Services and Housing (Ms. Melnick) and the Premier (Mr. Doer) to consider amending legislation to improve the process by which grandparents can obtain reasonable access to their grandchildren.

This is signed by Alia Marcinkow, Mary Marcinkow and Allen Marcinkow.

Removal of Agriculture Positions from Minnedosa

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

Removal of these positions will severely impact the local economy.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition signed by Darren Saler, D. Marnock, K. Bruce and many, many others.

Crocus Investment Fund

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The government needs to uncover the whole truth as to what ultimately led to over 33,000 Crocus shareholders to lose tens of millions of dollars.

The provincial auditor's report, the Manitoba Securities Commission investigation, the RCMP investigation and the involvement of our courts, collectively, will not answer the questions that must be answered in regard to the Crocus Fund fiasco.

Manitobans need to know why the government ignored the many warnings that could have saved the Crocus Investment Fund.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the Premier (Mr. Doer) and his NDP government to co-operate in uncovering the truth in why the government did not act on what it knew and to consider calling a public inquiry on the Crocus Fund fiasco.

This is signed by C. Labuick, P. Labuick, M. Harrison and many, many other fine Manitobans.

* (13:40)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs Third Report

Mr. Daryl Reid (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Third Report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs—

Mr. Speaker: Dispense?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs presents the following as its Third Report.

Meetings:

Your committee met on Thursday, June 1, 2006, at 6 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration:

Bill 4 – The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la manutention et le transport des marchandises dangereuses

Bill 37 – The Labour-Sponsored Investment Funds Act, 2006 (Various Acts Amended)/Loi de 2006 sur

les fonds de placement des travailleurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)

Committee Membership:

Mr. Altemeyer

Ms. Brick

Mr. Cummings

Mr. Dewar

Mr. Eichler

Mr. Faurschou

Mr. Reid (Chairperson)

Mr. Reimer

Hon. Mr. Rondeau

Mr. Santos

Hon. Mr. Struthers

Your committee elected Ms. Brick as the Vice-Chairperson.

Bills Considered and Reported:

Bill 4 – The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la manutention et le transport des marchandises dangereuses

Your committee agreed to report this bill, with the following amendment:

THAT the proposed clauses 18(1)(b) and (c), as set out in Clause 5(1) of the Bill, be replaced with the following:

(b) to determine compliance with this Act or a regulation or order,

(i) inspect and test any installation, equipment or machinery, or any process of handling or disposal relating to a dangerous good or contaminant, at or in a place, premises or means of transport entered under clause (a),

(ii) open, inspect and test any container, or its contents, located at or in a place, premises or means of transport entered under clause (a), and

(iii) take and retain, for purposes of testing or analysis, samples of any raw or manufactured substance or material used in or relating to an installation, equipment, machinery, process, container or its contents inspected or tested under subclause (i) or(ii);

Bill 37 – The Labour-Sponsored Investment Funds Act, 2006 (Various Acts Amended)/Loi de 2006 sur

les fonds de placement des travailleurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)

Your committee agreed to report this bill without amendment.

Mr. Reid: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for St. Norbert (Ms. Brick), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us Mark McDonald and Murray Gibson who are with the Canadian Cancer Society.

Also seated in the public gallery we have from Whyte Ridge Elementary 84 Grade 4 students under the direction of Mr. Ken Park, Mrs. Diane Kates and Mrs. Karen Lister. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, (Mr. McFayden).

Also in the public gallery we have from MacGregor Collegiate 44 Grade 11 students under the direction of Mr. Julian Hoyak. This group is located in the constituency of the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Cullen).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Security Measures House Briefing

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): I just want to for a moment take advantage of leaders' latitude to offer my sincere congratulations and the congratulations of all members to the honourable Member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), who just within the last couple of days became a grandmother. I have had an opportunity to see the pictures of her beautiful granddaughter, Lauren Elizabeth, and we congratulate her on that great accomplishment.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to ask the Premier, in light of the reports just recently over the last few days of the raid and the arrests in Ontario in connection with the planned attacks in our neighbouring province: Given that we all would like to think in our country and, in particular our province, we are immune to such events, but we

know that it is prudent to prepare for the worst and hope for the best, I wonder if the Premier could indicate for the House, bearing in mind that I am aware that I have been invited to a briefing that had been previously scheduled for this Thursday the 8th, I wonder though if the Premier would take this opportunity to brief the House on plans that he is aware of respecting his government to avert or, if necessary, respond to such events here in Manitoba.

* (13:45)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): First of all, I want to say for the record that we do not believe that anyone is immune to a potential attack. So I just want to make it very clear that that is not the position of the provincial government on immunity from a potential attack in Manitoba.

Certainly, there have been, over the last number of decades, indications or concerns that security forces in Canada and people in Manitoba have monitored. The alertness and the co-ordination between Canada and Manitoba improved and increased and was enhanced after September 11, 2001.

Of course, as the member just indicated, we have an all-party committee that has, before this date, scheduled a meeting for Thursday evening. We have had the two deputy minister equivalents, Mr. Horn and Mr. Sanderson, who are briefed by CSIS, the RCMP, the military, the various Winnipeg city police who have security clearance at the highest level. They in turn brief the members of the committee and, obviously, members of the government, but I would say to people here that we are pleased with the co-ordinated work to identify this potential risk in the city of Toronto and outside of Toronto. We are pleased that the police were able to stop this potential or alleged attack before it started.

We would say that the message from this incident on the weekend and the message from the leader of al-Qaeda who stated even before that, that Canada was a target, and we are in Canada and we must consider ourselves to be very, very vigilant while praising the police authorities and the security authorities in Ontario over the weekend.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Premier for that answer. We share the view that as much as we may hope that we are not a target for such activities, it is certainly wise and prudent to be

prepared in the event that such activities find their way into our province of Manitoba.

I just want to ask the Premier, as a supplemental to that initial question, whether at the recent gathering of leaders from across North America held at Gimli whether security matters were discussed and, if so, could the Premier brief the House on what the outcome and the nature of those discussions were.

Mr. Doer: Well, we had a very honest discussion on security at the general meeting and then with the meeting with the Prime Minister. Obviously, when you have governors from Mexico, governors from United States, premiers from Canada and the federal Prime Minister, matters are discussed, concerns are raised, reassurances are provided. So, yes, security is always on our agenda, was on our agenda on the Wednesday and it was on our agenda Wednesday night.

I would point out that, at that meeting, Ambassador Wilson who, all the ambassadors were there as well, pointed out that many of the major security leaders in Canada were being invited down to Washington because you find on the one hand positive comments from Secretary of State Rice over the weekend and then you have comments that have been made in the past by U.S. politicians to undermine the priority of security here in this country. I note that we were pleased with the Secretary of State's comments that this is an example of how Canadian security forces work together for the safety of people in this county and people in the communities, in terms of what they did, but also Ambassador Wilson indicated that it was extremely important for all of us to continue to outline not only what we are doing but outline it to our neighbours to the south. They in turn, Mr. Speaker, outlined measures they were trying to take as consistent with that.

I would point out that Winnipeg, of course, many of the emergency responses are now part of some of the NORAD protocols, and the United States hosts NORAD in Colorado Springs and hosts it also here in Winnipeg.

Red River Floodway Flood Protection Levels

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on a new question to the Premier.

Mr. Speaker: On a new question.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Premier for his answers to questions on that very important issue for all Manitobans.

On a new question. The Premier and his government have stated many times that the floodway expansion project would provide 1-in-700-year protection for the people of Winnipeg and surrounding municipalities. We on this side of the House support that goal, and we would certainly want it to be reached in a way that is fair to taxpayers.

This Premier's own news release issued only eight months ago said that the floodway expansion project will provide 1-in-700-year protection and that the total project cost to get 1-in-700-year protection was \$665 million. Mr. Speaker, given what we now know, will the Premier admit that his October news release misled Manitobans about the level of protection that they were to get for \$665 million?

* (13:50)

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite would have probably read the Clean Environment Commission report and he probably would have read material from the City of Winnipeg right from 1997 on. The Clean Environment Commission report was a public document available to everyone. In fact, we could not get a commitment from the national government for the higher amount of money until the Clean Environment Commission report had dealt with all the matters before it, including issues in the city of Winnipeg, including matters northeast of the city of Winnipeg.

In fact, the Clean Environment Commission spent a lot of time dealing with all of the community issues. Ritchot presented, Winnipeg presented, the communities northeast of Winnipeg, particularly St. Clements. That is all in the public record. They all presented in public. The presentations were all in public. I do not know where the member opposite was, but that material was all available to the public months and years ago in terms of what was proposed to the Clean Environment Commission, and it is all dealt with in the Clean Environment Commission report.

Mr. McFadyen: The report that the Premier is referring to from the Clean Environment Commission was published in June of 2005, and it says, at page 107, and I quote: As the City of

Winnipeg's presentation to the hearings acknowledged, without permanent increases in the height of the dikes, there is less than 1-in-700-year protection for the city. This was in the middle of 2005.

Subsequent to that report from his own government's Clean Environment Commission, his government issued a news release. This was in October of last year, saying that the total project cost was \$665 million and that it will provide 1-in-700-year flood protection. This is the government's propaganda following his own Clean Environment Commission's report.

So the issue, Mr. Speaker, is why his government continues to put on the record 1-in-700-year protection when they know from their own reports that that is not what was provided under the current project specifications. I want to quote from a letter that was written in November of 2003, also predating the government's news release, from Barry McBride, the director of Water and Waste for the City of Winnipeg, an engineer, one of the top engineers of the City of Winnipeg, who states in reference to the backup effect of the Red River when water is flowing north of the city, and I quote: In this situation, the primary dikes have a high risk of being over-topped. This is unacceptable since it leaves the city extremely vulnerable to flooding for the design event and could defeat the objective of the floodway expansion. This is a letter from one of the top engineers for the City of Winnipeg to Mr. Gilroy of the Floodway Authority, and I will table that letter.

So, in light of the fact that the Province was on notice as early as November 2003 that its own Clean Environment Commission indicated in 2005 that we are not getting 1-in-700-year flood protection, and given that the City's top engineer indicates that the city will be extremely vulnerable in the event of a flood of that magnitude, Mr. Speaker, that the city will be vulnerable in the event of a flood of that magnitude, will the Premier admit that the people of Winnipeg were misled about the protection they were getting from his government?

Mr. Doer: Well, Mr. Speaker, the only person misleading people is the member opposite. On the Executive Summary, it clearly states, floodway expansion involving widening the floodway channel, modifying and replacing bridges that is to expand the channel, making improvements to the inlet and outlet control structures, and extending and raising the west dike, the expanded floodway would provide the city

of Winnipeg with protection against what is described as 1-in-700 years.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of some of the internal diking in the city of Winnipeg has been front and centre since 1997. Some of us even sandbagged at Scotia Street and actually know that issue well. I lived on Glenwood Crescent. I know that issue well. There are people here that represent people on Kingston Crescent. That issue and, of course, you would note and the member opposite knows this, the issue of even putting an internal dike and extending it on Scotia Street was consulted with the residents, and they did not agree to it. I think this summer they may be agreeing to it. That is why the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Smith) has got a release to work with the City of Winnipeg on some of the internal systems.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that the west dike is proceeding, the old Z-dike if you will, to protect the city of Winnipeg. It is intended to protect the city of Winnipeg. The inlet, there are concerns on the inlet. That is why we have improved the notches. That is why we have improved the forebay. That is why we are improving some of the infrastructure in that area. The outlet, there were concerns raised about the impact, going right back to 1965 on the aquifer northeast of Winnipeg, so the Clean Environment Commission asked that an amount of money be set aside. The engineers have looked at that recommendation to look at a possible contingency dealing with the aquifer in the St. Clements area, another concern that was raised. But, all this matter, the IJC commented on this in '99 and 2000. The KPS report commented on this matter in 2001, had public hearings and had the material available in 2002. All of this material was presented to the Clean Environment Commission in public, and we have all the material in the report.

I do not know where the members were, but this has been going on as part of the debate of the floodway for the last five years. Where have you been?

*(13:55)

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, the Premier makes the point and the point is this, the Premier has now confirmed that he was aware of the issues within the city of Winnipeg and he knows full well that the last—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier makes the point that he has been aware for years of the issues related to what is going on inside the city of Winnipeg. He knows the last major flood that we dealt with was not a 1-in-700-year flood. He knows there are engineers who are advising the City of Winnipeg and this government that there is not sufficient protection in the current plans to get us to 1-in-700-year flood protection.

We know and we approve of and support the improvements to the west dike. We know that flood protection in a scenario like this is only as good as the weakest link. It is only as good as the weakest link, and the weakest link and I will resist the temptation to make references to the weakest link as it may pertain to the Premier's Cabinet, but I will say that he knows that flood protection is only as good as the weakest link.

Given that we have these identified deficiencies within the city of Winnipeg which were identified in advance of his government's news release issued in October, which said that we are getting 1-in-700-year protection and that the total cost is \$665 million, will the Premier today commit to going back to the drawing board, identifying what is required to give Winnipeg 1-in-700-year protection and report to Manitobans with the true accounting of the costs and the benefits of the project that is being undertaken, this very important project for Manitobans?

Mr. Doer: I would get into the federal flood mitigation policy, but that would take too long to explain it. The member opposite talks about a link. I think he has been a missing link for the last five years in this debate. Let me go back to 1997. We came—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Yes, we came very close to flooding in Winnipeg and, in fact, there was artificial flooding in the operation of the floodway on Grande Pointe operated by the previous government.

Mr. Speaker, there was an allegation of artificial flooding in the operation of the west dike on a flow of water that came across land to Ste. Agathe. We, of course, have dealt with Ste. Agathe with the flood protection on all four sides and we have improved the situation at Grande Pointe.

