



First Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Seventh Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
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DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
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FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean, Hon.	Wolesey	N.D.P.
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HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
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MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
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PENNER, Jim	Steinbach	P.C.
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SMITH, Scott	Brandon West	N.D.P.
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TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 1, 2000

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**PRAYERS****ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS****PRESENTING REPORTS BY  
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, is there consent of the House to present the report of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

**Standing Committee on Law Amendments  
Second Report**

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Second Report of the Committee on Law Amendments.

**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** Your committee met on Monday, May 1, 2000, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

*Your committee heard representation on bills as follows:*

*Bill 19—The Holocaust Memorial Day Act/Loi sur le Jour commémoratif de l'Holocauste*

*Michael Lazar – Canadian Jewish Congress and the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg*

*Your committee has considered:*

*Bill 19—The Holocaust Memorial Day Act/Loi sur le Jour commémoratif de l'Holocauste and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:*

**MOTION:**

*THAT the second paragraph of the preamble be deleted and the following substituted:*

*AND WHEREAS six million Jewish men, women and children perished under this policy of hatred and genocide;*

*AND WHEREAS millions of others were victims of that policy because of their physical or mental disabilities, race, religion or sexual orientation;*

*On motion of Mr. Martindale, the report of the committee was received.*

**Mr. Martindale:** I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inkster (Ms. Barrett), that the report of the Committee be received.

*Motion agreed to.*

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****Manitoba Lotteries Corporation**

**Hon. Diane McGifford (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act):** Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

\* (13:35)

Today, I wish to share with the House certain information regarding the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation. On January 7, 2000, when the new board of Manitoba Lotteries Corporation was constituted, a number of alleged financial irregularities and expenditures were brought to their attention. These allegations were communicated to the Provincial Auditor, who called for an investigation. The Provincial Auditor originally intended to release the results of the investigation today, May 1, 2000. However, because the Chief Executive Officer of the Manitoba Lotteries commission has not yet spoken with the Auditor, this date has been delayed to May 12. This delay is understandably

most frustrating to the Auditor, to Government, to Manitoba Lotteries Corporation staff and to Manitoba citizens, all of whom demand accountability with regard to public money.

One of the chief concerns is the cost of recent expansions to the two casinos, Club Regent and the McPhillips Street Station. In 1997, the previous government announced that these expansions would cost \$50 million. In March of this year, Lotteries officials informed us that the current cost is \$112 million, or over 100 percent more than was originally stated. This Government deeply regrets that the Crystal Casino was closed and the other two casinos expanded without the benefit of public consultation. The huge overruns are certainly cause for concern, and we sincerely hope that this figure will not further escalate.

Concurrent with the Auditor's investigation, on February 15, the board called for an organizational review. An independent lawyer was hired to co-ordinate a team of human resource specialists who are conducting this review. This review will address concerns that were raised about the general work environment at Manitoba Lotteries Commission and examine issues of staff morale, equity and fairness in the workplace, harassment prevention, conflict resolution processes and other factors affecting the work environment. This review is expected to be completed on May 15.

Clearly, the huge overruns and alleged financial irregularities are distressing, especially in a Crown corporation which is responsible to the public. The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation board and this Government believe that a thorough investigation is necessary to ensure the integrity of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation. We know that Manitobans benefit from the revenues generated by lotteries, and it is our joint intention to behave responsibly by protecting the public trust.

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale):** I thank the Honourable Member for bringing this forward to the House as an update as to the audit that is being currently undertaken by Manitoba Lotteries Corporation. The Minister has pointed out a number of areas here in regard to what we too would hold to be very concerned about, and

that is in regard to the demand for accountability in regard to the spending of public dollars.

I think that it is ironic that here we see a report that is coming out in another few days, May 12, and we have these reports about accountability, the comment here about the public consultation, when we have a government here that is going on a totally different direction with casinos, and now they are bringing forth the sanctimonious statement of saying that these changes are made without public consultation, and indeed is ironic where we see this flip-flop going on with this Government.

The smokescreen that the Government is trying to bring forth right now to deflect some of the comments and some of the areas of concern in regard to the casinos in the so-called audit that is being taken is something that, I think, everybody is aware of, but the idea and the comment of bringing in public consultation for something like this is very ironic at this particular time.

#### **Aboriginal Child and Family Services**

**Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Family Services and Housing):** Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House. As Minister of Family Services and Housing, it is my pleasure to announce that the Province of Manitoba and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs on behalf of southern chiefs have entered into a memorandum of understanding regarding Child and Family Services.

On Thursday of last week my colleague Eric Robinson and I joined with representatives from the Assembly in formalizing a historic agreement based on the child welfare recommendations contained in the AJI report. A similar memorandum of understanding was signed with the Métis Federation in February of this year. These agreements entered into represent our Government's commitment to begin a process that will lead to the establishment of province-wide First Nations and Métis mandates for the delivery of child and family services. The agreements will make it possible for First Nations and Métis agencies to deliver the full range of services under The Child and Family Services Act as well as adoption services under The Adoption Act.

\* (13:40)

It is important to recognize the experience in leadership that aboriginal communities have demonstrated with respect to child welfare. Prior to 1980 aboriginal communities were often denied services, and the few services which were provided were offered by non-aboriginal agencies. The AJI report noted that these services were often "disruptive and destructive to the very families and communities they were supposed to help." This began to change in the early 1980s. In 1981 Dakota-Ojibway Child and Family Services was created, the first such First Nations child welfare agency in Canada. Following this, the tripartite negotiations on child welfare between First Nations, Canada and Manitoba took place and the federal and provincial governments, along with First Nations governments, led to the signing of a master agreement in 1982. This agreement allowed for subsidiary agreements authorizing the establishment of First Nations child and family service agencies, and today there are nine such agencies in Manitoba providing on-reserve services.

As of March 1999 these agencies were responsible for 1930 children in care. They have done a commendable job in creating culturally appropriate solutions to child welfare problems. As Minister, I am honoured and proud to be part of a process that makes our province a leader in child welfare. Manitoba is the only jurisdiction in North America to recognize the ability of aboriginal communities to exercise child welfare mandates off reserve. These historic memorandums are the beginning of a process which will lead to the establishment of off-reserve mandates recognizing the unique cultural needs and sensitivities of aboriginal families and their children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** I would like to thank the Minister for his statement today. We certainly do look forward to hearing more about the framework that is being established for the setting up of the child and family services for aboriginal peoples as well as for the Manitoba Métis Federation. I had forwarded a letter to him some time ago asking for more information about the framework for the Métis Child and Family Services, and I have yet to receive a response to that. Hence I did not

at this point in time forward a letter about the structure of the Aboriginal Child and Family Services because I was not sure when I would get my response to that either.

I look forward to the Estimates process where we can bring forward more questions about the structure of both of these agencies. It certainly is important that we are always looking at addressing the welfare of our children in Manitoba so we certainly do look forward to hearing more about how these particular agencies are going to be structured. I have had a number of requests for information, I guess, and some calls of concern from various Child and Family Services employees who are certainly concerned about their jobs in the current structure because they are not quite sure—there is not very much information out there—in terms of how current employees within the various Child and Family Services, not just Winnipeg but also rural Manitoba, are going to be affected by this decision. So I would hope that we will see from this Government a fairly speedy response in terms of addressing where our workers are going to be affected. Certainly they are concerned about it and have been raising that concern.

\* (13:45)

For the welfare of Manitoba children, it is certainly a priority, I am sure for all of us, because they are really our future in this province, and making sure that they have good and sound beginnings is not anything that any of us would argue with. So I look forward to more information coming forward from this Government in terms of how these agencies are going to be set up and the accountability structures that will be put into place to address them.

**Mr. Speaker:** Notices of Motion, Introduction of Bills.

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to revert back to Tabling of Reports, please.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave to revert back to Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports?  
[Agreed]

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the 1999 Annual Report of the Public Utilities Board.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill 8—The Enforcement of Judgments Conventions and Consequential Amendments Act

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that leave be given to introduce Bill 8, The Enforcement of Judgments Conventions and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les conventions relatives à l'exécution des jugements et modifications corrélatives, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** The Government of Canada enters into agreements or conventions with other countries to recognize and enforce each others' court judgments. This bill provides a process for bringing those agreements into force in Manitoba.

*Motion agreed to.*

### Bill 10—The Cooperatives Amendment Act

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister for Culture, Heritage and Tourism (Ms. McGifford), that leave be given to introduce Bill 10, The Cooperatives Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les coopératives, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Speaker, this bill will make some minor amendments to The Cooperatives Act which was proclaimed last year. The definition of "auditor" will be amended. Also, notices terminating membership will be able to

be sent by mail to provide a greater assurance that the affected member receives notification. The balance of the amendments is of a house-keeping nature such as correcting typographical errors.

*Motion agreed to.*

### Bill 11—The Winnipeg Stock Exchange Restructuring and Consequential Amendments Act

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (Mr. Robinson), that leave be given to introduce Bill 11, The Winnipeg Stock Exchange Restructuring and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi sur la restructuration de la Bourse de Winnipeg et modifications corrélatives), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

\* (13:50)

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Speaker, this bill has two main purposes. First, it will repeal The Winnipeg Stock Exchange Act and allow the Winnipeg Stock Exchange to continue as a private corporation under The Corporations Act. This will enable the Winnipeg Stock Exchange to implement its agreement to merge with the new Canadian Venture Exchange, CDNX, which will have an office in Winnipeg.

Second, Mr. Speaker, the bill amends The Income Tax Act to extend the Manitoba Equity Tax Credit to shares listed on the exchange operating in Manitoba. This will be the Canadian Venture Exchange. The shares must meet all other eligibility criteria. Thank you.

*Motion agreed to.*

### Bill 18—The Labour Relations Amendment Act

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Ms. Wowchuk), that leave be given to introduce Bill 18, The Labour

Relations Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, this bill is intended to clarify the application of provisions relating to successor rights and obligations under The Labour Relations Act in cases where a business is sold, and as a result of that sale, the business transfers from federal to provincial labour jurisdiction.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Bill 20—The Farm Machinery and Equipment Amendment Act**

**Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Ms. Barrett), that leave be given to introduce Bill 20, The Farm Machinery and Equipment Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les machines et le matériel agricoles), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

*Motion presented.*

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Mr. Speaker, this bill addresses two issues: First, the bill is allowing financial institutes to lease directly to producers; and secondly, it is permitting a dealership to carry competing equipment lines and products as well as defining the conditions by which a dealership agreement can be terminated.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the members' attention to the gallery where we have with us today eight Grades 10 and 11 students from 12 Tribe Home Schooling under the direction of Mr. Edward Dawson, in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen).

Also, seated in the gallery, we have with us 16 Grade 9 students from Salisbury Morse Place

School under the direction of Mr. Warren Earl. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Doer).

**Speaker's Statement**

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the table and ask you to assist me in welcoming Richard Yarish, our newly appointed Clerk Assistant, Clerk of Committees, to the table.

**Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today His Worship Mike Spence, Mayor of the Town of Churchill; and Mr. Cory Young, the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Churchill.

\* (13:55)

Also, seated in the loge to my left, Mr. Brian Pallister, former member for Portage la Prairie.

I welcome you all here today on behalf of all honourable members.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

**1987 Subdivision Proposal  
Out-of-Court Settlement**

**Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the First Minister.

This past weekend the people of Manitoba learned from media reports that his Government had settled at the eleventh hour the long-standing lawsuit between the Zuiberts and Campbells and with him in his capacity as the former minister of Urban Affairs in the Pawley government as well as the former Premier Howard Pawley regarding steps that were taken in 1987-88 while he was Minister of Urban Affairs with respect to a subdivision in West St. Paul. This settlement was reached almost on the courthouse steps at the eleventh hour in a long-standing lawsuit, and I would ask the First Minister today if he could inform the people of Manitoba as to the details of that settlement, including all of the monetary considerations that may be part of it.

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, the settlement was ultimately negotiated by a very credible lawyer, Mr. Glen McFetrich, who has been representing the Province throughout various administrations. The client was Mr. Jim Eldridge, the Clerk of the Executive Council, and Deputy Minister Winston Hodgins from the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, which was previously the department of urban affairs, as the client. The parties to the suit, the million-dollar lawsuit, were the community of West St. Paul, the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba, myself in the capacity of Urban Affairs Minister and former Premier Pawley.

An earlier settlement, which was initiated by the plaintiffs, was rejected by the persons I have mentioned who were operating and giving instructions to legal counsel. The settlement, which has been approved by the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, will be tabled. In fact, we were seeking permission to release it to the public. It is for \$100,000. It is intended to represent a contribution to the plaintiffs' out-of-pocket costs, no contribution at all to any liability from the Province of Manitoba, both in our office in Government and later in your office in Government, and now again continuing on.

**Mr. Praznik:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the First Minister for that information. As the First Minister well knows, some of the allegations made in that lawsuit are indeed very, very serious allegations. They involve the misuse of government authority and power by himself and the former Premier.

I would ask the First Minister, given his comments some weeks ago in *The Sun* indicating it was important that those issues be aired, why in fact they will not be responded to, because they are very serious allegations about the way in which that Government and he conducted public business.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, I think the release of the information is much more open than say the Gateway North Transportation system that the Member will be aware of from his previous experience in reaching a settlement. I had waived my MLA immunity to testify in court, scheduled to be on June 2 in fact, to have this testimony proceed. We had rejected another

proposal lower than the million dollars from the plaintiffs. This settlement deals with the liability of the Province of Manitoba. The authority in law is clear. We believe that the authority for the Province of Manitoba and the ministers responsible to limit the transition or development and zoning of land from agricultural to residential is clearly within the legal authority of the Province of Manitoba. We clearly believe that the white paper that we issued in 1987 as a cabinet document indicated our belief in a balanced approach. We had zoned positively places like Whyte Ridge within the city of Winnipeg and were trying to limit some of the proposals that were outside of the Capital Region, not to say no to all the proposals but to have a balanced approach. We again believed that the policies were solid for that approach. Certainly it was a process in transition because we in government and members opposite in government had supported the Cherniak report to go from a transition of the additional zone for West St. Paul, Taché, Ritchot and East St. Paul to the procedure now in place under the existing Planning Act.

\* (14:00)

I would note that members opposite would know that the Director of Planning in 1992 under the former administration made the same determination as I did when I was Minister of Urban Affairs. Having said that, it was the advice of our legal staff and professional staff that we should use the precedence of other settlements without liability. Members opposite will know about the Gateway Transportation settlement. The Minister himself was, I think, involved in that allegation, and we honoured the settlement arrived at by the former government because it was in the best interests overall, according to our lawyers, for the taxpayers. This case had gone on 13 years. We were going to have to call witnesses in from the Middle East, from Victoria, from parts of Canada; so were the other side. Both parties went to the precipice, if you will, looked at incalculable costs, and this will deal with part of the costs the plaintiffs have had in the past 13 years, a contribution to their costs but not to liability and damages.

**Mr. Praznik:** Mr. Speaker, all members appreciate the need from time to time to settle



lawsuits and their relative costs, but the issue, the deeper issue of this case, no doubt, is the allegation that the now-First Minister and the former Premier used their power to do something for the purposes of attacking really an individual who owned that land. Given the location of that property, given the recommendations of the time of both the RM of West St. Paul, of the City of Winnipeg Planning, given the subsequent hearing held when this party was in power by the Municipal Board which okayed that subdivision, given where that land is located on a narrow strip between the highway and the river, the First Minister, I ask him today, very pointedly, will he tell this House whether or not he as a First Minister was contacted by the former Premier in his capacity as Minister of Urban Affairs and told not to have that project proceed?

**Mr. Doer:** No, Mr. Speaker.

#### **1987 Subdivision Proposal Out-of-Court Settlement**

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale):** Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the First Minister. As was reported in the paper on the weekend in regard to the settlement that the First Minister is referring to, there was also a comment made by the plaintiffs' lawyer that they could not speak and could not comment on this outcome or the settlement. Is the Premier now saying that this gag order that is often put forth on the plaintiffs is lifted and that the plaintiffs can comment on the subject and the settlement that has been brought forth by this Government?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen) to table the document. The language in the document was absolutely the same as negotiated by the previous government for the Gateway North Transportation system. I felt it was important, this morning, to get permission to release the document and the amount of money. Ultimately it is public money, as it was with the Gateway North Transportation case which was settled by members opposite and honoured by us as a reasonable decision to make. Certainly the whole issue of liabilities, the million-dollar lawsuit has been dropped; the liabilities and damages have been dropped.

Contributions to the legal costs of the plaintiff are part of the settlement as was the case in the Gateway North Transportation system, which of course was the settlement reached by not only the provincial government with the proponents but also a considerable amount of money from the federal government, we understand, although apparently there is a hush order on the amount of money that was arrived at by the governments of the day. I think that we are trying to put this out and make it open.

The language is standard, but it is clear that the contributions go to the costs. This has gone on for 13 years. The former minister involved in the Gateway North Transportation case asked the question. He mentioned that the Municipal Board had approved it in 1992, but he failed to mention that the senior planner from the Province of Manitoba had not recommended that it go forward. In fact, a senior civil servant, Mr. Serge Scrafield, had taken exactly the same position as we had and I had in government.

But, Mr. Speaker, the land in the additional zone was an issue in transition. In 1987 the City of Winnipeg approved the proposal that we rejected. In 1992 they rejected and opposed the proposal. Certainly land-use policy is an issue that we believe should be developed and balanced. As I say, the Minister can table the statement, but it has the same wording as the—in fact, the Gateway North Transportation wording is even stronger, on the rights of speaking, than what we are practising today.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Speaker, in the very beginning of the First Minister's comment in answering the question, he mentioned that the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs will be tabling the reports and the communications.

My concern is: Is the First Minister conveying the impression that the communications will only be coming from the defendants for the settlement of this claim? Will the plaintiffs have the ability to respond and not be under a gag order so that they cannot comment on the settlement that has been brought forth? That is a simple question.

**Mr. Doer:** We are releasing the document that was negotiated by the lawyers, and we are going

to make that public, unlike some of the previous documents that we are aware of from the previous government that were never made public. So we are releasing that document, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Reimer:** My final question, then, will be very short. Are the plaintiffs under a court order for nondisclosure of the settlement? Will they be able to comment on the disclosure? The Minister has said that the Government can comment, but can the plaintiffs respond as to the settlement and for the amount?