I would point out too, Mr. Speaker, that rather than taking what happened in 1997 and saying we have to deal with this as a government, members opposite went ahead and built bridges at 1-in-100 years across Highway 59. Highway 59 was built after the flood at 1-in-100 years. So they talk about a missing link, their whole government was missing after the 1997 flood. They did not put one nickel into the city of Winnipeg for flood protection after '97.

We worked diligently to negotiate 1-in-700-year flow of water around the city of Winnipeg. It is going around the city of Winnipeg so it does not go through the city of Winnipeg. The Clean Environment Commission said the flood expansion program will take 1-in-700-year water around the city so it does not go through the city. That is in the Clean Environment report.

* (14:00)

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Rebranding Strategy Ad Campaign

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on a new question.

The only diversion that Manitobans are getting is the diversions we get day in and day out in this House from the Premier. On Friday, speaking of diversions, on a new question related to diversions. The government, we learned on Friday, is set to unveil the Province's new brand on June 14, the day after this session is scheduled to end. This venture is over a year late, and reports indicate that \$600,000 has already been spent to date on the rebranding strategy alone.

Mr. Speaker, this is the strategy alone. We do not yet know what the ad buy budget or the media buy budget is going to be, so I wonder if the Premier can advise the House what is the budget for the advertising campaign coming out of this rebranding effort. How much is being underwritten by the private sector? How much is he expecting ratepayers to Crown corporations and the taxpayers of Manitoba to underwrite with respect to this branding effort?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite has been briefed on this file, and I also know that the private sector here in Manitoba said we have a significant challenge to have a modern message from Manitoba to the world and to even ourselves. The private sector asked to

conduct this function. They did not want government to do it. They wanted experts in the private sector who have had experience in marketing to proceed with this. It includes representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, it includes the co-chair of the Premier's Economic Advisory Council, it includes other individuals who are marketing around the world.

I would ask the member opposite—I have faith in the individuals who are volunteering their time on behalf of Manitoba. Does the member opposite?

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, we have great faith in the private sector of Manitoba, but we are puzzled as to why the Premier will not answer questions about how much is being spent in the way of taxpayer funds and ratepayer funds on this effort. Given that it is being launched the day after the session ends, I think we have every reason in light of the government's other advertising campaigns ongoing right now in health care and other areas to be concerned and suspicious about the use of Manitoba's funds for these sorts of efforts.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, and I will take the non-answer as confirmation that there will be contributions from Manitoba ratepayers and taxpayers to this effort. I wonder if the Premier could indicate the role that his former political Cabinet press secretary, Donne Flanagan is playing with regard to the co-ordination of this initiative.

Mr. Doer: Well, Mr. Speaker, I know the individual is involved but the co-chairs are Ash Modha and Mariette Mulaire. They report to the Premier's Economic Advisory Council. I can say without any fear of hesitation that provinces like Saskatchewan over the last number of years have been running major campaigns to attract business and attract the public to their province. You have seen their ads, I think it is \$14 million they have been spending.

To a large degree the business community has said to Manitoba, do a couple of things. One is take the advertising budget out of the Department of Tourism where it is traditionally going to the political advertising firm, and one would remember Barb Biggar and Foster Marks. Take that advertising out of the partisan advertising and have a separate and distinct committee dealing with tourism advertising that does not go through the regular Cabinet approval process. We did that.

In terms of the advice we are getting from the business community, when the final proposal is ready we will look at the proposal. Obviously we have to be careful about dollars. We are way behind provinces like Saskatchewan, Alberta, Nova Scotia, British Columbia. That is why—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: One of the criticisms business made against us is that we have not modernized our image or the Manitobans' role in the economy. We have not got that message out, and we are being outspent by other provinces dramatically. Rather than the government dealing with this, we sent it over. The private sector recommended, they said we want to deal with this, we do not want politicians mucking their hands in it, we want to have a package that all of us can be proud of and that is why we have let the private sector come forward with this. I would ask the member to support that.

Mr. McFadyen: I give the Premier credit. It is a clever, clever operation. They moved the advertising out of the political side of government to be co-ordinated by the civil service, and they move the political staff into the civil service to co-ordinate it. It is a nifty move, Mr. Speaker. It is a nifty move, and in that respect the Premier is one step ahead of us and I do give him credit for that.

Mr. Speaker, given that all these other jurisdictions the Premier is referring to have launched major branding campaigns to bolster the image of their provinces, and we have seen the ads for Newfoundland and Saskatchewan and others aimed at people outside of their province, why is his government aiming his advertising at Manitobans? Is it not just another cynical taxpayer-funded NDP re-election campaign?

Mr. Doer: Well, I would point out that the person, the senior civil servant in charge of this is one Ms. Cindy Stevens. I believe she is the ADM, a long-time civil servant. I can tell the member opposite, we obviously, every government has people who are very, very consistent with the government, but I would point out that the first thing I heard when I was elected is that the tourism contract for advertising, and the member opposite was at the Cabinet table, the tourism contract for advertising

was always going to go to the person or company that advertised for the political party in power.

Mr. Speaker, I did not ask that person, Ms. Stevens, to give the advertising contract to Barb Biggar. I did not ask them to give it to Foster Marks. We have tried to separate as much as we could that kind of role, and we have even got a new business group that is part of Travel Manitoba. We have a separate group that is chaired by Paul Robson outside of government. So you have Paul Robson outside of government, you have many people who we have established outside of government.

As I say, I am glad the member opposite now is asking us to match Newfoundland and Labrador, match Saskatchewan. His first question is do not spend anything, and his next question is match all these other provinces. We will not go that high, Mr. Speaker.

Health Care System Pathologist Shortage

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, cancer patients in Brandon are being forced to wait longer than normal for test results because of a shortage of pathologists. Dr. Dhaliwal, the head of CancerCare Manitoba, has said that this is disturbing to specialists and to patients. Years ago we warned this NDP government that the pathology program was on the edge of crisis.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health: Has that crisis now arrived?

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Health): Well, Mr. Speaker, I would refer the member to the article in the *Brandon Sun*, which is what she may be referring to. Dr. Dalton, who is the head of Diagnostic Services Manitoba, is quoted as saying, pathologists and doctors who analyze lab tests are hard to come by, for one. That is currently not the problem at the local lab although it has been in the past, Dalton said. So it is not a question of shortages. It is, as he said, increased complexity of tests.

For example, for breast cancer, there has to be screening not just for cancer but for whether the woman has the HER receptor, and is therefore eligible for Herceptin treatment, or does not. And that is at 20 percent of that population. It takes more time to do the—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

* (14:10)

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I will point the Minister of Health to a CBC story on Friday where Dr. Dhaliwal is indicating that the health care system has not prepared for the shortage of pathologists, and he said this is very disturbing.

Mr. Speaker, in 2001, the Medical Advisory Committee of the Brandon Regional Health Centre warned that a concrete plan was needed to attract pathologists. This was in 2001. If that did not happen, there would be a total implosion of the pathology services in this province. The minister ignored the warnings and now cancer patients are paying the price.

How can this Minister of Health have failed cancer patients so badly?

Mr. Sale: Mr. Speaker, the hysteria of the member opposite leaves me puzzled when we exceed the national benchmarks. Instead of four weeks for access to radiation therapy, it is one week in Manitoba. Instead of the great problems people have in accessing the appropriate oncological treatments, we have a single program emerging in Manitoba under the leadership of Dr. Dhaliwal, who, by the way, has said publicly part of the serious problem that he is facing is that in the nineties, governments cut back on training. He made the point that we have made that when you cut back enrolment in medical schools, you cannot expect there to be enough doctors eight and 10 years later. We are still playing catch up from decisions that were wrongly made in 1993.

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, to be called hysterical for standing up and speaking on behalf of patients, I think is absolutely arrogant. I will stand here any day of the week and speak up for patients and access to care in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I would like this minister to fast forward to 2006. The doctors in 2001 were telling him to put a plan in place for pathologists to deal with the shortage then. That pathology shortage, seven years later, still exists. Patients are suffering and thousands of specimens are now being sent to the United States for testing because we do not have enough specialists here in Manitoba right now.

I would like to ask this Minister of Health: How much longer will patients have to wait too long in order to have their tests come back, especially now that they are going to the United States?

Mr. Sale: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am going to get the numbers for the member. I do not have them in front

of me, but I am going to be able to tell her, I believe that there are in fact more pathologists today than there were in 1999. Yes, pathology is an area of shortage when you cut back on enrolment in the medical college, you cut back on enrolment in the residency programs and specialties take anywhere from 10 to 14 years to graduate. We brought enrolment back up in 2000 and 2001. That is only five years ago. Unfortunately, the shortages that were incurred in the 1990s still have anywhere from five to seven years to run before we are going to be able to say that we have fully caught up for mistakes that they made and now want to blame us.

Westman Regional Lab Technologist Shortage

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Diagnostic Services Manitoba say there are 13 technologist vacancies at the Westman Regional Lab. The technologists themselves have called it a critical shortage and have emphasized the importance of completing tests quickly and accurately, but the Minister of Health says they are not short-staffed. I question his numbers that he has been sharing earlier in other areas that leads to this question.

Is the minister telling the DSM and the laboratory technologists in Brandon that they are wrong about their own profession shortages?

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Health): First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member just to be careful about terminology. Technologists are not lab techs. Lab techs are hired out of Grade 12 and they are trained on-site. They are very important people in our system. Technologists are trained in a two-year certificate program at Red River College, a program that when they were in government they abolished. I wonder why we are short of technologists.

But, let me tell the member that we have hired 150 more technologists than we had when we formed government in 1999, Mr. Speaker, so she is wrong about the number 13. It is seven. There are seven coming in June to fill all of the vacancies in the Westman Lab in Brandon.

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, I find it passing strange that the technologists out in Brandon are questioning whether he knows the difference between a technician or a technologist. I also wonder about his statement of 150 new technologists in Manitoba, then why are 50 leaving the province and not returning? We are losing technologists, and he is doing nothing about it.

Mr. Speaker, the technologists are blaming the minister for the shortage. Technologists of Westman Regional Laboratory have stated, and I quote: The fact is the present government has been in power for the last seven years, during some of the worst times for the Westman Regional Laboratory. They are frustrated with this minister's unwillingness to acknowledge the critical technologist shortage at the Westman Lab.

Can the Minister of Health attempt to solve a problem that he will not even acknowledge exists?

Mr. Sale: Well, I wonder if the member opposite was in support of her party's policy of cancelling programs to train critical medical specialists, Mr. Speaker. Was she in favour of cutting that program in the 1990s? Does she understand the impact?

Mr. Speaker, I am told that as of today, not as of when her question was framed two weeks or three weeks or two months ago, as of today, there are no vacancies in the Westman Lab for either technologists or technicians. Those positions have been filled by graduates of the program that they cancelled and we reinstalled.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Rowat: Mr. Speaker, the arrogance of this minister will come back at him because really for him to say that there are no shortages when there is a letter that has been sent to our office responding to the inaccuracies of this minister in this House and in the media. So I challenge the minister to check his facts, to answer and respond accurately and truthfully and to listen to the technologists in Westman Lab because they are very concerned and frustrated with this minister's inability to answer a question.

Mr. Speaker, the Westman technologists are frustrated with his unwillingness to inform himself accurately about the situation. Given the Westman Lab has lost 50 technologists since 2000, and that is a fact, is the Minister of Health willing to acknowledge that a shortage even exists?

Mr. Sale: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear. I did not say that there were no shortages. What I said was that there are no vacancies. *[interjection]* No, you need to listen. Instead of laughing, you need to listen.

The vacancies that existed when you framed your question are now filled. The new students are

coming to work there. The technicians are hired out of Grade 12, Mr. Speaker. That is old news. Those questions were asked three and four weeks ago. You should find some new questions.

There are 150 more technicians, technologists in Manitoba today than in '99, Mr. Speaker. We have to hire 50 more to make our pledge of 200. They are being trained. They will be hired.

Manitoba Housing Authority Security for Residents

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Morris): Mr. Speaker, terror and violence have become the order of the day in some Manitoba housing units. The woes in housing stretch from inadequate maintenance, to bugs and mould, to drug dealing and criminal activity that lead to fear for personal safety and, indeed, for people's lives. Yet, this minister said last week when questioned by the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), there are no sin bins at Manitoba Housing Authority.

When will this Minister of Family Services and Housing address these issues in her portfolio and ensure that families have a safe and sound place to live?

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Family Services and Housing): Well, Mr. Speaker, I was very happy today to attend the luncheon for the family centre where we talked about the success of the Woodydell model in which we teamed with Manitoba Housing, the family centre and people who live in Manitoba Housing complexes. The Woodydell model has helped to create a sense of community, has helped to create a sense of safety, has helped to create a sense of people building their community together. Today I was very pleased to announce that it is no longer a pilot project, it is being permanently funded. We have also announced a further initiative at 60 Plessis Road.

* (14:20)

Mrs. Taillieu: Well, Mr. Speaker, last time we heard the minister say she thought a press release was a terms of reference for a child review. Now she is saying a press release is a security system for Manitoba Housing.

Mr. Speaker, the problems at Manitoba Housing under this minister are many. She is charged with ensuring maintenance of housing stock and security to residents, a safe and sound place to live. She claims zero tolerance to criminal activity but she

does nothing but turn a blind eye when criminal activity occurs. When will this minister crack down on the crack dealers, push out the prostitutes, get rid of the guns and secure the safety of those living in Manitoba Housing or is she just going to wait until someone dies?

Ms. Melnick: Mr. Speaker, I can table a *Winnipeg Free Press* report from the 7th of May '05. It is about people at 555 Ellice whom we worked with. Holly Bertram who has a residence there, has been a resident there for quite a while, acclaims the building's security and our loss prevention manager for helping. Holly Bertram states: I am applauding the Housing Authority. They are my heroes now.