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, there is no court order, first of all. Secondly, the language in the settlement, as I understand it, talking to the lawyers today who negotiated it—and I want to pay tribute to Mr. McFetrich who I think is an excellent lawyer. We used in-house lawyers all the way through, both ourselves and the previous government. I never felt any need to go to outside counsel. I think Mr. McFetrich is an excellent lawyer who did an excellent job in standing up to the principle of the right of the Province to decide on zoning and certainly dealing with the liabilities inherent in that. The document will be made public. As I say, there are documents that we are aware of that have such strong hush clauses that they cannot even be tabled in this House. This document we are tabling in the House, I asked this morning that it could be tabled. The language is standard, and the agreement was reached between two parties, two sets of lawyers. It is not a court order.

\* (14:10)

#### Point of Order

**Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the legal release document that completes the matter between Campbell Trading Limited and the government of Manitoba and others.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order, the Minister did not arise on a point of order; she rose to table a document, and the document has been tabled.

#### First Nations Casinos Community Approval

**Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask some questions of the Minister responsible for Gaming. Recently some Long Plain First Nations residents protested over the lack of consultation about a casino proposal for the Portage la Prairie area. These residents claim that the project is going ahead without their approval and that the money being spent to fund the casino could be better spent on other initiatives.

My question to the Minister responsible for Gaming: Is his Government prepared to acknowledge that casinos should not be awarded to communities where there is clear opposition to them, including First Nations communities?

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act):** I just want to state that, with regard to the casino proposals and with regard to the process itself, we have stated repeatedly that there is an independent selection committee in place. We are not going to prejudice any decision that they might make. We continually repeat this to the Opposition and members opposite that there is no way that we are going to, in any way, shape or form, prejudice the outcome of those casinos and their decisions. That is going to come—as of May 31, they are going to make recommendations to this Government on those casinos. So I would not want to comment on any proposals as such or locations and so on which I am certainly not aware of.

So, Mr. Speaker, the independent process is in place. We believe that a framework is there. The Bostrom report stated that, under the appropriate framework, this would be the best way to proceed in order to fairly arrive at a decision with regard to those proposals.

**Mr. Pitura:** A supplemental question to the same minister. Given his response and given the mounting public concern, does his Government plan to force casinos upon unsupportive local communities?

**Mr. Lemieux:** I could repeat my first answer—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Well, some members opposite are saying that, you know, please skate around this Minister responsible for Gaming. I want to see them skate when the report finally comes out on Regent and McPhillips, and then we will see some skating taking place.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Beauschesne 417: Answers to a question should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate.

The Honourable Minister is prejudging one report, and then his answer will not allow him to prejudice what the communities want.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member does have a point of order, and I would like to remind all honourable ministers that according to Beauschesne Citation 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** Would the Honourable Minister for Gaming please conclude his answer.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Speaker, the request for proposal states that the proposals must demonstrate to the First Nations host community and adjacent local government—should be presented to the selection committee. Now there is an independent process in place. The location has not been selected. The proponent, successful proponent, if any, has not been selected. So this Government does not want to predetermine or prejudice.

Not only that, the question is quite hypothetical in the sense that the process has not been completed yet. As of May 31, the selection committee will be recommending one, two, three, four, five—

**An Honourable Member:** Or none.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Maybe none, and we await their recommendations.

#### Public Consultations

**Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the same Minister: Will he commit to Manitobans today that, before any casino licences are issued, there will be a series of public consultations?

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister charged with the administration of The Gaming Control Act):** Mr. Speaker, the recommendations will be coming forth on May 31 to this Government, and at that particular time we will be announcing to people what those recommendations are. Once again, we do not want to predetermine or prejudice what they are doing. They are an independent selection committee, independent of government. We wanted to depoliticize the process. Members opposite agreed that to depoliticize the process is the way to go.

So I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to say that May 31, stay tuned, we will announce if any recommendations for casinos are made.

#### Health Care System Rural Services/Staffing

**Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, during the '99 provincial election, members opposite made a number of promises to rural Manitobans regarding health care. On August 28, the First Minister said an NDP Government will mean more doctors, more nurses and more services for rural Manitoba. Last week rural hospitals were being threatened by loss of services. Today it is being reported that the Government is reviewing the possibility of cutting hospital laboratory services by 20 percent.

To the Minister of Health: When will this Government deliver on their promises to provide more personnel and more services to rural hospitals?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for that question.

When we came into office and I found out that the former government had set out a process for lab consolidation and had put the process in place, I wondered if the former member had asked the member of the former government about that question when they put that process in place. I also queried, when the former government put in place this process of reviewing the small hospitals, whether he had queried the former government about the process they put in place.

In both cases, both processes were put in place by the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson) who was Minister of Health, and we inherited both of those reports when we came to Government.

**Mr. Tweed:** Mr. Speaker, how can the Minister and his colleagues promise to increase staff in rural hospitals, and yet the Minister refuses to assure Manitobans that he will not close these hospitals?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, as we indicated, when we came to office, and the state of health care was the worst that it has ever been in this jurisdiction, we put in place a process to deal with the issues of the hallways. We put in place a system to deal with human resources for training nurses, put in place a process for doctors. We put in place a system for dealing with the SmartHealth contract where the members opposite wasted \$30 million of taxpayers' money. We put in place a system to try to reconcile and come to grips with the frozen food problem, and most importantly we put in place a far-ranging human resources plan that we are beginning to implement.

I wish members opposite would give us some support to help all Manitobans, particularly as it relates to nurses.

**Mr. Tweed:** Is the Minister's solution to the shortage of health care professionals, such as pathologists, to simply reduce the numbers required by the guidelines?

\* (14:20)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for raising the issue of pathologists

because when the report commissioned by the former government came to our attention, we told the proponents, RHAM, to go out and discuss it with the pathologists, something that had not been done. We told them to discuss it with the workers in the labs. We told them to discuss it with a wide sector of the population and come back with comments and advice with respect to a process that was put in place.

Mr. Speaker, I might add, the former government had a process where they took \$5 million out of the Department of Health the last two years for not consolidating labs—for not consolidating labs. They penalized the Department to the tune of \$5 million. I never understood that decision. I never understood a former government that does one thing and says another.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, Beaudesne 417 is quite clear. I do not want to read through it over and over again, but answers to questions should be as brief as possible and should not provoke debate.

Every time this Minister gets up he provokes debate. All he has to do is answer the questions. If he is going to close hospitals, tell the people of Manitoba so that they can either hire or not hire the nurses and the doctors that are necessary in the rural communities.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, I was very clear in my answer. The Member accused members on this side of the House of dealing with pathologists and reducing pathologists when in fact the former government wanted to reduce pathologists. When the report came to our attention, we asked the proponents of the report to go out and discuss it with pathologists so that we had proper input.

So not only did I answer the question, Mr. Speaker, but I think members opposite are quite concerned about the fact that it is another report of theirs that they are now trying to turn around.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. On both points of order, I would just like to remind all honourable ministers that according to Beaudesne Citation

417, answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate.

### **CFB Shilo All-Party Delegation**

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, in June of 1991, an all-party committee of the Legislature travelled to Ottawa in response to the federal government's considering closure or downsizing of CFB Shilo. A National Defence document is proposing similar action with the decision due this July.

Is the Premier (Mr. Doer) prepared to address this situation in a similar non-partisan basis as was done earlier and strike an all-party delegation to meet the federal representatives and state the case for keeping Shilo open?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** I thank the Honourable Member for his question, Mr. Speaker. I certainly was involved in '91. Regrettably, we were not able to save the base in Portage. It was very unfortunate. We were also involved in an all-party way about the Air Command in Winnipeg and its transfer to Ottawa. I think it is a good idea. We are trying to work with the community of Brandon and the community of Winnipeg.

Obviously the worst-case scenario for us—it also not only involves the bases that are here but the two reserve troops that are located in Manitoba as well with a considerable amount of economic and social and historical significance to this community and to this province—is to have everything transferred to Edmonton, again lose everything.

In terms of these proposals, we are certainly aware that the withdrawal of the German troops from Shilo that was announced during the election campaign is very negative for southwest Manitoba. We have asked the federal Minister of Foreign Affairs to try to get a relocation of another set of troops for training and to maintain the Artillery Corps there and then have the presence maintained in Winnipeg, but there are people that want to remove everything to Edmonton. There are concerns in Winnipeg and in southwest Manitoba.

On the question posed, we should have an all-party briefing of where we stand this week, and, secondly, we should look at how we can best present this to Ottawa. I certainly think the idea is a good one.

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** I thank the Premier for his response.

### **Business Case**

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** I would ask if he has examined the details of the business case for Shilo and if he has given any support to the councils in Brandon and the southwest Manitoba area?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Yes, I have, Mr. Speaker. Again, I have met with the Mayor—and I am meeting with him again, I believe, tomorrow—of Brandon. I met with the Chamber of Commerce of Brandon when we were announcing the Hydro announcement in Brandon, the creation of the \$165-million gas conversion plant for Hydro in Brandon. We met again on Shilo and southwestern Manitoba.

Certainly we recognize the economic impact of the withdrawal of the troops and any other moves for southwest Manitoba at a time when that region has already been battered with low prices, with flooding that has not been compensated adequately by, we believe, the disaster assistance program. So I have met a number of times, but we are facing some of the same realities that members opposite were facing. Like Portage or like the Air Command, we have not been able to move the agenda yet, but I am certainly willing to try any means to do that.

### **Reorganizational Proposals**

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, can the Premier advise the House which of the military reorganizational proposals that the federal government has put out there he can support?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, as I say, we should also include the reserve units here as well in our discussions with the Defence Department. Secondly, we should

recognize the Defence Department just deals with the existing deployment of the existing troops in terms of Winnipeg, Shilo and Edmonton and does not deal with the possibility and, I think, the necessity of further efforts with other countries through the Foreign Affairs Minister to locate another training opportunity at that base.

So I do not want to limit the discussion for only to be reshuffling or reducing in Manitoba the presence from the National Defence Department, and I do not want to leave out the issue of the reserve presence here in Manitoba as well. We think it is broader than just a Defence Department report.

### Nursing Diploma Course Costs

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Yesterday, at the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses meeting, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health indicated, in response to a question about how much the diploma program would cost, that "the government money we are spending is not the issue."

It would appear that this Government is pursuing a policy of spending without counting the cost. Will the Minister acknowledge that the cost was not a factor in his decision to implement the diploma program?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, a couple of things in this regard. When we came to office after the Government had cut and laid off close to 1000 nurses in order to save money—and we are obviously in a very difficult situation. We are facing 600 full-time nursing shortages—700 when we came into office; 600 when we made our announcement—and facing 1500 nurses retiring in the next five years.

We said that, given that the Government was spending \$5.6 million on the nurses' strategy on a yearly basis in addition to \$3 million that they were spending from the Department of Education, we had to provide something that would provide an alternative to men and women

of Manitoba to provide them with a nursing option. That was a diploma program, which was recommended by nurses in the hundreds to us, on forming government, with respect to having a diploma program. That is why we proceeded to apply flexibility.

### Health Care System Nursing Shortage

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** My supplementary to the Minister of Health: Will the Minister not come clean and admit that the number of full-time nursing positions vacant right now is 217, not 600 as he has claimed?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, the information that has been provided to us, which is the same methodology which was followed by the former government, that I followed as critic, and which was followed by our Department, has indicated to me that there is somewhere in the vicinity of 600 full-time EFT positions that are vacant in the province of Manitoba.

\* (14:30)

**Mr. Gerrard:** Given that his own Assistant Deputy Minister made very clear yesterday that there were only 217 full-time positions in nursing vacant currently, albeit there are more part-time positions, when will the Minister carry through on his promise to create more full-time positions so you improve the environment in health care, rather than sowing division, as he is doing by introducing the diploma program?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, that is why, when we announced the nursing strategy, it was a five-point nursing strategy that dealt not just with the diploma program that the Liberal Leader opposes and opposes despite the fact that the majority of nurses in Manitoba have asked us to do this and the patients want nurses at the bedside, but we put in place a process to retrain nurses, a process to attract nurses, a process to assist nurses in retraining. Three million dollars is going back to the regions to retrain nurses, first time, something the nurses have called for and which was not listened to in this province for over a decade.

In addition, we are putting in place a plan and a process to have workplace issues dealt with so that nurses feel safe, comfortable and productive in the workplace. You know, we are launching a comprehensive strategy, and, in addition, we have asked all of the regional health authorities to maximize the number of full-time positions available, because when we came to office, full-time to part-time was the lowest in the country in the province of Manitoba.

### **Dauphin Lake Conservation Minister's Action**

**Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose):** Mr. Speaker, I have some questions for the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin). Last year in the Lake Dauphin basin, which is one of Canada's finest walleye fisheries, there was a great spirit of co-operation between the conservation groups and all users of this lake. There are countless photos and articles in the local Dauphin paper that show the fish being wasted, show extreme concern being expressed on the part of the fish enhancement organization. I would like to ask the Minister of Conservation why, even though he contends to be very interested in conservation, he continues to refuse to take action.

**Hon. Oscar Lathlin (Minister of Conservation):** Let me advise the Member, first of all, that I am not refusing in any way to take action on what is happening in the Lake Dauphin area. I am quite aware of the situation in Lake Dauphin. I have been advised not only by our staff but by groups in that area who are interested in fishing in Lake Dauphin. I also advised the Member last week that I am intending on going in to Dauphin and meeting with the non-aboriginal groups there who have an interest in Lake Dauphin, but I am also going to be meeting with the West Region Tribal Council to again talk about this issue that the Member is raising today and that he raised last week.

### **Legislation Enforcement**

**Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose):** Well, Mr. Speaker, my concern is the Minister says that he is prepared to consult and discuss with the people of the area, and I congratulate him for that, but there is concern that a direct order has

been given not to enforce the existing legislation in this area. I wonder if the Minister would respond.

**Hon. Oscar Lathlin (Minister of Conservation):** Again, I would like to advise the Member that I do not take this matter lightly. Our Government does not take this matter lightly. Our Government is very committed to conservation, whether it has to do with fishing, forestry, mining, or otherwise. I would like to assure the Member once again that I am going to be meeting with the interested groups there in the next little while. Once I have finished my meetings with the two groups, I will be happy to report to the Member, both verbally and in writing, to advise him as to the progress of the discussions there.

### **Conservation Minister's Meeting**

**Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose):** Well, Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned that while we are continuing to study the issue and discuss the issues at some future date, I would like the Minister to announce a date when he intends to meet with the concerned parties and whether or not he intends to have a discreet meeting or whether or not he will sit down with the conservation groups in the area.

**Hon. Oscar Lathlin (Minister of Conservation):** Let me say to the Member that I am also given to understand that at this time last year when this same issue arose, his attitude was that he was going to monitor the situation. That was his position last year, I am advised.

Let me also advise the Member that I will be meeting with the two groups Friday morning on my way back to The Pas, and once the meeting is over, I would be glad to report to the Member.

### **Point of Order**

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, the Member is putting misleading information on the record. I would ask him to withdraw.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Conservation, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Lathlin:** Mr. Speaker, if I have offended the Member in any way, of course I will withdraw those remarks, but let me also—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member's apology, I think, has taken care of the matter.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Conservation, to conclude his answer.

**Mr. Lathlin:** Lastly, Mr. Speaker, let me advise the Member that I will be meeting with those two groups this Friday on my way back to The Pas. If he wants, I can give him a written report by the middle of next week and tell him what has transpired in those discussions.

#### **First Nations Casinos Economic Opportunities**

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** My question is to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. I would ask the Minister if today she will commit to stopping the fast-tracking of aboriginal casinos until an economic summit has been held to explore methods of creating true economic development and employment opportunities for aboriginals.

**Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** This question has been raised in a number of other guises, and I do not know whether the Member has heard the responses. But the issue is that there is no fast-tracking involved here. There was a commitment during the election to the Bostrom report that was very clear and aboveboard. Two independent commissioners were appointed, Mr. Speaker, and they are conducting their work as they should.

#### **Impact on Winnipeg**

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** I would ask the Minister if she has had any discussions or consultations with the City of Winnipeg or with any other Capital Region municipalities to get their feedback on the advisability of the addition of casinos in the immediate vicinity of the city of Winnipeg?

**Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** But this is a procedure and a process which is established as arm's length from the Government, and that issue, in fact, is proceeding as it should. Two commissioners in whom we have great confidence are dealing with this issue according to the rules that were laid out, and we have great confidence in their report.

#### **Public Consultations**

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Mr. Speaker, I mean, is there a gag order or is there not a gag order? Let us answer the question.

Can the Minister, who should take some responsibility for this, given that she is the Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs, tell Manitobans: What is it going to take, Madam Minister, for Manitobans to have their voices heard by this Government so that thorough consultations can take place before any new casinos are announced in this province?

\* (14:40)

**Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the question is the same and the response is the same, that an arm's-length process has been established that is fair and aboveboard and was established and committed to before the election.

But I do want to commend the former government and the members opposite for their interest in public consultation, something which they were not as committed to when they were in government, and we could indicate a number of occasions when that was very clearly the case.

For the Member's concern about aboriginal employment in Winnipeg, I would certainly like to ask him what happened to their urban aboriginal strategy. I remember day after day in this House asking: Where did the quarter-million dollars go that they spent on that first aboriginal strategy and when did the second urban aboriginal strategy ever see the light of day?

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



## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Northern Manitoba Art

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise today and once again pay tribute to the growing cultural and artistic spirit of northern Manitoba. This spirit is evident in the annual juried art shows in northern Manitoba, which are always huge successes. It is evident by the number of writers, poets, dramatists, sculptors and painters that originate from northern Manitoba. It was evident when the unique musical *Bombertown* was performed in Flin Flon a number of months ago, and again it was evident on March 25 when the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, together with the Flin Flon Community Choir, delivered a high-quality evening performance in the R. H. Channing Auditorium in Flin Flon.

Along with hundreds of northerners, my wife and I were thrilled to listen to that well-known orchestra and our own community choir. What a great combination. The evening featured Neil Currie's *Fanfare* and Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 20, K466 in D-Minor*, as well as Mozart's *Requiem Mass*. The artistic director was Earl Stafford, and the guest conductor was Jennifer McAlister.

I thank all organizers and sponsors for once again presenting us with a first-class performance. A special thank you is due to the Flin Flon Community Choir members and to the creative, dynamic duo which guides them, namely Crystal and Mark Kolt. As well, congratulations are richly deserved by Lisa Komernicki, the production manager; Kate Anderson, the secretary; Jo-Ann Lengyel, the treasurer; and past production managers, Karen O'Brien and Graham Craig. Thank you.