That is how we work with communities in Manitoba Housing. When there are issues to be dealt with, we deal with them. Again I applaud the citizens of 565 St. Anne's, Woodydell and I look very forward to working with the people at 60 Plessis Road to create communities in their area too.

Premiers' Conference Communication with Prime Minister

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, it would appear from last week's Western Premiers' Conference that our Premier has developed quite a close friendship with the new Prime Minister and is clearly in regular contact with his good friend to discuss matters of importance to Manitoba.

I would like to ask the Premier, given the dramatic events of the last weekend, whether the Premier has been in touch with the Prime Minister to discuss the approach to improving the security arrangements around the Canadian Centre for Human and Animal Health, that is the virology lab, in the centre of Winnipeg?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, it is the role of Premier to respect the will of the Canadian public and to deal with the democratically elected Prime Minister of the day. I am surprised the member opposite does not understand that. It is also important, the member opposite also used to represent the riding where we were, so it is also a lesson for all of us how to stay in touch with the constituents and represent them as best as possible.

We do have very professional people at the head of the Emergency Measures and the head of our security and ADM, Mr. Horn, that briefs our ministers with material that can be released to the public and material that is confidential. We respect the role, as I say, of the Prime Minister in this issue. I

do not phone him every minute of the day. I phone him when I need to on behalf of Manitobans. If you do not abuse that responsibility you will find, I think, in the long run that when you have to call, you call and you get your calls returned.

Mr. Gerrard: My follow-up and supplemental to the Premier concerns the additional discussions which we presume the Premier had in that beautiful town of Gimli last week: discussions about the federal budget and the situation with regard to, not only the future of the medical activities around the virology lab, but the discussion around the Labour Market Partnership Agreement, which the former government has apparently axed, the discussion on the federal funding for the national child care program which the federal government is in the process of axing.

Can the Premier tell this Legislature what his special relationship is doing in regard to these problems that are created for Manitoba by the federal government?

Mr. Doer: First of all, Mr. Speaker, we believe in calling them like we see them and this issue is special. It is a little bit of a surrogate Liberal position from Ottawa, and I would recommend the member opposite not diminish the debate in this Legislature with that view.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that I had the responsibility of chairing an international meeting. I did not take every issue to an international meeting. I am sure the member opposite would understand that. You have a responsibility.

We will call it like we see it. We do not agree with their child care policy; we have said that. We do not agree with the position on Kyoto; we have said that. But I would applaud the federal government for cleaning up the mess the member opposite left. He abandoned Pinawa and AECL with not a nickel to deal with the uranium waste in that place. You know, let us give credit where credit is due. I am glad the Prime Minister is starting to clean up the mess the member opposite left behind.

Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, over 33,000 Manitobans have lost tens of millions of dollars because this NDP government, under the stewardship of this Premier, were negligent and did not recognize the importance of taking action when the red flags came. They lost tens of millions of

dollars. Today we see the legislative agenda, up to 25 percent of the legislative agenda, this Premier is prepared to sacrifice because of his unwillingness to do the right thing and call for a public inquiry.

My question to the Premier: Reflect on the tens of billions, reflect on the 25 percent of your own legislative agenda and call the public inquiry today.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, one day in the middle of the BSE crisis, the member opposite was holding up this House for where he was going to sit. This member has held up the House for how many questions he is going to ask after the public has made a decision. He is holding up the House on this issue. Tomorrow it will be another issue. I just want to say that the legislatures in Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Alberta have already risen. We came in earlier, and if the member opposite wants to ring the bells, he will be accountable for his priority of bell ringing rather than the public business. He is going to be accountable for that.

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

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: I have a ruling for the House.

After the prayer on May 5, 2006, the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou) raised a matter of privilege to note that the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) had decided to no longer publish the fourth quarter reports any longer, which would have an impact on the ability of members to do their jobs given resource constraints on the office of the Auditor General.

I took the matter under advisement in order to consult the procedural authorities. I thank all members for their advice to the Chair on this matter. There are two conditions that must be satisfied in order for the matter raised to be ruled in order as a prima facie case of privilege. First, was the issue raised at the earliest opportunity and, second, has sufficient evidence been provided to demonstrate that the privileges of the House have been breached in order to warrant putting the matter to the House.

Regarding whether the matter was raised at the earliest opportunity, the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie did not address this point in his remarks to the Chair. Regarding the second issue of whether a prima facie case was demonstrated, I would note that the honourable Member for Portage la Prairie did not conclude his remarks by moving a

motion, which, as Manitoba Speakers Forbes, Graham, Walding, Phillips, Rocan and Dacquay have ruled is a requirement for a matter of privilege.

I would also note that the publishing of fourth quarter reports is not a matter that falls within the purview of the Speaker, as it is not a requirement in the Manitoba rules or House practices that these reports are published. I appreciate that the report in question may be an issue of concern to the member, however, it is not the role of Speakers to interpret or enforce matters of statutory law. This finding is supported by a February 5, 1992, ruling by the House of Commons Speaker John Fraser, by Manitoba rulings from Speaker Rocan in 1994 and Speaker Dacquay in 1996 and by *Beauchesne's* Citation 31(9).

I would therefore rule with the greatest of respect that the matter raised is not in order as a prima facie case of privilege.

*(14:30)

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

West St. Paul Fire Department 50th Anniversary

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth): I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the West St. Paul Fire Department. The department provides fire protection service to the municipality of West St. Paul, Old Kildonan and the southern portion of St. Andrews and has demonstrated a high level of skill and response over the years.

Established in 1956, the fire department came together after several years of community organizing and collaboration with municipal and provincial authorities. In the early 1950s, recognizing the need for fire protection in the West St. Paul area, the three communities of McNaughton, Middlechurch and Rivercrest formed unofficial fire brigades. In the mid-1950s, the Civil Defence Organization, now known as the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization, offered the municipality the use of a fire pumper truck on the condition that their firemen would receive proper training and form a municipal fire department. The completion of training, the transfer of equipment and the construction of a fire hall officially inaugurated the fire department in West St. Paul.

After 50 years, the department has grown into a modern rural fire department. Currently there are 24 members and five vehicles. Not only does the fire

department offer fire protection, but it also provides public awareness campaigns, vehicle extrication and emergency medical services. In 2005, the West St. Paul Fire Department responded to nearly 200 emergency incidents.

The West St. Paul Fire Department is also the driving force behind the West St. Paul Canada Day celebrations. Their annual spring social kicks off the festivities and fundraises for the July 1 entertainment and family activities, and their commitment to the community extends far beyond their duties as firefighters.

Celebrations for the fire department's 50th anniversary are scheduled for Saturday, September 9, 2006, and will no doubt draw a crowd of thankful West St. Paul residents.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the brave men and women of the West St. Paul Fire Department and thank them for 50 years of community service. Thank you.

Brantwood Hutterite Colony

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you could canvass the House and see if there is a willingness to allow leave to read this brief thank you note into the public record on behalf of the family who lost their little child, the little Hutterite girl, who was lost for two days.

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Rocan: I have to wait for Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Mr. Rocan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The note says thank you from Brantwood Colony. A very special and heartfelt thank you to all the great volunteers, relatives, friends and neighbours who assisted in the search of our angel, Kaitlyn Margaret, two, of Brantwood Colony. Thanks to everyone who gave their support by searching with tireless efforts and pure determination for just being there and helping out; otherwise, for everyone who so badly wanted to be there and could not. It was their prayers and well wishes that helped lead the searchers to her temporary bed. We thank you so much for your thoughtfulness and care which showed that there are no differences and that we can all still function as one big family in the hardest of times.

It is emotional times like these that bring us together, although it seems that too many times we forget how great God still is to us. Perhaps he used a little child's disappearance to try to show us that we can work and co-operate as one, which should open the eyes of the few that try and tear us apart.

May the dear Lord bless you and watch over you as much as he watched over Kaitlyn that faithful day. It was you who made everything a little easier for us to accept. Though some had given up hope, perhaps a little too soon, everyone else just stepped it up to replace the few that had left.

When the most complicated and technically advanced equipment turned up empty-handed, the dear Lord decided to show us his, which showed but one thing, that prayers are above all the best tools the world has to offer. It seems strange that a child could hide from 250-plus excellent searchers and volunteers for so long, but it was his thousands of angels that kept her from our grasp so that they could visit with her alone for a short while. It was the angels that covered her and protected her from all harm.

Kaitlyn is in excellent health at Brantwood Colony, and maybe God will help her remember every face she saw so she can cherish this for many years to come. We would like to thank you all again for everything from the bottom of our hearts, but words are much too small to express our gratefulness and thanks. Your kindness will be remembered always. Thank you kindly, Cameron, Melissa and family.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Kids Fishing for a Cure Derby

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday I was pleased to attend the 11th annual Kids Fishing for a Cure fishing derby held in Selkirk at the Selkirk Park.

The derby is organized by Kids Fishing for a Cure Incorporated, an organization started to raise funds for kids battling cancer. With the help of many dedicated volunteers and staff the event hosted a fishing derby to provide children suffering from cancer an opportunity to get out, enjoy the outdoors and perhaps catch a few fish. I can report back to my colleagues that many of them did.

Mr. Speaker, the derby began in 1996. Its founder, John Harber, was moved by the sight of young children at the Health Sciences Centre here in

Winnipeg battling the disease. He decided to hold an event which would provide these children with a fun day to go fishing and at least one day to forget about their treatments. In the first year, only 11 children tried their hand. I am pleased to report to members that now there is participation of over 90. It is a very popular event with the children who look forward to it for several months in advance.

All the money raised, and that is in excess of over \$50,000 since the beginning of the event, goes towards the costs associated with hosting the derby and to the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation pediatric care unit.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all Manitobans, I thank and congratulate the volunteers and staff of Kids Fishing for a Cure Incorporated for their dedication to improving the lives of children who suffer from this disease. Thank you.

Pembina Constituency Events

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I am pleased to report to the House that I and my family enjoyed another very busy weekend in the Pembina constituency.

On Friday, I had the pleasure of attending the Morden-Pilot Mound 4-H Rally with 14 individual groups and over 200 entrants. I was asked to judge and help present awards. I can certainly say that the Pembina constituency is gifted with many talented young people in the agricultural community, and I want to thank all of the volunteers and the organizers for this event.

On Friday I attended the 56th annual Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs Conference. I would like to thank Chief Garry Klassen of the Winkler Fire and Rescue Service and everyone from the Pembina Triangle Mutual Aid District for planning this event. Over 200 fire chiefs and deputies from across Canada attended this successful conference.

Every year I look forward to attending Heritage Days at the Pembina Thresherman's Museum. This provides an excellent opportunity to view antique farm equipment and a first-hand experience to learn about our past. I personally took part in the soap-making activities and drove one of the old tractors with a scraper attached to it.

On Saturday, I ran in the Pembina Valley Pregnancy Crisis Centre Marathon. Fifty-one runners did the half marathon and 57 completed the five-kilometre walk or run raising a total of \$6,200. I would like to thank and welcome their new executive

director, Linda Marek and thank also the outgoing director, Pamela Funk.

Rounding out this lovely weekend on Sunday afternoon we attended the Back Forty Folk Festival in Morden. I would like to thank the organizers, the participants, with a special thanks to President Jeannie Nickel. I also want to thank the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) for attending the event that day. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It was a wonderful weekend.

Council of Canadians With Disabilities

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to recognize the 30th anniversary of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities. For 30 years now the council has worked tirelessly for the advancement of the rights of disabled persons across Canada.

Originally created in 1976, as an umbrella organization that gathered together the various disabled advocacy groups already in existence, CCD's mission was to unite the variety of groups around the common concerns and issues that affected disabled Canadians.

The council rose to prominence at the Rehabilitation International Conference held in Winnipeg in 1980. It was a watershed moment. CCD shifted the focus from the medical model to recognizing the rights of disabled people, and from that time on, CCD became known as an impassioned advocate, educator and participant in the battle for disabled people's rights.

Guided by four basic principles, citizenship, self-determination, consumer control and equality, CCD's work has spanned every forum. Whether it be in social, political or legal venues, on municipal, provincial, national or international stages, CCD has been the force ensuring that the voice of disabled people is heard. Their work was essential in the formation of the Disabled People's International. In 2004, I had the privilege of attending a Disabled People's International world summit in Winnipeg where I saw the CCD hard at work. As a result of their advocacy, Canadians with disabilities have been able to enjoy a level of equality heretofore unknown of, on the bus, in their jobs, in the health and education systems.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this House join me in congratulating the Council of Canadians with Disabilities on their 30th anniversary and three decades of impassioned advocacy. While

they have accomplished much, their work serves as a reminder that the fight for equality and solidarity for all Canadians remains ongoing.

* (14:40)

GRIEVANCES

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for River Heights, on a grievance?

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I rise on a grievance. On March 20, there was an inquiry called into the external review of Child and Family Services. We should have received a terms of reference at that particular time. Now we are two and a half months later and we still have not received a terms of reference. Indeed, we are closing in on the end of the month when there is due an interim report. We should have had this terms of reference. I have asked for it. The MLA for Morris has asked for this. I have requested this through The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act provisions.

We waited for more than the allotted time and, indeed, on the very last day, my staff got a call from the minister's office and her staff and was told, well, can you not request that we have this terms of reference because the minister is going to table it in the next day or two? This was last week, on Tuesday or so, but we still have not had it tabled. We still have not had a terms of reference presented to this Legislature. So, Mr. Speaker, I rise today on a grievance.

This is a fairly straightforward matter, making sure that when a review is called there are actually procedures which are going to be followed, that we are going to have details of how concerns can be raised, what kinds of concerns can be raised, who can present, are there going to be open hearings. We, in fact, have had none of this. There is a phone number and there is an operation which is working largely, it would appear, out of the Child Advocate's office, but there are concerns with regard to this external review, in many respects because the Child Advocate herself has dealt with some of the people in Child and Family Services. So the Child Advocate may be in a position of having to review her own advocacy, her own decisions. This is unconscionable.