### MS Super Cities Walk

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring the House's attention to an important event that took place in the province yesterday. More than 3800 Manitobans, myself included, walked or ran for multiple sclerosis in the annual MS Super Cities Walk. Enthusiastic participants raised money and awareness while enjoying a bright, sunny day.

The town of Morden, where I participated along with 12 other communities in Manitoba, took part in the Walk for MS. Last year nearly \$500,000 was raised throughout the province for research. Estimates predict that this year Manitobans raised a record amount of money for the MS Society.

The stiff legs I am standing on today are certainly a small price to pay for this great cause. Events like these are significant because they bring people together for a common cause. This event is particularly valuable in Manitoba, because Manitoba has one of the highest rates of multiple sclerosis worldwide. More than 3500 Manitobans suffer from MS, which usually strikes an individual between the ages of 20 to 40.

I would like to thank and congratulate all those who participated in the Super Cities Walk yesterday to raise funds for such a worthwhile cause. Thank you.

### Mr. Jack McLeod

**Mr. Scott Smith (Brandon West):** I appreciate this opportunity to stand and give recognition to a special person in my Brandon West constituency. I know each member of this House will agree that the importance of community leaders is a very treasured asset. One such person in my community is Mr. Jack McLeod.

Mr. McLeod has worn many hats throughout his tenure in the community, from running his own business, farming, and certainly his involvement and recognition of being one of the most knowledgeable people in the horse industry. However, his true passion, as witnessed on many occasions, past and present, is the Keystone Centre and grounds in Brandon. The Keystone Centre's life spans the past 27 years, and Mr. McLeod has always been one of its strongest assets from day one. As a member of the fair board for many years and eventual president, he worked hand-in-hand with the Keystone Centre, highlighting the importance of rural life and the dependency that both urban and rural have on each other within Brandon.

In recent years, his contributions on the Board of Directors of the Keystone Centre have been invaluable. He has just finished his most recent position as the President of the Board of Directors of the Keystone Centre and sits as past president. The Keystone Centre is a very complex operation involving the enclosed building of over 450 000 square feet, a staff of 200 people and an economic impact in Brandon of \$40 million.

Mr. McLeod is very valuable to this. The history and foresight Jack provides to the facility is immeasurable. He understands that, as the stewards of this valuable property, long-term vision is essential. It serves the residents of Brandon and Westman well to have a man of his character and integrity committed to the future of this valuable resource.

In closing, this centre will continue to progress as long as there are visionary people of his calibre involved, and I thank him for his dedication to the community and continued good work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### May Day

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield):** On September 21, 1999, Manitobans voted for what has been traditionally seen as a pro-labour government. Yet today, the day nations around the world honour their workers, the NDP forgot their supporters in the labour movement. Shame on them. Shame on the Minister of Labour (Ms. Barrett), and she should apologize to workers in this province for this omission. CNN reports much of the world recognizes May 1 as International Labour Day, a day for unions to push for better workplaces.

Mr. Speaker, in Yugoslavia citizens rallied against President Slobodan Milosevic's regime calling for peace, bread and democracy. When Russia was the Soviet Union, May 1 was the day of worker solidarity, a major date marked by huge processions of workers on the Red Square. In the post-Soviet era, the date has evolved into more of a holiday, still a tribute to workers but with more domestic concerns being raised. In China, crowds filled Beijing's Tiananmen Square drawn to honour model workers. In Japan some two million people attended rallies at about 1000

locations. In Manitoba, our labour government did nothing for May Day, not recognizing the efforts and sacrifices of our workers.

We, in the PC caucus and I as Labour critic, do recognize the efforts of the men and women who have served this province well, and we wish all of them a great and safe May Day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

\* (14:50)

### Manitoba Writing and Publishing Awards

**Ms. Linda Asper (Riel):** At the 12th annual Manitoba Writing and Publishing Awards on April 29, Diane McGifford, Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, announced that Manitoba authors will be recognized for their accomplishments through two new provincial literature awards. These two new annual prizes will be awarded for the first time in 2001, the Margaret Laurence Award for fiction and the Alexander Kennedy Isbister Award for non-fiction.

These awards, administered by the Association of Manitoba Book Publishers on behalf of the province, are worth \$3,500 each. In announcing these awards, the Minister began to fulfill a commitment by this Government to support Manitoba's literary community financially. The awards are named for two great pioneers who enriched Manitoba's heritage in many ways during their respective lifetimes. Margaret Laurence, from 1926 to 1987, has emerged as one of Manitoba's most successful authors and is regarded as an outstanding Canadian novelist who has done much to promote local and national literature. Alexander Kennedy Isbister, 1822 to 1883, was an explorer, noted educator, aboriginal rights reformer, lawyer and prolific writer of textbooks. The legacy of both these writers will be remembered through these awards. Minister McGifford stated that honouring local artists at the awards night was encouragement for the further growth of a healthy, thriving literary community.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Is there consent of the House to

proceed to report stage and then third reading of Bill 19, The Holocaust Memorial Day Act?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave? *[Agreed]*

### REPORT STAGE

#### Bill 19—The Holocaust Memorial Day Act

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, that Bill 19, The Holocaust Memorial Day Act (Loi sur le Jour commémoratif de l'Holocauste), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

*Motion agreed to.*

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill 19—The Holocaust Memorial Day Act

**Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour):** I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Ms. Friesen), that Bill 19, The Holocaust Memorial Day Act (Loi sur le Jour commémoratif de l'Holocauste), be now read a third time and passed.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Gary Filmon (Leader of the Official Opposition):** It is a privilege and an honour for me to rise and to speak today to Bill 19, The Holocaust Memorial Day Act, to add my words of support to those that have been put forward by members on both sides of the House as this bill has proceeded through first and second readings and committee stage in our Legislature. There have been some very eloquent speeches made, and I compliment members on all sides of the House for their contributions, for, I think, the very considered way that they have addressed this issue and for the position that they have taken to unanimously support the passage of this legislation.

Throughout my life, Mr. Speaker, I have been very proud to be an admirer and a friend of the Jewish community in our province. Janice and I have had the opportunity to count among our close friends many members of that

community. I have learned much from them, and it is probably fair to say that I would not have been elected first to City Council and then eventually to the Legislature without their support. They are a very talented group of people. We are very fortunate as Manitobans to have them in our province and to have the many contributions that they make to our life and our society. They are involved in public service at the community level, many of them very creative people. They certainly exercise a good deal of leadership in our business community, in our professions, in our arts community, in public life. I have always listened when they put forward proposals, Mr. Speaker, and supported their efforts throughout my 25 years in public office.

Mr. Speaker, one of the great privileges that I had as Premier was to be involved in the establishment of the Holocaust Memorial here on the grounds of this Legislature. It was, at the time, the only such memorial on the grounds of a Legislature anywhere in Canada. I believe it still is today.

It is a very visionary representation of the horrors of the Holocaust, of the terrible, terrible time that that was, perhaps the darkest hour in modern history in our world. The hatred, the genocide, the barbaric attitudes of a government that engaged in systematic destruction of people because of their religion, their race, their creed, their colour, their sexual orientation, their infirmities, physical and mental disabilities. They were targeted. As was said today at committee, they were targeted for mass destruction, principally, of course, the Jewish people but secondarily the others that I have referred to, whom the Nazis believed had to be exterminated in order to create their terrible, terrible, horrible vision of a society that they wanted to create.

When we established the Holocaust Memorial on the grounds of the Legislature, we did so because we wanted to have a permanent recognition of this period of time in the world's history, that time of the systematic and barbaric attempt at extermination of a race. We wanted to do it to ensure that people would always remember that dark period. I believe that that is very much a part of the motivation of this

legislation, to ensure that we, as a Legislature, put in place this day of recognition annually so that our children and their children, through the acknowledgment of Yom Hashoah, will never forget the horrible tragedy of that time.

The theme behind the memorial—I should speak firstly to its design because I remember, when I first saw it in a model form that was brought forward by the Jewish community, the tremendous symbolism that it contained. It was designed, if not totally, principally by Alec Katz, whose father was a Holocaust survivor. Its shape, of course, that of the Star of David—with one side wrenched open representing how the European Jewish community was almost entirely destroyed by the Nazis—was the symbol chosen as a reminder of the yellow Star of David Jews in the ghettos and camps of Europe were forced to wear.

\* (15:00)

The memorial was organized around the theme that past Holocaust remembrance events have always adopted, which is "Unto Every Person There is a Name," and that stark black granite memorial has listed on its walls more than 3700 names of Holocaust victims related to Manitoba families, thus ensuring that unto every known person there is a name on that memorial. Indeed, I think it can be said that for most of these victims this will be the only memorial bearing their names because there were no names on the mass graves and the crematoria of the Nazi death camps.

We were doing that, and I believe we are passing this act to keep faith with the martyred dead and to keep alive their memory, ultimately doing all we can to prevent such a barbaric tragedy from ever happening again. I look upon this remembrance and the establishment of this day of remembrance much in the same way as the establishment of Remembrance Day and remembering the dead of the major wars in which our world has been engaged during this century. Many times in recent years I have thought more about Remembrance Day than I did maybe in many years past because as we get further and further away, many of those who survived the wars, who participated in the wars, are gone. They are dying off. It is part of the

process of aging. I have been reading a book recently by Tom Brokaw called *The Greatest Generation*. It is about precisely the people who gave so much in the two world wars, but principally the Second World War, to ensure that we are able to live in peace and democracy and freedom for the future.