We are in a position where there are people in the Child Protection branch providing inside information to this external review, but they are on the inside, not external. It is not at all clear that this is what the minister has called an external review at

all. So, while we are waiting for a terms of reference, there are people who have had concerns with Child and Family Services, who would want to bring their concerns forward, but are still waiting for a proper terms of reference in order to do this in an appropriate way. It is just astonishing that we can have a minister call a review, and then not in two and a half months present a terms of reference.

We all know that the minister presented a press release. She called it a press release, as the Speaker, indeed, pointed out. She never called it a terms of reference; she called it a press release. A press release is not a terms of reference. There were, indeed, some mistakes in the press release referring to the four Aboriginal Child and Family Services authorities when, in fact, there are three. It is preposterous to call this press release document a terms of reference.

So I rise today on a grievance because it is important that the government know that this kind of behaviour is totally unacceptable, that when we have 31 children, and the numbers may be adding up and increasing, but at least 31 children who have been killed, homicide, while in care or shortly after leaving care, this is a very serious matter. For it to go two and a half months without a terms of reference is not treating this matter with the kind of seriousness that it should be treated with.

Each one of those 31 children has an important story to tell, I am sure, each one of those, but they cannot tell it anymore, so the families and other people who have been involved will have to come forward and tell those stories. There will need to be a proper investigation into what happened and recommendations into what can be done better, and it is time to start making this process more accountable, more transparent and more appropriate to today's world, instead of having an external review behind closed doors with no terms of reference and, at this point, a totally uncertain outcome in terms of what may or may not be presented.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that there have been hundreds of recommendations made over the last number of years. We know that many of those recommendations still have not been followed through. This all deals with aspects of the operation of Child and Family Services and the care that is provided to children in care and shortly after leaving care in Manitoba.

So it is important today that the government knows that we in the Liberal Party are very upset

with the government for taking this matter without the due seriousness with which it should be treated. We are upset to have press releases instead of proper terms of reference. We are upset to have an investigation where there may be conflicts of interest and problems within the way that this investigation is being conducted. We are upset that the minister herself cannot give us proper answers time and time again when she is questioned in Question Period, in Estimates and, indeed, today, when I rise once again to raise this issue before the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter which is why I am rising on a grievance. This is a matter which needs to be treated with the appropriate respect, with the appropriate process, with the proper terms of reference, with appropriate due diligence, powers of investigation and the ability to find out exactly what went wrong to be able to change the way that Child and Family Services is operating, so that we can improve the way that children in care are being looked after and that children have a transition after they leave care that will provide protection.

* (14:50)

The circumstances of this review continue to be most unsatisfactory in the way that the minister has organized it. The lack of terms of reference done appropriately in two and a half months is absolutely appalling. This matter continues to be a problem for children in this province, a problem for this government, which this government does not adequately realize or pay attention to. They have become sloppy and arrogant, very sadly. This should have been attended to properly and appropriately early on, but, instead, all we have had is sloppiness and arrogance from this government. It is a sad testament to how far they have slipped from when they were first elected.

Mr. Speaker, the children of this province are important. The children in care are important. They should be treated better.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you please call 27, 29, 25, 32, 28, 33, 38, 34, 39, 40, 41?

Mr. Speaker: Okay. We will call the bills in this order: Bill 27, Bill 29, Bill 25, Bill 32, Bill 28, Bill 33, Bill 38, Bill 34, Bill 39, Bill 40 and Bill 41.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS**Bill 27—The Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act**

Mr. Speaker: To resume debate on second reading, Bill 27, The Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, it is actually with pleasure that I stand today to talk on Bill 27. There are a number of different thoughts that run through my mind that I would like to be able to express this afternoon in regard to this bill.

I truly believe that there are bills that come before the Legislature that receive overwhelming support from the public because, Mr. Speaker, what you will find is that it touches the lives of so many different Manitobans. If we look at the legislative agenda that we have today, ultimately I would argue that, out of the 40-plus bills, there is probably a good handful of them which I truly believe that Manitobans would be well served if the government recognized the value of those bills and allowed all of those bills to be able to pass and become ultimate law in the province of Manitoba.

This is one of the bills where the government was not diligent in terms of bringing forward in a timely way, and, as a result, Mr. Speaker, the government has been looking at what it might be able to do to try to get this bill through. I listened to the government and the government's arguments on it, and the government's arguments have not been persuasive. In fact, what I have found is that the government's arguments have been very, very biased. Had the government been straightforward with all legislators inside this Chamber, I suspect that we would not have the problem that we have today in regard to Bill 27.

I say that because I really do believe that Bill 27 is a bill that should pass, because it is for the betterment of all Manitobans in a very real and a very tangible way. I would further add to that, as I did in a letter to the Government House Leader (Mr. Mackintosh), that there are other bills that equally are important. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to just talk about my bills. There are other private members' bills, but I understand best some of the bills that I have presented to this Chamber. One of those bills deals with the fetal alcohol syndrome, and it is a bill that would not cost anything. Yet, if it was accepted and passed—other jurisdictions have done something

of a similar nature—it could have a very positive impact on the children of our province into the future. But we recognized the good idea and we asked the government to do likewise and recognize good ideas.

Bill 27 will have our co-operation in terms of ultimately passing. I will tell you that the reason why is because I did have some feedback on this particular bill from individuals in which not only I but, I believe, my leader have a tremendous amount of respect, in particular, from the Canadian Cancer Society. It is encouraging when you get individuals that take an active interest and follow what is actually taking place inside the Chamber. Upon reflecting on what it is that they had indicated to me personally, I had the opportunity then to discuss the issue with my leader, and it was felt that at the end of the day this is a bill that we do not necessarily want to hold up because of the government's negligence.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want the government to believe for a moment that we are relaxing our position in regard to the need for a public inquiry on the Crocus Fund fiasco. As I raised the issue today in Question Period, we truly believe that 33,000-plus Manitobans have lost a great deal of money because of gross government neglect. Ultimately, the government is in the position that it is today on a number of pieces of legislation because of their refusal to do what is in the public's best interest, because of their refusal to acknowledge what everyone else seems to acknowledge—whether it is former NDP Premier Ed Schreyer, independent media outlets, both opposition parties, Manitoba Crocus shareholders and Manitobans as a whole—the need for a public inquiry as to why it is that we need that public inquiry, so that we can get to the bottom of that truth.

Members say be honest. Well, maybe not every one of the 33,000 shareholders, I agree, but some of those shareholders are MLAs that sit on the government benches so I can appreciate, Mr. Speaker, why it is that they would not want to see a public inquiry because at the end of the day they know that Manitobans will see and have a better understanding of the relationship. I do believe that that is a very important issue to all Manitobans, and we need to get to the bottom of that.

In regard to Bill 27, you know, you pull the government press release, and I think it says it all when it makes reference in terms of in four points what this legislation does. As opposed to being

accused of plagiarism, I will tell him right from the press release, Mr. Speaker, that it states: to "give the government a direct and distinct action against a manufacturer of tobacco products to recover the costs of health-care benefits for tobacco-related illnesses, allow the government to claim for both past and reasonably-expected future costs of health care needed because of tobacco-related illnesses, allow the government to file a lawsuit on behalf of one person or all of the people affected by tobacco-related illnesses, and ensure the definition of the manufacturer captures tobacco companies that are resident in other jurisdictions but sell in Manitoba."

Mr. Speaker, I do not necessarily believe that this is the minister's actual verbatim words himself. I believe that this is just the sentiment of feelings that many have in regard to this very important issue here in the province of Manitoba. I do believe that it is responsible upon us to do what we can to better arm the tools that are necessary in order to take the next step in terms of fighting tobacco diseases that result from either first-hand or direct smoking to second-hand smoking. I think a bill of this nature will go a long way in recognizing just how important it is for us to deal with this issue.

* (15:00)

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time that this Legislature has attempted to do some very positive things in regard to smoking. In fact, it was the Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan) who, years back, brought in a private member's bill which talked about the banning of public smoking out in the public. It was the Member for Carman's idea and his persistence that ultimately led to an all-party task force to deal with that issue. Through that task force, I know the leader of my party and other members of this Legislature had the opportunity to go throughout rural Manitoba. I was even afforded the wonderful opportunity to sub-in periodically for my leader and heard first-hand in terms what people had to say about the banning of smoking in these public facilities.

So we were glad to have been able to contribute in an all-party, apolitical way to doing and passing law that made a lot of sense for our province.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, there were still some concerns that were raised because of the legislation. One of those concerns, for example, was in regards to casinos on reserve. There were some people inside the Chamber that believe that that banning should have applied because there is

second-hand smoke that is created in casinos, even on reserves. Much like we should be thinking of the worker that works at the McPhillips casino, we should also be thinking of the worker that has to work in a reserve casino. So we recognize that there are still even areas that need to be pursued in regards to that particular issue. We anxiously await some sort of a government response. I suspect it might require a change in government to see that change in policy. If that is what it takes, I think that it is unfortunate. I would like to think that a progressive, socially minded government would have dealt with the issue when it had the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, there are other issues. At the beginning, I talked about how some issues touch all Manitobans. I make reference to the fact that this is one of these issues. I truly do believe that, if member after member were to stand up inside this Legislature, they could all cite specific stories, individuals and family members and friends that have died as a result of cancer, or have had to endure all sorts of discomfort as a result of having this disease. What I would like to do is just to comment on a couple of them because I was very close, as I like to think that most are with their respective fathers. My father had lung cancer and it was from smoking. In fact, he had one of his lungs removed, and for a couple of years it looked fairly positive. He went through a great deal of treatment. Ultimately, he succumbed to cancer and we were sad to see him go. When I reflect on that, on the issue of smoking, I can tell you and I am sure all members because, obviously, I am not alone; every one of us can give stories.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

But what I reflect on is how things have really changed in society. It was not that long ago that smoking was the thing to do. When my father was growing up—and he sold a good number of cars, Mr. Speaker, amongst other things—it was nothing to be having a cigarette in the office. He would have customers that would come in, ashtrays all over the place. You might see 10 or 12 butts in one ashtray before it is actually emptied. The mindset was that there was absolutely nothing wrong with smoking.

I remember seeing members of my family, of an older generation, who would roll their own cigarettes, and you could see the tobacco coming out of both ends. There are people who still roll them today, and 30, 40, even longer, 50 years ago, when smoking was taking place back then, it was never a

question in terms of the impact it was going to have on their health.

In fact, it is interesting at times, if you get the opportunity to watch some of the older TV programs, or you see some of those older movies, and you think of some of those movie stars, some of those icons of the sixties and the fifties, even to a certain degree even into the seventies, you will see that they will be smoking. As they are performing, they will have a cigarette in their mouths, puffing away. Whether there was a room of three people having a cigarette and two people being non-smokers, it just was never really realized as to the impact that that was having on mainstream society, when you get these icons in that area, if I can put it in that fashion, smoking. Government at the time, of course, was collecting taxes through tobacco tax and cigarettes. So there was almost a glorification, and I say almost. I should not even say the word "almost." There was a glorification of smoking, and as a result of that, you had unbelievable numbers of people who were smoking and never thought of the negative consequence.

I am 44 now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It was a number of years ago when I was in high school, and when I was going through high school at the time, that was when I first started to see some negative things coming into our schools in regard to the negative side of smoking. That is the first time I can recall, and that would have been, I guess, in the mid-seventies, later seventies. I can remember them talking about the lungs, how the lungs turned black and all this kind of stuff. You were given that lecture, but it was quickly put to the side. It was just thrown to the side. In the most part, it was never really taken seriously because I can remember that when there was a recess, there was a little store that would actually sell cigarettes to kids or to young adults and thought nothing of it.

So you would go outside of some of these stores and you would see youth back then smoking cigarettes, and they were smoking it because it was the cool thing to do. There were a lot of people, even in my generation, who are still smoking today that started back then when it was perceived as okay to do. Even myself, I believe that I might have smoked for one or two days, but, for some reason, I think it was because I was—*[interjection]* I believe I did inhale, too, for both of those days. But, Mr. Speaker, I believe that I was fortunate in the sense that I had a part-time job. I was pumping gas. So cigarettes and gas did not go along too well, and I had a lot of other

things to fill my time. So I might say maybe I was not the coolest kid on the block, but at least then I did not smoke, and I am glad that I never started smoking. But, if you look at back then, and you can compare it to today, even if you compare it to today, the mindset has changed dramatically.

* (15:10)

It is interesting, I, as a child, would never go to my dad and say, Dad, you should not be smoking; that is bad; that is unhealthy. Well, I can tell you that my daughter does it to my wife in terms of, you know, it is not a good thing to be smoking, Mom, type of thing. There is a change in mindset. Our young people are a whole lot smarter on the issue of smoking. It is encouraging when we see that mindset starting to change, or it has started. This goes back a number of years ago.

It was interesting. I guess it would have been in the early- or mid-nineties that I had the opportunity to go and meet with virtually every Grade 9 class at Sisler High School. One of the things that we talked about was the issue of smoking, and there were a couple of things that came out of it. This is again in the mid-nineties. I would ask, why is it that you smoke? Is it the cool thing to do? It was interesting that I had different reasons, but the primary reason that was given, at least in the Grade 9 class that I was in discussions with, was that it was a good way to keep weight off. I could not believe the number of young ladies that would say, well, by smoking, it cuts back on me eating and I do not want to put on the weight, so I will have a cigarette. It surprised me in terms of the motivation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that even that has now changed, and we have seen today more than ever before that our young people are very much aware of the consequence. You know, I can remember one of the Grade 9 students had indicated, why are you so opposed to cigarette smoking because, after all, you are a part of the government and you guys get taxes from it? That comes from a Grade 9 student. That was the essence of the question, obviously, not verbatim. It is a few years ago. My memory is not quite that good, but therein lies this huge gap from the reality of the situation.