It brings home the fact that it is so easy for us to be able to carry on with our lives, to be able to enjoy all of the things that people fought and died for and the fact that we start to take it for granted. So, the last time that I officially represented the province at memorial day and laid a wreath at the Convention Centre, I took my granddaughter with me, who was only 4 years old at the time, not because she was old enough to really appreciate what this was about but because some day I will talk to her about that event, and it will be very important for her to join with, hopefully, many, many children in passing on to yet another generation the need for us to remember the sacrifices that were made by many.

I think this act is similar in that it is very important that we continue to pass on from generation to generation our horror at the atrocities that occurred during the Holocaust and our desire to ensure that it never happens again. Of course, the only way that we will, as a society, not be doomed to repeat the mistakes of history is if we learn from them and find a way to ensure that we always remember those terrible things and therefore remain committed from generation to generation to ensure that they never happen again.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to ensure that we do everything possible to support this legislation, to promote this legislation, and to see that Yom Hashoah, as a day of remembrance, becomes an important part of life in Manitoba, not just for Jews but indeed for all of its citizens.

I know that, as well in government, one of the other achievements of which I was very proud was the establishment of the Asper Centre, a centre of all sorts of activities for the revitalization and for the health and active involvement of the Jewish community in our city and our province. It has as one of its features a Holocaust memorial library, and that too, of

course, is very important to us in ensuring that information about this dark time in history is always available. When Janice and I went with the Jewish National Fund to Israel a few years ago, without question the most moving part of that journey was our visit to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem. I can tell you that I do not know of many people who could go through Yad Vashem and not be emotionally struck by it. You cannot go through it without having tears as you read about the people who were involved in the Holocaust, the stories of so many who were treated so horribly. Indeed, there have been many books written and many movies, whether it be *Schindler's List* or others, in which the story of the Holocaust is told. But for me it is important for us to add yet this official manner in which we can ensure that the Holocaust will always be remembered by generation after generation in our province and in our country to ensure, again, that in remembering, we do everything possible to eradicate the possibility that it could be repeated.

I could not put my hands on a famous work that I remember reading at some point. It was a comment by somebody who survived the terror of the Nazis, and it went something to the effect of: First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out; then they came for the weak and disabled and I did not cry out; then they came for the Catholics and I did not cry out, and then they came for me and there was nobody to call out to, nobody left.

That has always been something that stayed in my memory when it comes to us having a responsibility to speak out on issues. I think that in this Legislature we sometimes get partisan in the way in which we raise issues. I know that those on the government side sometimes object to the Opposition raising issues and hammering away at them, and I assume that the government of today has those feelings because I know we did when we were in government. It is events such as this, it is remembrances such as this that I think confirm for us why it is important to have the freedom to be able to speak out, to be able to criticize.

Not always right or wrong, oppositions make as many errors as governments do along the way, but the fact of the matter is that we

have the ability in our democratic society to be able to speak out and to be able to cry out when we see things that are wrong and need addressing and obviously need to be corrected. That is something that we should prize above all else in our democratic institutions, in our democratic society, is that we do have the right to do this and that we are always protected in our rights to do this.

As I have said many times, I may disagree vehemently with what somebody is saying, but I will defend to the death their right to say it. That is indeed the sort of thing that we need to have, is the ability to continue to protect our democracy and to remember the times in which things went wrong in this world and hopefully through that remembrance to be able to do everything we possibly can to ensure that those things do not happen again.

\* (15:10)

The Holocaust imposed unbelievable horrors on groups and categories of people in our society, principally the Jewish people, but, as the preamble to this legislation indicates, many others were targeted. I want to thank the government for accepting the very, very slight amendment that I made this morning at committee just to clarify the wording to ensure that we were recognizing the horrors that were enforced upon many, many because of the tremendous hatred that motivated the Nazis against people who had human characteristics, race, colour, creed, physical, mental infirmities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs that they disagreed with. They used that as the motivation to impose horrible, as they called it "final solutions" to eradicate these people from our society.

That should and I believe will never happen again if people throughout the world take the position that people in this Legislature have, to say that this method of recognizing the Holocaust, of remembering it and every year having people get together to make speeches, to go through the various remembrances that they will from their personal circumstances and their knowledge of people who survived that Holocaust and people who perished in the Holocaust—I believe that this will be a healthy

thing for our society and an absolutely proper thing for Manitoba to do.

It is interesting, you know, we all of us take democracy for granted, and sometimes it is such a simple thing. On the night of the 21st of September last year when our government was defeated and I had certain things to say on that evening, I thought that they were pretty straightforward and appropriate remarks to be made at a time of transition of government, recognizing the emergence of a new government in our province. I had somebody who was not from our country say to me a couple of days later that they could not believe how civilly and straightforwardly it took place. It took me aback because to me, I said, how else would it take place, and they said, well, you do not realize how many parts of the world there are in which that transition involves tremendous chaos and conflict. I guess that it helps us always to be able to recognize that there is a difference, that we have not always had peace and tranquillity, we have not always had democracy in our world, so remembrances such as this I think will help us to make for an even stronger society in Manitoba and in Canada.

A number of other governments, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island have all passed similar legislation. It is a credit to them, and I believe it is a credit to us that we are dealing with this and that we are able to unanimously approve speedy passage of this legislation, so that tomorrow Yom Hashoah can be recognized for the first time under this legislation passed by the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to have the privilege of being able to support this legislation and to say that all members on our side join with the Government in ensuring that it is passed.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased and honoured to have the opportunity of speaking in some small way to this bill. I, too, have been very impressed by the comments of previous members with respect to this bill, and I paid careful attention to the comments of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Filmon) to this bill. I was moved and impressed, as well, by his comments and by his

commitment, his ongoing commitment to this matter and to this cause throughout the tenure of his political life.

I have thought about the fact as the former Premier was speaking whether or not the fact that growing up in the north end amongst people who had emigrated from that part of the world in our early childhood played a part. I think his connection with this, as well as my own personal connection, the stories and the images and the fact that ever since childhood I was taught about this and I was drawn to this, and I am so very pleased that all members of this Chamber recognize the significant effect that this bill and this day can have not just on our own lives but in the lives of our children and our succeeding children.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately when one looks back at the incredible gains, the incredible strides and the progression of humanity and all of the sciences and the arts and the progressions that we have made in this century, despite all of that there is this huge black mark that remains on the 20th century, and that is the Holocaust. There might be a tendency to perhaps purge this from our memory and try to indicate that it was an anomaly, that it did not happen, but was only one in a long stream and perhaps of the Holocaust and similar events, particularly attributed to the Jewish people, that occurred and this was perhaps a culmination and the worst culmination. But if we do not in the 20th century with our technology and with our education, our advancements, acknowledge it, recognize it and work with it, then it is, as the Member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon) indicated, it is something that we might be inclined to repeat again, and that would be the ultimate tragedy and the ultimate desecration to the memory of every one of those men, women and children who perished under those extraordinarily evil circumstances.

I do not profess, Mr. Speaker, to have any great points that I can bring to this debate. I, as a rule, have a policy that I tend not to get personal in anything I speak of, because I represent a large volume of the population, and I am hesitating to tell my own personal stories in this regard. But I do want to indicate that I have sat at tables with families, with a woman who is writing a book whose entire family was

annihilated, who watched her mother shot to death in a burning hut. She watched with horror.

I have talked with individuals, many individuals who have on their hands tattoos from concentration camps, and you know what struck me most about those people with the tattoos on their hands. While the tattoos signified something, I noticed in them a spirit, a strength and a commitment for it never to happen again, as well as a love and an ability to transform those horrendous circumstances into something positive, which is what we are trying to do in this Chamber and what we are trying to do with a recognition on a regular basis under The Holocaust Memorial Day Act.

That is where I take my lead, from those men and women and what they have gone through and what they have done and how they have transformed what is an ultimate horror into something positive. I think that is what we are trying to do in this Chamber, and that is what we are trying to do with this act, and that is why it is so gratifying that we are doing this unanimously and with full intent and in recognition of this.

I, too, take my children when I can—and I understood exactly what the Member for Tuxedo was indicating when he said he took his granddaughter—I try to take my children, and I hope my children will take their children to the events. That is part of the motivation behind this bill, so that the memory will never be forgotten, so the mistake can never be made again.

\* (15:20)

I have the honour, as does the Member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon), to represent a large segment of population in my constituency that are of Jewish background and Jewish history. They have brought so much to the community. They have brought so much to my life, and I am so much a better MLA and so much a better human being because of the lessons that I have learned from them. So I commend all members of this Legislature, and I commend the community for bringing this forward in this. We are the servants of the community, we are the servants of the past, and we are the servants, in a small way, of all of those who suffered their

horrors. I know we will all be participating in events during Holocaust Awareness Week.

I am very pleased to have seen, in my short tenure as an elected official, the events becoming more and more part of public consciousness, and I think that is a real plus. I think it is a credit to some of the leadership of the former Premier and a credit to the leadership of the community that it is now becoming a more recognized and commonplace event. Is that not what we all hope for that rather than it becoming a diminishing memory and something that is a quaint relic of horrible historical fact, that in fact is a living relic of something that we are learning from and growing from?