The government does not make money because people are smoking. At the end of the day, we lose money, and we lose a lot of money. The costs to our health care system are staggering, and it is going to get worse. As individuals and our lifespan tends to grow, we are finding that more and more we have to

deal with the disease of cancer and the amount of things that are caused as a direct result of cancer, the number of different attributes or diseases, whether it is lung and so forth, are staggering. The costs are going to grow, and we do need to get that out.

There are still many Manitobans that believe that the government cashes in on the taxes it collects. This is why, when we look at Bill 27, this is a bill which relatively small numbers of people are actually aware of. If government wanted to do something positive in an apolitical fashion, to work with all political parties and maybe have some sort of a promotional campaign—Mr. Deputy Speaker, do not get me wrong. I do not want them going into the tax purse to go out and give self-patting on the back and spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in terms of an advertising campaign.

What I am suggesting is that, if they are genuine in what it is that they want, and I am going to give them the benefit of the doubt on this by saying that they do want to see this bill for the right reasons, then let us take it another step and see in terms of whether or not you can get some sort of a promotion about this particular bill. Why not have representatives from the three parties go out to some of our larger high schools? Sisler High has over 1,600 or 1,700 students in that one facility itself. There are other schools, and how maybe we can, again, by talking about this legislation, actually make a difference, because the more Manitobans realize that smoking is costing our society, we do not financially benefit, I think the better it would be because, as we know today, Manitobans more and more recognize the negative impacts of smoking. I still think that there is that mindset out there that the costs are less than the tax revenue that is gained by the selling of cigarettes.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I know, at the very least within the Liberal Party, that we would forgo every dollar of that tax if it meant that all Manitobans would give up on smoking. What we have found is that quite often Manitobans, what it takes for the individual to stop smoking is the price. The higher the price of cigarettes, the more incentive for the individual to stop smoking. I have witnessed that on numerous occasions.

That is why it was sad to see what happened out east when you had the wholesaling of cheap cigarettes and then, at the end of the day, there was a radical reduction in taxes on those cigarettes, which

then made it that much more affordable, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do not have the stats. I do not know the numbers, but I suspect that that was something that was not positive in terms of the decrease in the number of smokers.

So government does play a significant role. I can recall having discussions with individuals. If we did not have cigarettes today and someone tried to introduce that, I suspect, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it would be outlawed because of the different things that you have. There is so much that is on the Web sites on tobacco and cigarette smoking.

There was one that I did pull off from the Canadian Cancer Society. They have a section just dealing with tobacco, and it is amazing the ingredients. I will quote directly that "Cigarette smoke is composed of a large number of different substances that affect many parts of the body. Cigarette "tar"—a short name for the condensed solid particles in smoke—contains about 4,000 known chemicals, including poisons, and 50 cancer-causing substances. Many have been linked to disease. Some of these chemicals and poisonous gases in cigarette smoke are" and I will read off the ones that they have listed off: arsenic, acetone—and in brackets it says, acetone is used in paint stripper and nail polish remover; I have smelled nail polish when they have taken off the lid, that is one potent smell; it is amazing that people are actually smoking that—ammonia, carbon monoxide—some words are little bit more difficult for me to pronounce—cyanide, mercury, nicotine, lead. These are some of the things that are listed off. [*interjection*] Well, there are about 4,000 of them apparently, known chemicals.

It has been suggested that I be given leave on this bill. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not ask for leave because it is a bill that we will see pass today. Having said that, those are the ones that are actually listed on the Web site. I am sure if you are really interested in it, you would be able to buy some more.

*(15:20)

I made reference to lung cancer. Again, I am going to go right back to the Web site in terms of how cigarettes are harmful. It is a quote, Mr. Deputy Speaker: The moment the smoke from cigarettes touches the lips, it begins an attack of living cells. It continues to do so wherever it goes, the mouth, the tongue, the throat, your air passages, lungs, stomach and more. The cigarettes break down products.

Only two minutes left, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Well, the cigarettes break down products, eventually reach the bladder, the pancreas, the kidneys, the cervix, the colon, the breast. Mr. Deputy Speaker, cancer is a brutal disease. It is a disease that all of us have a responsibility to do what we can for all the right reasons. The social impact of smoking, its negative impact, is overwhelming. We need to not only settle for legislation such as this, we need and can be aggressive. We say 18 as an example for being able to buy cigarettes. Maybe we should be bumping that up to 19, and I suggest to the government that they consider that. I think that that is one of those ways.

So I look at this bill as a stepping stone, and I hope to be able to be debating more bills of a similar nature that are going to have a real impact on smoking in the province of Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if you would canvass the House and see if we can get leave of the House to relax the dress code rules for this afternoon to allow the gentlemen to participate without our jackets. We have done it in the past.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): It is unusually sultry and humid in here. I do not know if there was an equipment failure or something, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but we are okay with that request. *[interjection]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No unanimous consent.

Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Before I recognize the Member for River Heights, let me canvass the House if there is agreement about the request.

Are we prepared to give unanimous consent that we remove the jackets?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any objection?

If there is unanimous consent, then it will be done. Take them off.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I rise to speak to Bill 27, The Tobacco Damages and Health Care

Costs Recovery Act. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to begin by saying that I certainly support this bill, as my colleague does, and we hope that this bill, after due consideration at committee stage, will move forward.

I would like to thank all those who have worked hard to reduce tobacco smoking in Manitoba and to reduce the tragic impact of tobacco smoking on the health of Manitobans. As a physician, I have been concerned about the adverse effect of tobacco smoking on the health of Manitobans for some time. Of course, I was a participant in the All-Party Task Force on Environmental Tobacco Smoke, and we reviewed, at that point, many of the grim statistics in terms of the impact of tobacco smoking on health care. Major effects, clearly, of tobacco smoking on lung cancer, dating back to the 1950s, and certainly well-studied, well-understood, well-recognized and, clearly, in and of itself, the impact of tobacco smoke to cause lung cancer would be sufficient to be taking the measures that we have taken and that we propose and are talking about taking today.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Tobacco smoke has effects to cause or promote a wide variety of cancers from esophageal cancer to breast cancer to many other different types of cancers. Tobacco smoking is a major cause of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, a condition in which the lung function deteriorates steadily and progressively with age to the point where individuals can no longer have the capacity to breathe normally, to exercise normally, need to rely on oxygen and, sadly, as the condition progresses, it is all too often still terminal.

The impact of tobacco smoking on heart disease is huge, and as someone who has been involved in medical research involving cells called platelets which are impacted as well as many other components of the blood vessel and epithelial cells are damaged and so on, that it is quite clear that the impact on heart disease in terms of the effect on human health and the cost of human health is probably even larger than the effect of tobacco smoke on cancers.

Clearly, stopping the use of tobacco smoke in Manitoba can have a major, major impact and in this bill we are talking about tackling directly the producers, the corporations which produce tobacco and tackling them directly in a way that they will be forced to, we hope, provide some significant funding for health care but, perhaps more importantly, to

acknowledge the most unfortunate role which the tobacco companies have played in spreading the use of tobacco and in contributing to sickness and shortening of life to death in Manitoba as well as elsewhere.

It is significant the history of this legislation. This type of legislation was first introduced in Canada in British Columbia with their Tobacco Damages Recovery Act adopted in the British Columbia Legislature with all-party support on July 28, 1997. In 1998, the following year, the B.C. act was amended and renamed the Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act. It was challenged in British Columbia in a lawsuit from Imperial Tobacco Canada which went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

On November 12, 1998, following the act being proclaimed, the B.C. government filed a medicare cost recovery lawsuit in the B.C. Supreme Court. The tobacco companies filed a counter constitutional challenge action to the act. February 21, 2000, the British Columbia Supreme Court ruled that the act was unconstitutional on the grounds of extra-territoriality. The B.C. Legislature then amended the act to respond to the court judgment, and January 24, 2001, the amended Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act was proclaimed.

The B.C. government then refiled its medicare cost recovery lawsuit, and the tobacco companies filed a new constitutional challenge in the B.C. Supreme Court. June 5, 2003, the B.C. Supreme Court again ruled that the amended act was unconstitutional on the grounds of extra-territoriality. On this occasion, however, the case was appealed and on May 20, 2004, the B.C. Court of Appeal reversed the lower court and three judges unanimously ruled that the amended act was fully constitutional.

*(15:30)

On September 29, 2005, the Supreme Court upheld the act as correctly falling under provincial jurisdiction valid as being consistent with judicial independence and valid in being consistent with the rule of law. There were a number of provinces which intervened in the Supreme Court case, including Manitoba, and, following the action in the Supreme Court, a number of provinces, including Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, New Brunswick and Québec have passed legislation following in the footsteps of the British Columbia act. We are now doing so here in Manitoba, and we

are doing so, in essence, to hold the tobacco industry accountable with legal ramifications and liability for their wrongful behaviour. We are doing so to uncover the truth of the bad behaviour with full public disclosure of internal documents through the discovery process. We are doing so in the interests of improving health and forcing companies to stop their wrongful behaviour. We are doing so in the interests of compensation to Manitoba taxpayers. It costs Manitoba to treat people as a result of the perils and the influence of smoking, and there is the potential for the Province to recover some billions of dollars in health care expenditures.

There is a penalty, clearly, in pursuing this, to the tobacco companies, and, hopefully, it will send a message not only to tobacco companies, but it will set a precedent to other companies that they cannot deceive the public and cost the government major dollars without paying.

There is an important message here when we are talking about accountability, and I should note that it is not going unnoticed that the present government is tacking on to many bills at the moment a clause or clauses which would provide the minister and/or a representative of the government some major immunity or protection from liability and accountability. Clearly, one of the good things in our system is that there are ways of holding people accountable for bad decisions which are not only bad decisions which were taken from a misguided approach but bad decisions which reflect the fact that the tobacco companies appear to have wilfully failed to warn the public, appear to have suppressed research, have made claims on occasion that there was not proof that smoking caused disease and that cigarettes are addictive, have worked to prevent or conspired to prevent the government from warning the public of the risks of smoking, have done such things as marking light cigarettes as safer when they knew they were not, have done such things as disseminated false and misleading information about the risks of smoking, and suppressed and concealed research on the health risks in order to promote sales, and have targeted children and teens in their advertising and marketing.

This is an important initiative, as I have already said, and I think all parties agree. It is good that we are moving forward with this initiative in Manitoba.

One of the advantages of proceeding on this act and then subsequently proceeding with a lawsuit against the big tobacco companies is that it should

give us a much more accurate assessment of the real costs of tobacco smoking on health care and the costs to government insurance, medicare programs, and the cost, of course, to individuals.

I think that it is quite likely that these costs are substantially more than many have estimated to date. Smoking, of course, has been present since the very beginning of medical insurance and government public medicare programs in Manitoba, and so there are many years of accumulated costs in the past. We also know that the impact of tobacco smoking to cause lung cancer continues for many, many years. In this instance, we have medical care costs which are likely to continue, hopefully to a lesser extent, but are likely to continue to a significant extent for not only years, but decades into the future.

It is interesting that when we were part of the All-Party Task Force on Environmental Tobacco Smoke that we received some information from varied sources about costs. I remember in Gimli, Mr. Bill Aitken was describing the cost of his bladder cancer, believed due to smoking, as \$100,000 of surgical costs borne by the provincial health care system and major, significant, personal costs of travel, loss of income as he was forced into early retirement in the years of his highest earning potential.

I remember Mr. Fedorchuk in Gimli providing visual evidence of the high cost of treating a patient with lung cancer; costs, for example, which might include the drug Taxol at \$17,000 for a treatment. Costs, of course, will vary from drug to drug, and we are always hoping that there will be newer and better drugs and, indeed, cheaper drugs, but, at the moment, the overall cost of treating patients with cancer has been going up rather than down, and going up significantly with the new drugs.

I remember Dr. Tracy Tressor in Roblin providing some cost estimates for looking after a patient with a heart attack or myocardial infarction. She estimated a cost of about \$10,000 for the first two days after a heart attack in Parkland Regional Health Authority, \$2,000 per dose for thrombolytic therapy, \$5,000 for air ambulance cost to Winnipeg. Given about 200 heart attacks per year in the Parkland Regional Health Authority area, and a substantial proportion of these with smoking as one of the major causative factors, Dr. Tressor commented at the meeting, that patients with myocardial infarctions are probably costing some \$2

million a year for the Parkland RHA alone, and much of that relates to smoking.

In Swan River, we heard the story of an individual with asthma necessitating hospitalization, IV, steroids, oral prednisone, all due to smoking. The asthma was triggered by smoking, and here we are with major costs to the health care system, as well as sickness to the individual.

It has been estimated that some 30 percent of all cancer is due to exposure to cigarette smoke. Cancer costs society probably in the range of 10 to 15 percent of health care costs. It may be going up with the increase in incidents. Elimination of smoking probably would reduce total health care costs by, on the order of, 3 to 5 percent. That is from just cancer alone, but heart and stroke disease, which represent a significant proportion of health care, direct health care costs, estimates might vary between 7 and 25 percent, depending on just how broad you take this. If one third of these costs were to be eliminated with no smoking, then we, again, have significant contribution of smoking to heart disease and related costs.

*(15:40)

For respiratory disease, which may represent some 4 to 8 percent of health care costs, smoking elimination can probably reduce this by a quarter, reducing total health care costs significantly.

There are addictions, mental illness, neurological behavioural effects, the impact of smoking is significant, and there are reductions here as well. Total reductions from eliminating smoking, from adding the above is probably somewhere between 6 percent and 16 percent of the health care costs; that is, for example, for the year 2002, probably somewhere between \$180 million and \$450 million for the province of Manitoba alone.

To this should be added some significant proportion of federal direct expenditures for health care in Manitoba, which in 2002 were a little under \$400 million, so some tens of millions of dollars there. The huge cost of smoking on health care, the huge burden of illness, loss of productivity from the smoking, these are all important reasons why we should be considering and why we should be supporting this legislation.