I am hesitating proceeding down on a bunch of personal stories, Mr. Speaker. I think I will close my comments at this point just to say that I, and that of the community that I have the honour of representing to this bill, commend the Legislature for its unanimous approval of a bill of this kind. I just echo the comments of the Member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon), the former Premier, when he said how important democracy is. I always comment how many things are done in this Legislature through unanimous consent, how much really does go through this Chamber with agreement, albeit the 10 percent that does not go in agreement is usually quite heartfelt, but nonetheless it is significant.

This bill, I think, will go down in a small way in the history of this province but more importantly into the mainstream and the education of all of the citizens of Manitoba, not just tomorrow but for years and years to come. We all have a small part to play in something that, I think, we owe it to the survivors and to those who did not survive from the Holocaust to do our part that we shall never forget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education and Training):** I feel privileged to be able to say a few brief remarks on this bill. Like the two previous speakers, I think it is worth acknowledging that in this House there is unanimity on the Holocaust remembrance act. This episode in our history as a species on this planet in the 20th century is one of, I think, shame. The capacity for evil that exists in us as human beings is

something that is truly horrific. The capacity for evil that was translated into action during the Second World War with the imposition of the Holocaust on the Jewish people by Nazi Germany is something that needs be remembered, needs be proclaimed as a historical fact particularly to those amongst us in our society and those amongst us elsewhere in the country and in the world that deny the Holocaust, deny the evil that took place during the Second World War in this regard.

I think this Legislature, as I said, this unanimous Legislature, signals a very strong message to those who would deny the fact of the Holocaust, that we will not deny it and we will in Manitoba remember the tremendous evil that took place a short half-century ago and that it will never be forgotten. The capacity for evil will never be forgotten in this regard. I am just echoing my colleague's remarks that unanimity in this House I think is very important in this regard.

So I am very pleased to speak just briefly on this particular bill, to lend my voice to those in this Assembly who are supporting this act. I should also while I am here mention that my father fought in the Second World War, was laid up after the war for a better part of a decade from illnesses sustained during that conflict. The very reason why Canada was fighting against the evil of Nazism in the middle part of this century is illustrated I think very strongly by the fact of the Holocaust, that this was an evil that needs to be remembered and needs never to be permitted to happen again. Those who would deny it need to be faced down and confronted with those denials.

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** I would also like to put a few words on record regarding the Holocaust Memorial Day bill. If for no other reason, Mr. Speaker, that I was in Europe, albeit very small, when these atrocities occurred—I was born in the beginning of 1942 in southern Holland, so I might have been a small child, but I certainly heard the rumours later on and I heard the stories. I heard my parents say that their own small community of Jewish people suddenly never returned. They were there before the war, and after the war they just never showed up, and the question marks started arising.

Some of course denied that this could have happened, because I do not deny that that part of Europe, that part of Holland, was very pro-German. It used to belong to Germany at one point, and there are still many people even today that would argue that this could not have occurred. I find that rather disturbing that in spite of such evidence there are still people who would say this could not have happened, the Germans could not do such a thing.

I am mindful of the fact that after World War I it is true that the Weimar Republic was one of the most democratic republics in the world but, nonetheless, that republic in a very short order, certainly by 1933, gave way to Adolf Hitler. So even in the most democratic of circumstances, if we are not vigilant, if we do not pay heed to the real facts, things can transmute very rapidly.

It scares me sometimes when I see sentiments in this continent that would intimate that we are beyond those kinds of temptations, that there is no evil in our human hearts, that we are so democratic that nothing could ever be subverted and that an evil comparable to the evil that was perpetrated by the Nazis is not possible here. I would deny that most. Freedom demands vigilance. Humans have to realize that they are capable of infinite evil sometimes under all kinds of guises and educational systems and beliefs. They can be talked into it and they believe that they are doing the right thing. So, Mr. Speaker, that is why I wanted to say a few words on this topic.

I have also visited the Anne Frank house in Amsterdam. I can only imagine the fear that must have galvanized those people, shocked those people, forced them to live in a sense hiding away like mice, like rats. Whenever you walk into that house you cannot but feel the oppression, the ominous sense of everything closing in on you. A small bookcase covers the hidden door, behind which there were a series of very small rooms that sheltered a number of people, quite a few people, who had to hide year after year after year from the Nazis, who at this time controlled all of Europe, or most of Europe. It concerned me, because I hear people saying today we had a war to end all war in World War



I; it would never happen again. But war keeps coming back.

\* (15:30)

We talk about the Holocaust as if it was something that would never happen, an event that happened once, will never come back, but we do know that it happened in Rwanda, again in Kosovo. It happened earlier on in various other places like Armenia. I think, Mr. Speaker, we have to be aware that human beings are capable of descending to this kind of atavism always in history, and today is no exception. So we have to be extremely vigilant. That is why this bill is so very important. There have been many holocausts in the past, none of them quite as painful and as dark and as deep as the one faced by the Jewish people.

I also would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that in my former life as an English teacher, I used to teach the *Diary of Anne Frank*, which I treated as a novel actually, but it is a diary. I remember once teaching this to my Grade 9 students in Cranberry Portage, Frontier Collegiate Institute. We used to have many interesting discussions, not only about Anne Frank as a person, as a young girl, as a teenager in Holland hiding from the Nazis, because her life and the life of her family was at stake if they were ever discovered, and they were discovered. We had many, I guess, good discussions.

What really intrigued me was that one student came back from a visit to Winnipeg one day and had, I will never forget it, a big yellow sheet that she had picked up somewhere downtown. It was by Holocaust deniers. It was an attack on the Anne Frank diary, intimating such things as Anne Frank either had never existed or the evil that was suggested in the diary was not quite the evil that it really was. In other words, trying to whitewash or to thin down what really happened, which is the precursor or the forerunner of denying all together. I mean, sometimes when we are faced with overwhelming evil I guess it is good—or not good—but it is maybe human to stick one's head in the sand and say, well, it never happened; you can deny that it ever happened. I did not believe that this could happen to one of my students, that she would come back with a piece of paper that

somebody had actually printed and handed out in Winnipeg denying the Anne Frank family's existence and the fact that the Holocaust even existed. That was rather a scary eye-opener.

I have been back to Holland and to Germany a number of times over the last decade or two. It never fails to amaze me, when I run into former warriors or people that were involved in the war, there are always a small group that do deny that the Holocaust existed or those that would present an argument as if the other group was less than human.

This is really scary, Mr. Speaker, and it is a point, in fact, that the former Premier alluded to as well, that once we start to take our adversarial relationships too seriously, when we start to dehumanize the opposition and start giving them characteristics of the devil, then it is only natural to go to the next stage. That next stage could be teaching or educating impressionable young children and giving them this thwarted version of history.

The opposition is never the devil. Humans should never be dehumanized. Life is sacred. It does not matter what form, and you cannot put limits on it. It was so easy to limit sometimes in the past, and I can see how the Nazis did it. They said, well, we do not agree with left-wing politics, so let us proscribe all the social democrats. And while we are at it, let us for sure get rid of the Communists, and while we are at it, we do not like undesirables such as gay people, Gypsies and so on. That is their term "undesirable," so they were cleansing society on the assumption that they were a superior or Aryan race. This arrant nonsense held credibility in one of the most educated countries in the world, Germany, a highly scientific country, yet this nonsense existed.

Let us never presume that we are beyond such temptations. I look back even a few decades. In the United States, McCarthyism ran rampant. Good people were too scared to stand up and say, you know, let us stand up to this nonsense every time Joe McCarthy waves that sheet of paper saying it has come to my attention there are 273 Communists blah, blah, blah. Mr. Speaker, that is where it starts. That arrant nonsense where you start slinging mud at

the opposition and the mud becomes a label. Then you go a little bit further and eventually you give characteristics to the opposition that are no longer human. That is why it is possible.

It has happened to me that I have talked with what I thought were sensible human beings in Holland, former SS soldiers, wearing suits and ties, who would convince me that murdering Russian soldiers was perfectly all right, and would say to me, face-to-face, shooting them was just like shooting rabbits. Surely, you do not assume that these Communists were human? Well, of course, they were human. They are as human as you and I are. When we start saying that creed or race or colour or whatever becomes a reason for eliminating somebody, in other words that life is not sacred, that our ideology and our ideals and our beliefs are sacred, we are in serious trouble.

Now we say it will never happen here, but, ladies and gentlemen, I assure you it has happened elsewhere where we thought it would not happen. Nobody would have predicted in a million years that the Weimar Republic, the most democratic republic of all the entire world, would give way to an Adolf Hitler. Do not let us make the assumption that we are somehow beyond history and it cannot happen here. There are a few KKK types around, there are Aryan Nation types around. True, they are very small, they are very innocuous, but they are nonetheless very dangerous because this is a virulent botulism and once it spreads, and once you have enough people unwilling to speak to let it happen, then we are in danger.

We have had enough of the Holocaust deniers, we have had enough of the death camps and the collection camps. I can think of some of them in Holland—Westerbork, and I can think of Wercht [*phonetic*]. I can think of Auschwitz and Drancy in France and Sobibor and Bravensbrok and Bergen-Belsen, an endless number of death camps. We have had camps before and we have had them since, but these were the worst. This was the actual pinpointing of a people, the targeting of a people, the attempt to eliminate a people. When you can eliminate, sometimes you use a different argument. I have heard different arguments: not a people you eliminate, but an idea or a belief.