I think it is important, as well as the other factors that I have talked about, to consider the influence of second-hand smoke on children. Again, there are costs here and some of these costs may be lifelong.

Children who are born from mothers who were smokers are at a higher risk of having low birth weight and of having sudden infant death syndrome. Smoking is responsible for thousands of new cases of asthma every year. Second-hand smoke causes chronic respiratory syndrome, a coughing and wheezing in children. Children who breathe in second-hand smoke are more likely to suffer from dental caries, from eye and nose irritation and irritability. Second-hand smoke causes or contributes to causing middle ear infections, resulting in thousands of annual visits to the physicians. The impact of low birth weight in children is, from what we know, probably lifelong. The impact on health is quite significant. You are learning more about the addictive nature of second-hand smoke. It is quite possible that children who are exposed significantly to second-hand smoke early on are much more likely to become addicted to cigarette smoke and to take up smoking when they become adults.

Certainly, for all these reasons, for the many, many aspects which smoking can influence, for the problems that the tobacco companies have caused, it is right and appropriate that we should be moving on this legislation and following it up with a lawsuit to try and recover some of the costs, the past costs and the future costs, as a result of cigarettes, cigarette smoking and tobacco smoking.

Mr. Speaker, it is encouraging that, following the All-Party Task Force on Environmental Tobacco Smoke, we were able to achieve consensus in this Chamber to end the use of tobacco in most buildings. There are, of course, some exceptions in this province. The province-wide ban on tobacco smoking already looks like it is starting to have an effect to reduce the amount of and the prevalence of smoking in Manitoba, and, certainly, this has been a positive step forward.

It is timely, perhaps, to be moving with this bill today, but it is also a time when we should be looking, I suggest, at some other measures that can be taken to move us forward in the effort to reduce the likelihood that children become addicted. It is very apparent from studies, for example, that children and young people seeing smoking in the movies are influenced, sadly, to start smoking all too often and that doing as simple a measure as requiring notice to be placed at the beginning of movies in movie theatres of the dangers of cigarette smoking would perhaps be a measure that could be taken, as well as others, to reduce the impact of smoking seen in movies on young children and reduce, therefore,

the likelihood of children and young people starting smoking.

There is, I suggest, much more that we can potentially learn from this effort and this legislation because there are some potential areas already which can be followed through as a result of companies and institutions which have used practices that may have impacts on health care. One that would come to mind would be companies which have manufactured or used asbestos. While there is not, at this point, the indications that the companies may have done the same sort of thing as the tobacco companies in promoting the use of the product even when there was substantial research based to show that tobacco was harmful, certainly companies and individuals and even governments which are involved in the production or use of asbestos should take note of this bill, because clearly asbestos is a significant factor or a significant health concern, and we have had a number of individuals who have come forward, Raven Thundersky and her family being an example, with concerns about the impact of asbestos exposure on their families here in Manitoba.

There are circumstances where mining companies have left toxic wastes, and the effects of these toxic tailings piles on the environment and on health at this point may not be fully known, but it is quite possible that there could be additional health impacts and that there could be, following this legislation, the potential to pursue companies which are having an impact on health for one reason or another through this sort of mechanism.

It certainly sends an important signal to those companies who are operating in Manitoba and, indeed, in other provinces who have brought forward this sort of legislation, that they need to be careful about the long-run impacts of the products that are being produced and, indeed, of the work environment.

*(15:50)

We have moved in this Legislature to recognize, for example, the dangers to firefighters from exposure, and it is important that we acknowledge these.

It is important that we acknowledge other circumstances where individuals are exposed in the workplace. Because, in fact what we are doing through this legislation is setting a precedent which may have an impact on future circumstances where individuals are exposed to cancer-causing chemicals,

whether it is through products produced or in the workplace. Certainly, it opens up a field of liability and therefore due diligence and care which has not been adequately appreciated, I suggest, in the past.

There are in cigarette smoke, as we have already acknowledged, a wide variety of cancer-causing chemicals. It is of interest that there are circumstances, whether it is in the preparation of food or other circumstances in the home or at work, where cancer-causing chemicals are also produced. This measure, I suggest, will also send a signal to products which are being used in companies which use products in a whole wide variety of circumstances to be much more careful in the testing that is done to ensure that the testing results are provided openly and honestly, but also to ensure that there is adequate testing to determine whether products directly or indirectly produced have or are associated with cancer-causing chemicals.

Mr. Speaker, I will wrap up in saying once more that, as Liberals, we are strongly supportive of this measure. We look forward to it moving forward, and we look forward to the lawsuit which will come in due course, and we hope that that will be successful.

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

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading, Bill 27, The Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act.

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

Bill 29—The Degree Granting Act

Mr. Speaker: Second reading, Bill 29, The Degree Granting Act, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Inkster.

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable Member for Inkster?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, it has been denied.

The honourable Member for Inkster, to speak.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, once again the government is trying to get its way by trying to put through legislation that ultimately the government was negligent in terms of bringing before this House in a proper fashion, so they have invoked a different type

of closure. You know, I would like to comment on that process for this bill and how this bill has actually gotten before us today.

It is a bill that does have a significant impact. There are many people who believe that they brought this bill out for one reason and one reason alone. It has a lot more to do with a former MLA of this Chamber than anything else. I guess it would have been interesting to see if there are indeed any other provincial jurisdictions that have what is being proposed. I think that it would have been nice to have been afforded the opportunity to be able to do a bit of research, and that is the reason why, Mr. Speaker, the other day in Question Period, I had posed a question to the Premier (Mr. Doer).

The question was to the Premier, and it is on page 2877, June 1, quote direct, and this is what I had questioned the Premier. My question to the Premier was very specific: "I live up to my agreements. Will the Premier live up to his agreement, this agreement, and instruct his House leader not to invoke any form of closure, as we witnessed yesterday from this majority government? Will the Premier respect the agreement?" The Premier stood up in his place and said, "Yes, Mr. Speaker."

Now, what was it that I was referring to? Again, it is the same sort of thing. It is a process that we find ourselves in, in regard to this bill, Mr. Speaker. What I was referring to was May 31. After all, I asked the question on June 1 of the Premier, and at that time it was on Bill 30 and it was on Bill 31, and I had asked the government to allow the bills to remain standing in my name as tradition has had it for years inside this Chamber, because I do take it very seriously, my responsibility to be able to get a better understanding of the legislation. Bill 29 is a serious piece of legislation, and I think it is important that we be afforded the opportunity to be able to speak to the bill when we feel most comfortable in being able to speak to it.

I suspect, on a per capita basis, I might have one of the higher, maybe in the top 10 constituencies—*[interjection]*—that have post-secondary individuals attending the school. The Minister of Labour (Ms. Allan) chirps from her seat about briefings. Well, I am sorry I did not attend the briefing that she had offered, and I did not mean to offend her personally. I can tell her I have attended other briefings. If I would have known that she would have felt so slighted, maybe I would have made more time to be

able to attend that particular briefing, but I felt quite adequate in terms that the briefing was not necessary.

So, on that particular bill I was content, Mr. Speaker. I think the Minister of Labour is taking it maybe a little bit too personal, a little bit too personal. I can assure her that the bills that I do need, and I feel comfortable that I need a briefing, I will go and I will—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sure the honourable member is going to tie the relevancy here somewhere.

Order. The honourable Member for Inkster has the floor.

Mr. Lamoureux: I appreciate you bringing me back to order on this bill, Mr. Speaker. It is just the Minister of Labour is a little antsy on Bill 27. Bill 27 is an important piece of legislation, and the minister needs to think beyond your own legislation, and that there is other legislation, and that legislation deserves the opportunity to have adequate debate inside this Chamber. I would suggest to the government that they allow that debate to occur, and I am not alone inside the Chamber. The Premier himself stated very clearly, because I posed the question to him, yes, that it was not appropriate, that he would instruct his own Government House Leader (Mr. Mackintosh) accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, each New Democratic member can read for themselves page 2877, and they will see that the Premier did make a commitment. The commitment that he made was that his House leader allow me to speak to Bill 27 when I want to speak to Bill 27—I am sorry, Bill 29—because the post-secondary education—[interjection]

That is right. Post-secondary education, Mr. Speaker, is of critical importance. We see that every day and we recognize that. We, in the Liberal Party, I must say, acknowledge the importance of education. We respect the value of post-secondary education. We treat the issue nowhere near as political as this government treats it. You remember the promise in 1999. The promise was that they were going to freeze tuition fees. That was an NDP promise in 1999. They froze the actual tuition, but, as a result of freezing the tuition, ancillary fees came up. So, you know, instead of taking it out of this pocket or this purse, now they are expecting the students to pay for it out of a different pocket or a different purse. The cost of public education at post-secondary

institutions has gone up. Yet this government is able to go around saying, well, we made a promise in 1999 that we were going to freeze tuition fees to protect the costs of post-secondary education. They were so proud and so bold to go out and talk.

* (16:00)

Mr. Speaker, that was an important campaign pledge because this, as I indicated earlier, you know, I could not give you the actual percentage, but I can feel comfortable in knowing that my constituency and the number of students that I have that are going into post-secondary institutions is definitely within that top 10 of all the MLA constituencies in the province.

So I have an extra, vested interest to follow the issue of post-secondary education, and I take that very seriously. I believe that is one of the reasons why I should have been afforded the opportunity to be able to have this bill stand in my name. Mr. Speaker, if we take a look at the bill itself, Bill 29, which was actually introduced for second reading on May 29. That is when it was introduced for second reading.

If the government had its way, it would pass it today and it would go to committee. If the government had its way, that is what it would do. What kind of legislation is that, Mr. Speaker? How is that being responsible to our high school students that are looking at going into post-secondary university or college or whatever else there might be out there for them? How is that being respectful for them?

Mr. Speaker, this government believes because it has a majority mandate of 35 seats, that it can behave—or 34 seats I must say, because there are 34 NDP MLAs sitting inside this Chamber, they believe that they can behave in an action that is closer to a dictator than a premier. That is the reality of it. It is my way or the highway. You know, the Premier (Mr. Doer) says, I am not going to call a public inquiry. He is the only one that can call a public inquiry on the Crocus Fund. What is he prepared to sacrifice in order to prevent the public inquiry? He has made it very clear; at no chance is he going to sacrifice, or I should say, in no way is he going to call for a public inquiry on the Crocus Fund no matter what, even if it means sacrificing 25 percent of his legislative agenda.

But now he realizes he is losing his legislative agenda, so now we have a government that is forcing

us to speak on Bill 29, even though it was brought to this House on May 31. You know what, Mr. Speaker; I might have made a mistake. It is May 29. Let the record show it was May 29. I was two days off.

Mr. Speaker, you know, we have wonderful young Manitobans in our public gallery right now, and those are the types of Manitobans that we need to stand up for inside this Chamber. We do not want an arrogant government that believes that they know it all, that they have the answers to all of the problems, because we know full well that they do not have the answers to the problems.

We have kids that are dropping out of our school systems just as much as they were before. This government has not, Mr. Speaker, set up a system or improved the public educational system to the degree in which we are getting more and more people, or continue to get more people, dropping through the cracks. *[interjection]* Well, the Minister of Education (Mr. Bjornson) says I am wrong and he says he will provide me the data.

That is, in part, the point. You see, the Minister of Education needs to realize that you cannot just introduce a bill one day and then three days later expect it to pass the Legislature and then bring it to committee tonight and then ultimately pass. What sort of consultation is that? How does that afford the members of the opposition to be able to consult, Mr. Speaker?

So then he says, well, my numbers are wrong. I would like to see. Is the Minister of Education trying to say that we do not have dropouts in the province of Manitoba?

An Honourable Member: I am not saying that.

Mr. Lamoureux: So he is not saying that. Well, I realize this is not Question Period.

Having said that, I think that the Minister of Education needs to realize that we have hundreds of children every year who are falling through the cracks. This government has failed at being able to challenge the abilities of all of our children that are inside our public school system, Mr. Speaker.

As a direct result of that, Mr. Speaker, those individuals who are falling through the cracks, in good part, are going to suffer additional hardship because this government is more interested in self promotion and trying to be high in the polls as opposed to doing the right thing for our children.

That is the reality of it. That is the reason why they take the line—they say, well, when it comes to post-secondary education and those valuable degrees that Bill 29 authorizes us to be able to issue out, those valuable degrees are becoming more and more expensive.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you one thing. Even some of the policies that we have seen from this government, in opposition they might have suggested to you that they are somewhat racial in their nature, because, remember, one of the highest increases in tuition are coming from those individuals from abroad. We do not recognize the value and the contributions that they bring, and where are most of those students coming from? You can remember the immigration issue when we talked about the Provincial Nominee Program or federal immigration or, better yet, the landing fee, \$975. Right away, many government members who were in opposition back then said, well, look, that is a racial policy. You are preventing someone from certain countries to be able to come more than others. Well, what are they doing in terms of being able to acquire post-secondary degrees by individuals from some of those very same countries?

But it goes beyond that, because, consistently, year after year—even last year, I asked the minister of post-secondary education, what does it cost to get a four-year degree today compared to back in '99? She slipped me a note indicating that it is, in essence, the same, Mr. Speaker, that tuition fees have, in fact, been frozen, and they continue to be frozen, and under no circumstances does this government want to change that particular policy.

Well, if you listen to the government, you would think then that someone who is graduating from Sisler High School or Tec Voc or The Maples Collegiate today going to the University of Manitoba or Red River College or the University of Winnipeg, or wherever else, Brandon University, that they will be paying X dollars for their first year and the same X dollars in their fourth year. That is what they would believe, if, in fact, they were listening to the government. But, Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. The costs of going to university for students have gone up and they have gone up considerably.

So we talk about the importance of that designation, of the degree, and it is because many years ago in high school, you would graduate high school and people felt, well, you know, that is good

enough; that is as high as I need to go. It was a very small percentage of the graduates in the early seventies, late sixties, who were actually going on to university. Today there is a significant percentage that is going to our universities, and they have expectations when they are spending the kind of money that they are spending and that they are investing into that post-secondary education. I had a professor who would call it the deferring of gratification, someone who is prepared to invest in themselves with the idea that at the end of the day, they are going to be better off for it. It is all an attempt to be able to get the degree.

Government, in this legislation, recognizes the importance of even the name "degree" because that is, in essence, what this bill is all about, Mr. Speaker. It is who can say that in Manitoba you got this degree. The Province is recognizing the value of that through this legislation. But to what degree do their actions follow the types of speeches that they deliver, whether it is in a campaign, between elections, inside this Chamber, outside this Chamber? They are a master at spin. They have no problem in terms of spending in order to spin and so on. We have seen a million-dollar campaign to promote this government's budget in their health care.

* (16:10)

Every time they address students they talk about the freeze on university fees, but they are not telling the other side of the story. The other side of the story means the freeze on tuition does not mean that there is no increase for the student attending university, because the ancillary fees are going up and getting higher and higher. They are higher today than they ever have been. There are other concerns. If you say you are going to have a freeze and then you do not provide the necessary operational resources, Mr. Speaker, it is going to cause other problems, other issues that need to be dealt with.

If the government believes in the importance of a degree and quality education for our students, I think that we have to start looking at other issues. If you want, look at the issues of tenure in our universities. Look at the issues of cost of textbooks and the frequencies in which one textbook is actually used. Textbooks are exceptionally expensive. If a professor changes textbooks every year, there is a substantial cost to the university students, Mr. Speaker. That has nothing to do with tuitions. What is the cost for professors in terms of tenure? I am not just talking the financial cost. Those are also

important issues that need to be addressed. Where is this government on those critical issues?

I have never heard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger)—who himself, I understand, was a professor at the University of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. I am sure he is very familiar with the professors over at the university. I would be very much interested, especially in his role as Minister of Finance, how he sees the cost of post-secondary education in the future. How can he complement the system, because what he has done has not? By instituting the freeze and allowing the ancillary fees increase, by not providing adequate financial resources, there has been a cost to that. Why is he not getting on the record on those other issues that are important to the students of our fine province? What is it going to take for this government to stop talking the rhetoric and start taking actions that are going to be to the betterment of our post-secondary students?

Every other day or every other week I am hearing something on the radio where they are talking about the need for financial resources. Our post-secondary institutions are talking about how the system is failing this government's lead agenda item on post-secondary education, Bill 29. That is their lead item. It deals with the granting of degrees.

One individual had indicated to me that the primary reason, the motivation for this particular bill has a lot more to do with the former member of this Legislature, the bio of that former MLA, than it does anything else.

One has to question why—[*interjection*] Well, I am not 100 percent sure in terms of the name. I believe it was Linda West, but I am not 100 percent sure of it. [*interjection*] No? You know what? Oh, she has attempted to. Yes, well, Mr. Speaker, and again, this is one of the reasons why I say that members need to be afforded the opportunity to be able to do the work that is important. That is why you cannot just expect a bill to be introduced today, debated, pass, go to committee, back to the Chamber, and become law, all within seven or eight days, because when you do that, you do a disservice to all the MLAs.

Mr. Speaker, I then would ask, well, I know Hansard cannot make the modification, but my apologies for indicating that it was a former MLA. She was a past candidate, I understand, and this is maybe the primary reason as to why it is that the government has brought this bill before us today.

Mr. Speaker, I suspect that this has been an issue of when to issue a degree or not, and maybe the minister responsible in third reading or even possibly in committee stage, if the bill makes it to committee stage, that the minister of post-secondary education could maybe answer a couple of questions in regard to this bill. One of those questions is, why do we have the bill in front of us today? What is the primary reason for it? Is this something that was brought to the department from our universities or our colleges? Who was the stakeholder group that brought this issue to the minister? I would be very much interested in knowing that, and if the minister responsible for post-secondary education would do me the favour and indicate that during committee or in third reading, it would be very much appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, while she is looking at that, maybe then she could also get me a stat because on the one hand you have the bill, then on the other hand you have the money issue. My constituents are more interested in the money issue, I believe, than this particular bill itself. So I would ask the minister if she could provide an apple to apple comparison to the cost of going to university today in comparison to 1999, and I would like to give some definition to the apple, if I can.

The apple comparison would be, let us say, some of your basic courses, first year courses—an example of that would be intro to sociology, economics, possibly even a political science, Mr. Speaker—those four or five credit courses, and how much it would have cost to register back in 1999. Then I would like to be able to contrast that to what it would be for September of 2007. Now I do not want just the tuition costs. What I am interested in is the ancillary fees that are also charged. What were those in 1999 compared to what it is today? Further to that, I think that it would be definitely beneficial for us to have at our fingertips the average, and you can bring in an average cost of texts for a first-year student compared from 1999 to 2003.

Mr. Speaker, I would very much appreciate the minister of post-secondary education providing that information because then I will be sure to be fair and relay to my constituents to what degree this government has kept to its word about freezing the costs of universities and getting a four-year degree.

* (16:20)

I want to be fair to the government, and that is the reason why, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we look at those three components. So that is

how I would say when we talk about apple to apple, that is what we do a comparison with. I gave the minister some definition to that and I look forward to receiving something from the minister.

You know, one of the nice things is that, as I have indicated to my constituents in the past, these departments are not short. Where the government has spent a lot of money is on bureaucracy. We know that. The minister of post-secondary education has a pretty impressive bureaucracy, and I am sure that it would not be that difficult for the minister to be able to pull the information that I have requested. In fact, I would suggest to you that it would be very easy for the minister of post-secondary education to pull that.

I would argue, then, that the students and the parents of our fine province would very much be interested in knowing just what the reality is, because I know what the reality is not, Mr. Speaker. It is not fair to say to the students and to the parents, the people who are looking at post-secondary education, that there is a tuition freeze, therefore there are no increased costs for our universities and other post-secondary facilities or colleges and so forth year over year, because that is not the case. We know that for a fact. The issue is how much of an increase has there been over the last number of years.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that, if the minister was to be more transparent by providing that information, Manitobans as a whole will, in fact, have a better sense of whether or not this government is doing a good job or a bad job in regard to post-secondary education. In addition to that, it would be interesting to see, and we can use the University of Manitoba as an example, the annual operating costs, the percentage of funding from the government and students from '99 to, again, 2007, or 2006-2007. Again, it is just to get a sense in terms of what sort of commitment is coming from this government on this very important issue.

My constituents see the value of a degree, Mr. Speaker, whether it comes from whatever post-secondary educational facility. They see it and they strive to have it. We want those degrees to be credible degrees. We want their money not to be wasted. Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): I am pleased to rise to speak to this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Bill 29, The Degree Granting Act, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of comments that I do want to make as they relate to this act, perhaps some of the

short-sightedness in this legislation and the fact that I think the department and the minister could have done a more critical job in at least consulting with the various institutions in our province and individuals.

Before I get into that, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the state of this particular bill in the process of the session. We started out this session with an understanding that was signed between the House leaders, the political parties' representatives in the Chamber here, that we would conduct ourselves in accordance with some rules that were established in addition to the rules that we have established over time. But, more specifically, we had a sessional order that was passed in this Chamber when we adjourned the House last session, and that sessional order outlined how we would proceed.

However, as all Manitoba knows now, Mr. Speaker, one of the things we did not contemplate when we signed the agreement was that the government had embroiled itself to the extent it has in something called the Crocus issue. This is a scandal that we have not seen the likes of in this province in my time of office. We talked about the Monnin inquiry and, certainly, that was an issue in this Legislature, but when you look at this particular scandal, by comparison, this is a mountain compared to what we saw under Monnin.

Mr. Speaker, 33,000 Manitobans lost over \$60 million and this government seems to think that it is okay; it was a business venture, it was venture capital money, so, if it was lost by those people who invested, you know, the government says buyer beware, they should have been aware of some of the problems before they invested. However, what the government is not saying is that with their collusion, as a matter of fact, information was withheld from those 33,000 investors, and so, when this House opened, the opposition decided that we had to hold the government to account. It is one of the few times that you see opposition parties work together to bring a government to account. And we were not doing it just on our behalf. We were doing it on behalf of Manitobans and the 33,000 people who lost money in the venture.

When we started that process, Mr. Speaker, we knew that the government was bringing forward a pretty light agenda in terms of legislation. This was all supposed to be the feel-good legislation prior to going into an election campaign, but they did not contemplate that we would start to try to bring the

government to account for some of their transgressions, if you like, as a result of the Crocus scandal. The bells rang in the Chamber, which meant that certain deadlines, with respect to legislation, might not be met and, indeed, today is another one of those deadlines.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the government thought that by bullying the opposition, they would get their way at the end of the day, and to a certain extent government has the numbers, they have the power, they should be able to carry out their agenda. Never in the history of this province have we seen a time when 22 members of the Legislature held up 34 members of the Legislature with respect to passing the budget. The first time in the history of our province, but what will go down in the history of the province is not the fact that we rang the bells for that number of days and that we held the government from passing its budget. What will go down in history is the fact that this government embroiled itself in one of the worst scandals this province has seen where 33,000 Manitobans lost over \$60 million.

This is not the loss of a few thousand dollars, Mr. Speaker. This is the loss of millions of dollars—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I just remind the member that we are on Bill 29, The Degree Granting Act. I am sure what comments he is making that he is going to be tying it into the bill. I am sure of that.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, thank you for that caution.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 29 finds itself amidst that mix of legislation that has been held up because of the conduct of the government. Bill 29, The Degree Granting Act is sort of a—I guess it is a me-too bill, because other jurisdictions have it. In Manitoba, we have not had an act of this kind. One would have to ask the question: Do we really need an act of this nature? What are we afraid of?

Well, there are some things that we should be cautious about. Some of them are like institutions coming along, either set up from the United States or set up from Europe or set up from wherever, from within Manitoba or Canada for that matter, and offering degrees that, at the end of the day, are meaningless. So what we want to do is ensure that we protect the students that might be enrolling in these universities, in these programs, and also preserving the integrity of our institutions here in Manitoba.

* (16:30)

So, from that perspective, Mr. Speaker, this legislation, I think, is fine. But this legislation has a problem because, as a result of the government's not wanting to deal with the Crocus issue and not wanting to call a public inquiry into Crocus for fear that they would be embarrassed and held accountable, and, indeed, the truth would come out about what their involvement was in the Crocus affair, this legislation, Bill 29, finds itself in somewhat of a problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we continue down this road of trying to end this session in the next week and one day, one would have to ask what have we accomplished in this session? And if you look at the light agenda of the government, they should be quite embarrassed by the fact that they have not been able to bring substantive legislation that really deals with the needs of Manitobans. And Bill 29 is one that we could live with or without for that matter over the course of the next year or two. But, having said that, this government needs to take on its own responsibility about how it is going to be accountable for what happened in Crocus.

Now the day does not end here on the Crocus issue, Mr. Speaker. This is going to keep coming back to this Legislature, and we will continue to press the government for answers. The new task force that has been established by my leader to look into this issue is just another step in holding this government accountable, and this government can be accountable in a number of ways. Number one, it can call an inquiry and set the terms of that inquiry. Let the government set the parameters of the inquiry, and then we will make the judgment on how valuable that inquiry is. That is one step they can do. Another step they can do is to call an election. I mean, that is always a choice of the government. When the government feels that it is being pressured to a certain extent, it has the option of going to the Lieutenant-Governor and asking for the government to dissolve the House and to call an election because this is an issue that Manitobans should have the ability to speak on and then we will abide by Manitoba's wishes.

The government again is afraid to call that. So it is afraid to call a public inquiry. It is afraid to call for an election. It wants to be stymied, Mr. Speaker. This government has lost, in my view, the confidence of the people of Manitoba. It has lost the trust to govern on behalf of Manitobans, and it has to do the right thing, whether it is today or whether it is tomorrow, and I know that members on the other side of the

House cannot wait until next Tuesday to get out of here. But that is not the end of the day. That is not the end of the day. *[interjection]*

The Member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) should contain himself if he can, Mr. Speaker, but I know it is difficult.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 29 is caught in a myriad of problems. It is in a quandary because the government would like to see this pass. It will find itself embarrassed if this bill does not pass. On the other hand, who is going to be responsible for this bill not passing. Well, it is going to be the government because they are supposed to be in charge of the agenda. It is not the opposition that is in charge of the agenda. It is the government. Now, if the government has given its responsibility over to the opposition to control its agenda, well, let us see what is going to happen in the end. Maybe what they should do is ask us for guidance in terms of how they should deal with the Crocus issue.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 29 sets out some things. The first thing it does is that the explanatory notes say: "The Bill restricts who has the power to grant academic degrees." It says: "Only the following may do so: institutions that are expressly authorized to do so by an Act of the Legislature;"—and I will repeat that: "institutions that are expressly authorized by an Act"—not a regulation—"an Act of the Legislature." And then it has another item called Steinbach Bible College, who are authorized to give degrees, and "other institutions that are prescribed by regulation."

Now, that is the part that bothers me because, all of a sudden, we are going to now continue to allow this government, that cannot bring its own affairs into line, determine by regulation who should be authorized to grant a degree. I can understand that only the Legislature should be allowed to make that determination through an act; or, if there are institutions that need to be added to the list, then that should come back into the House for a debate. The government should put its cards on the table, and then the Legislature determines who and what institutions should be allowed to grant degrees in this province. Now that is not how this government wants to proceed and, indeed, other jurisdictions probably followed this pattern to some extent.

Mr. Speaker, granting of degrees is a very important matter. I am one who would have to say that I do not agree with fly-by-night institutions coming into our province, setting up shop and offering a degree, and then, in the middle of the

night, leaving as well. That person or those students who have registered for those programs find themselves with really nothing at all to show for the time or the money or the effort that they have invested in education.

Mr. Speaker, what bothers me, though, is that, within our province, we do have recognized institutions that are even today not allowed to call themselves universities. There are legitimate reasons for that happening, but I want to refer to one institution that I am somewhat fond of and that is St. Boniface College. St. Boniface provides a very unique form of education in our province. It is our official bilingual institution that offers programs in French and in English, I believe. It is a college university program that is being offered at St. Boniface. Right now all of their degrees have to be granted through the University of Manitoba.

I think for Manitoba, at some point in time, we should be allowing an institution like St. Boniface College to really upgrade, if you like, their stature to a university college. That is another step in the whole process of evolution of education in our province. I think it would be a good thing and a good signal for St. Boniface, as well, but that is not a determination that should be made by any small body. That should be something that is decided upon by either the lobbying interests of the college itself that come to the Legislature, come to the MLAs, put out their cards on the table, allow us to debate that here in the Legislature. At the end of the day, government would have direction given to it by this Legislature in terms of what to do with regard to an application of that kind.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other problem I have here is the power that is given to the minister. Now, under the regulations, it is the department of post-secondary education, the minister, who will probably be drafting the regulations. That gives them unfettered powers in terms of what they are going to put into the regulations with respect to granting of degrees. Once again, I have a problem with that because I do not believe that anyone, any single person should be given that much authority with respect to those kinds of important issues.

When you read through this, it simply tells you quite plainly that the minister is the one who has the power here. Now the minister may designate certain aspects of this to COPSE, the Committee on Post-Secondary Education. They can, in fact, delegate some of their powers over to the Council on

Post-Secondary Education. Now the Council on Post-Secondary Education is given the responsibility of determining whether a business or some entity may use the term "university" or "varsity." Well, Mr. Speaker, if, for example, the minister is going to take the responsibility of determining who is to be able to grant a degree in this province, why in that same vein would the minister not take that same responsibility as to who should be able to be allowed to use the term "university" or "varsity." I mean, why would you delegate that to the Council on Post-Secondary Education and not the other?

* (16:40)

So there are some inconsistencies as we go through this little bit of legislation, Mr. Speaker. I know that we have not heard a great deal from the universities and, in just becoming the new critic for the area of post-secondary education, I have not had that opportunity to be able to discuss this piece of legislation with all of the institutions. Those that I have do not basically have a great problem with this, because they understand the need to try to restrict the granting of degrees to legitimate, bona fide institutions that are operating in our province.

I did receive, Mr. Speaker, representation from an institution in our province that has a bit of a different problem. That is that graduates from their particular institution cannot be allowed to enter into furthering their programs at the University of Manitoba because they are not recognized by the association of universities and community colleges nationally. That is a bit of a different problem because they are in a catch-22. In order for them to be able to be recognized by the association of universities and community colleges, they need to also be recognized by the provincial department of post-secondary education.

So, when they come to the minister here and ask to be recognized so that their graduates can then enter the University of Manitoba, they are told that they have to go and be recognized by the association of universities and community colleges. Mr. Speaker, the association tells them that they have to be recognized by the Province first before they can go to them. So they are in a catch-22. They are turned away when they go to one entity, and they are turned away when they go to the other. They are in no man's land.

To my way of thinking, a minister who has responsibility and is the advocate for institutions like this should be able to take this problem and resolve

it. If she cannot resolve it, then she should be able to recommend how this problem can actually have a positive resolution to it. Instead, the institution, as I understand it, is punted from pillar to post and does not get anywhere and this has gone on for some time.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess my message to the government and to the minister is that this bill, although it addresses the issues of granting degrees, should be looked at a little more broadly in terms of the legitimate institutions that operate in our province, and perhaps those institutions like the Steinbach Bible College should be named.

Providence College, the institution I am talking about, is named in this legislation, so it will fall under the umbrella of being controlled by the minister in terms of whether it can or cannot grant degrees. As I understand it, it is one of those institutions that is named that is allowed to offer degrees. What we have to do is find that next step, Mr. Speaker, that allows this institution's graduates to be able to be accepted into the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are other members who wish to speak to this bill. I think I have made the points that I wanted to make on this legislation, but let me go back to why this legislation has got a problem. I know that there are people in the academic community that are watching to see whether or not this legislation will actually become law. All we can do is look at the government and see whether or not they have decided that this is legislation that is important enough for them to try to make accommodation so that, indeed, this legislation passes.

But I go back to my first point, Mr. Speaker. This proposed legislation finds itself in a quandary because of the attitude and the line in the sand, if you like, that the government has drawn with respect to the Crocus issue. After weeks and weeks of questioning in this House, we have not gotten any straightforward answers from either the Premier (Mr. Doer) or his ministers with regard to what went on with Crocus.

We know that back as far as 2001, the minister's did receive, or, his staff did receive an e-mail from one of their staff people who warned this government about what was coming down. We also know that one Pat Jacobsen, who used to be an employee of the Workers Compensation Board, wrote to her minister, who was Becky Barrett at the time, warned her about what was going on with

respect to the investments that Workers Compensation was making on behalf of its members into the Crocus scandalous issue.

So, repeated warnings. The Auditor General himself called these red flags, and these red flags were ignored by this government. All we want to do is to clear the air. The Premier says he has nothing to hide, and if he has nothing to hide, then he should do the honourable thing and call a public inquiry. Mr. Speaker, if he did that, bills like Bill 29 would not have a difficult time in seeing the light of day, if you like.

But there is a point to be made here. If the government wants to stall, if the government wants to be stubborn, if the government wants to use bullying tactics with opposition members, those things will not go unnoticed. We will make sure that Manitobans understand what really happened in this whole session with regard to the Crocus scandal and why we, after only a weekend, a few days left, still have about 40 hours of Estimates left to debate. Because the government is trying to push through its agenda on bills, it is not giving the opportunity to opposition members to debate Estimates. That is fine because we had to set priorities in the beginning of this session, and our priority was to hold the government accountable for Crocus and that is where it still is.

So I end by saying that I think that this legislation is workable. I do not like the fact that we are giving the minister that much authority in this legislation by simply giving carte blanche powers to make regulations, Mr. Speaker, with respect to degree granting. I think the issue is far too important for us to be treating it this way, and that, indeed, there is a better process that we should be dealing with it. On the other hand, I see the day when we need this legislation to ensure that we do not have those fly-by-night operations setting up in our province and then taking our good students for a ride, if you like, if I could use that term.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to allow me to put these remarks on the record. Thank you.

House Business

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

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): It is on House business. I would like to announce that Bill 27, Tobacco Damages, will go to

Social and Economic Development this evening at 6 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: The following bill will be added to bills being considered by the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development this evening at 6 p.m.: Bill 27, The Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Bill 29, The Degree Granting Act, the honourable Member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about The Degree Granting Act and to indicate that we are prepared to support this bill, but we do have some concerns that I would like to talk about.

The bill sets out to eliminate the granting of degrees by educational institutions which do not have the proper qualifications. Now, all who are using the Internet substantially have become very aware in the last while of the large numbers of e-mails arriving from institutions saying that they can provide quickie degrees. Clearly, there is a need for some better regulations, legislation around the granting of degrees, so that there can be improved guarantees that those who have degrees actually have achieved those substantively and have the qualifications that they show when they show their degrees.

It is important that the degrees, the qualifications represented by the degrees, are valid qualifications, and that individuals with degrees, indeed, have the education and have passed the appropriate examinations which are indicated by the degree. Clearly, since the large majority of e-mails are probably originating from outside of Manitoba, these e-mails saying, sign up here for a quickie degree, this law will not have much of an impact likely on reducing such e-mails. One presumes that that is not where the government is trying to regulate in this respect, that they recognize that they cannot limit e-mails coming from around the world in this context. But, clearly, what would be good and smart and advisable is ensuring that any degree granted from Manitoba, and stamped from Manitoba, Canada, comes from a reputable institution, and that it can be checked that the institution is reputable, and that the individual, indeed, has the degree that is claimed.

* (16:50)

This would be an important step forward and would make sure that we have in Manitoba, for Manitoba degrees, the stamp of quality. The stamp of institutions with strong reputations, the stamp of institutions which have been thoroughly vetted and approved, and that we know that the degree that has been granted, with Manitoba geography on it is a substantive degree and is a valid degree.

I would like to talk for a moment about the degrees and the graduates because we have had, just yesterday, the spring convocation at the University of Winnipeg. At this convocation there were some 1,019 students who received degrees. Clearly, many of these, in fact, I would suggest all of these degrees represent students who have worked hard and, in some cases, have overcome huge and major obstacles: people like Brad Boisselle graduated in spite of huge health issues; people like Corinne Stevens who started on the degree process some two decades ago, and has only just now graduated with a sociology degree after a huge, long struggle; people like Shawnee Guimond, also a graduate in sociology, who took 15 years to complete the degree. That is a long time, and it represents, for somebody who has spent 15 years getting a degree, an enormous effort. One can only imagine the struggles and the difficulties along the way.

Clearly, we want to make sure that when there is a degree from a Manitoba institution that it represents that effort, that struggle, that validity, that quality which is so important. I would mention people like Matthew Sodomsky, who is the Chancellor's gold medal recipient for the highest standing in science, a graduate of Applied Computer Science, but, clearly, somebody who has not only worked hard, but achieved in a major, major way; people like Brenna Grafton and Darren Courchene who are graduates in Aboriginal Governance—I am sure that is of particular interest to the Speaker, because, clearly, as we all recognize that improving the nature of governance, whether it be in the Legislature or in the Aboriginal community, is very important; people like Christopher Gerrard-Pinker, a student graduate in theatre.

There is a wide range of qualifications or of degrees in a variety of different subjects. Clearly, this represents major achievements. It is not just the gold medal winners and the silver medal winners, but each individual, each one of those 1,019 individuals who graduated yesterday at the University of Winnipeg's Spring Convocation, represents a major and significant achievement.

I had the opportunity on Saturday evening to attend a function which recognized a number of individuals who were going to receive awards and honorary degrees. It is thus, I think, a tribute when we have at spring convocation, that there be honorary degrees which represent achievement in a way that is an achievement in real life, achievement above and beyond what is a regular degree.

There were three individuals who received honorary degrees whom I will mention briefly: the Reverend Cao Shengjie from the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, an extraordinary person who has taught in China and been able to do remarkably well under difficult conditions and achieve some considerable renown; Sheila Watt-Cloutier, who has been described as the voice of the Inuit from Iqaluit. She has had particular concerns and interests in the area of global warming.

Global warming, of course, is having a disproportionate impact and influence on the North and so, as Canadians concerned about the northern parts of Canada as well as where we are in southern Canada, it is important to recognize the impact of global warming and its particular effects on the North.

Dr. Allan Ronald was the third recipient of an honorary degree. Dr. Ronald has contributed globally enormously through his efforts in infectious disease research and, in particular, AIDS research. He grew up in Portage la Prairie, and, a home-grown Manitoban, he went on to become the head of Infectious Diseases and Medicine, I think, at the University of Manitoba and has been instrumental in a large body of AIDS research that has been undertaken in Kenya in association with people at

the University of Manitoba. He was very important in setting up the collaborative research program which has been so fruitful, so helpful in providing a much better understanding of AIDS, of the transmission of AIDS, and why, interestingly enough, some individuals are particularly resistant to AIDS, can be exposed, but do not get infected. That may, of course, be enormously important in helping us to enable many others in the future to be able to resist the infection of AIDS and the AIDS agent.

Dr. Allan Ronald was instrumental in setting up the program where Dr. Frank Plummer and many others have played important roles. Of course, Dr. Frank Plummer has gone on now to a major role at the Canadian Centre for Human and Animal Health, and Dr. Plummer has made major contributions, not only in his own research related to AIDS, but in the area of administration of public health and leading teams of researchers at the Canadian Centre for Human and Animal Health who are engaged in research related to the development of vaccines and other means of preventing viral diseases. His role in advancing our understanding of Ebola and the prevention of Ebola and a variety of other tropical diseases, I suggest, will be very, very important, not only today, but in the many years ahead. These diseases that become quite prominent in parts of the world, and certainly our—

Mr. Speaker: Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) will have 18 minutes remaining.

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 5, 2006

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Introduction of Bills		Manitoba Housing Authority Taillieu; Melnick	2987
Bill 42—The Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, 2006 Selinger	2977	Premiers' Conference Gerrard; Doer	2987
Petitions		Crocus Investment Fund Lamoureux; Doer	2988
Grandparents' Access to Grandchildren Fauschou Taillieu	2977 2978	Speaker's Ruling Hickes	2988
Civil Service Employees—Neepawa Maguire	2977	Members' Statements West St. Paul Fire Department 50th Anniversary Bjornson	2989
OlyWest Hog Processing Plant Gerrard	2978	Brantwood Hutterite Colony Rocan	2989
Removal of Agriculture Positions from Minnedosa Rowat	2978	Kids Fishing for a Cure Derby Dewar	2990
Crocus Investment Fund Lamoureux	2978	Pembina Constituency Events Dyck	2990
Committee Reports		Council of Canadians with Disabilities Martindale	2991
Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs—Third Report Reid	2979	Grievances Gerrard	2991
Oral Questions			
Security Measures McFadyen; Doer	2980	ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Red River Floodway McFadyen; Doer	2981	GOVERNMENT BUSINESS	
Rebranding Strategy McFadyen; Doer	2983	Debate on Second Readings Bill 27—The Tobacco Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act Lamoureux Gerrard	2993 2997
Health Care System Driedger; Sale	2985	Bill 29—The Degree Granting Act Lamoureux	3001
Westman Regional Lab Rowat; Sale	2986	Derkach	3005
		Gerrard	3010

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