We cannot get too partisan, and I am glad that the former Premier mentioned it. We cannot get too partisan. We must always give others the right to speak. We may not agree with their ideas, but we must always give them the right to speak. We can ridicule mildly, and we do in this House all the time. But let us never forget we live in a democratic system; we have to abide by certain civilised rules. We cannot take ourselves and our own humanity too seriously. We are all prone to mistakes, and you will notice that those who target others claim never to make mistakes. They are somehow always pure or refined and they have sifted it out. That is nonsense, because we are all humans and we all have value.

So I am very happy to see that we have a Holocaust memorial on these grounds. I am very happy to support this bill. I am very happy that we are aware that evil has to be confronted and has to be remembered and we are not going to deny it, because if you deny history you are bound to repeat it. So we are not going to deny it. I am glad to see that there is this unanimous agreement that we are supporting this bill because we are not going to let it die. We know what human beings are capable of when they take themselves too seriously, when they dehumanize the opposition. We do not want that ever to happen again. It is just not fair to the children; it is not fair to a race or the culture that is involved. It is not fair to any of us. When some of us are dehumanized, regardless under what circumstance, whether it is McCarthyism in the United States or Nazis in Europe, it dehumanizes all of us, and we want to stop that dehumanization process once and for all. And that is why I am very happy to support this bill and thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert):** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say a couple of short words. After all the speeches that I have heard on this and the heartfelt feeling that has gone into it, I must say the supporting of The Holocaust Memorial Day Act is a point that I think is more than just something that we as legislators are looking at today that we at times agree with, it is something that we all truly have a strong belief in. I think it stands in itself as an opportunity, a tool that we will be able to use in our schools to help educate our children in the future so that they remember the horrors of the

past and that they remember that the things that they hear out there, that the Holocaust did not happen, are not true.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we as legislators bring forward this type of legislation and work together in the future to see that we do not forget and our children do not forget and our children's children. We must see that the history of the past does not get repeated. I am just happy to support this with all my colleagues in the Legislature today. Thank you.

\* (15:40)

**Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Inter-governmental Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to add my comments to this bill and to support this bill because it does offer us a point in time to remember the attempt which came dangerously close to success, to the elimination of European Jewry in the 20th century. It should be and it will be, as a result of this bill, part of the education of children and adults to remember the Holocaust and to understand what implications it has for everyone in our community. It is something, I think, which the Jewish community and many other organizations have worked for for a very long time.

It was in the 1960s when the push to have Holocaust studies in schools and universities and to have Holocaust memorials and Holocaust memorial days began. We are in fact in this Legislature today, as we move through this bill, part of a much larger international movement which is dedicated to keeping alive the memory of the evil that was there in the middle of the 20th century.

It is more important perhaps to do it as we look at a new millennium, because many of the survivors have passed on. Very few of them of them are still with us, but the deniers are still with us. We know that from our own country and from issues in some of the provinces about Holocaust denial. There has even been a recent court case with Penguin Books which again has dealt with the issue of Holocaust denial. It seems almost unbelievable at this point in time that there should be that issue of people who, in spite of all the evidence, seem able to deny the

existence of the evil that was there in Europe in the 19th century.

It is important, I think, to commit to public memory, to the collective will to remember, this knowledge of evil. I will say that we did not always know of the extent of this evil, but through the restoration of survivors, through resisters, through righteous Gentiles and through many others, the records have gradually been put together. In part, they have been put together because of the rigorous recording of evil itself by the Nazis. The records indeed are there for the concentration camps. The historical arguments and the evidence have been gradually pulled very meticulously from the records of the murderers themselves.

We have seen films on this. We have seen the work of Simon Wiesenthal in Austria and of Simone Wisa [*phonetic*] and others and her family in France, particular families and people who have taken upon themselves to maintain the record and to create the opportunity for a collective memory that is going to be so important, not just for us but for succeeding generations.

Like my colleague who spoke before me, I grew up in England in the 1940s. It was at a time when the evidence on the Holocaust and the extermination camps was becoming gradually known. I remember reading as a child, I think I might have been nine or ten years old, beginning to read a book called *The Scourge of the Swastika*. It was by Lord Liverpool. It was one of the first full accountings of what had happened in the Holocaust. People certainly knew and they knew during the War what was happening, but I do not think people knew the extent and the depth of what had happened. That was what began to be reconstructed in the 1940s and '50s.

Those of us who grew up in that era, I think, not so much in those days that we knew people who had survived, but certainly the popular record of that came out. The book by Lord Liverpool was an important one, so were many of the books about the Resistance that I read as a young girl. I remember we used to in class, we had them as they came out. *Carve Her Name With Pride* was one I remember. We had them in

our desks and we exchanged them amongst ourselves. It was our education about the previous 10 or 12 years. It was almost a sense of bewilderment, I think, that you would read as a young child about those events. It did make a tremendous impression.

But it was not until I came to Montreal and became quite close to members of the Jewish community in Montreal, which is a very diverse and active community, that I met survivors. I saw the tattoos on their wrists, and I talked to the them, some of them students like myself who had lost families. These were Belgian and French Jews who had lost their families at Auschwitz. I talked to my own professors who had fled Germany in the late '30s and who made it a point in their own courses. I remember the history of Germany that I took from Professor Vogel, who was himself a refugee from Austria, about the nature of this evil and the importance that he always stressed of the beginnings of Nazism, that it began with the setting aside of the rule of law and that that is where it began. That is what we should remember, that it begins stealthily and that what we saw in the 20th century should remind us of the banality of evil as others have written, that it begins step by step with the defining the "other" as inhuman. That, Mr. Speaker, is something that we should all remember not just in Canada but elsewhere around the world.

We should not think that anti-Semitism does not exist in Canada. I have seen it not just in Montreal but I have seen it too in Winnipeg and phoned myself to institutions where I have heard people make those comments, and I have gone home and immediately phoned the manager and made my views clear. I hope that it is that kind of simple gesture, small as it was, but nevertheless taking note and challenging those who do make those comments and beginning with the very small steps and assuring ourselves that those kinds of comments cannot pass unnoticed.

I expect most educators will make use of Holocaust Day, and I hope they will, to speak not just about the Nazi program but about the history of anti-Semitism in general, because what happened in the mid-20th century of course had many long antecedents throughout Europe.

It had it in the history of the burning alive of Jews in York in the 13th century, or whether we look at Passow [*phonetic*] in the 16th century or whether we look at the pogroms of Russia in the 19th and 20th centuries. The history of anti-Semitism goes very deep in Europe and is something that had very strong impacts on the lives of many families throughout the generations of European history.

Perhaps it will also be a time, Mr. Speaker, to remember the mass exterminations of human history in our own time: Rwanda, Cambodia, parts of the Balkans. We should remember to focus on the 1930s and '40s, as well, on "the final solution." Its timorous beginnings and its unimaginable end, its calculations, its breadths, its discipline, its meticulousness, and the 11 million people who died in those camps, 6 million of them killed for being Jewish, the direct result of the anti-Semitism of generations of European history.

In some jurisdictions, different dates have been chosen for Holocaust Day. Some have chosen January 27, the liberation of Auschwitz by the army of the former Soviet Union. Others have chosen the 15th of April, the day when Belsen was relieved by the allies. We have chosen another version of the date, but all of us would be remembering the evil that came to Europe and but for very few small accidents might have come to the rest of the world as well in the middle of the 20th century.

It is important, I think, to see the Holocaust Day as a time for education, a time for reflection, a time to remember the banality of evil and a time to remember the importance of all members of society in fighting that evil. There is no more famous quotation about moral failure in the past century, and I am quoting, than Martin Neimale's [*phonetic*] mea culpa about the Holocaust. "First they came for the communists, but I was not a communist, so I said nothing. Then they came for the social democrats, but I was not a social democrat, so I did nothing. Then came the trade unionists, but I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew so I did little. Then when they came for me, there was no one left to stand up for me."

Everybody knows that. There is a force and a clarity about those sentences that are important, I think, to establish in the minds of every child of succeeding generations, and I hope they will be there for my grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It is a very formidable statement and one that reminds us of all our responsibilities. Others have added to that statement, Mr. Speaker, Catholics, gays, homosexuals, the disabled, and what it does indicate, I think, is that that statement is something which affects everyone, that everyone has felt that this is important and is something which requires a moral courage on behalf of all of those who are seen as outsiders in a society. In a just and liberal society, it is important that everyone participate in this.

\* (15:50)

So I think, Mr. Speaker, it is important that we have a Holocaust Memorial on the grounds of the Legislature. It is the right place for it in Manitoba. It is important that we have a Holocaust Day not just for ourselves, not just for the public, but for the future generations of Manitobans.

I want to quote again from an article by Andrew Marr. He said that the Holocaust has become the single most potent moral event of our times, our symbol of absolute evil, our hellfire in history, the place where we imagine ourselves tested hardest, our instinctive reference point for anything else that appalls us.

It is that sense of a moral compass, Mr. Speaker, which I think is at the heart of this bill on Holocaust Day, and I am very pleased to support it.

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Just to conclude debate on this bill, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the members opposite, my counterpart in the Official Opposition and the Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) for consenting to the swift passage of this bill. I think it attests to both the importance of the bill, its subject matter, and, as well, what is best about this place.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that His Honour will be available at 4:55 today for royal assent.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is Bill 19, The Holocaust Memorial Day Act. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Agreed and so ordered.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, would you please call the Government resolution on page 4 of Orders of the Day in the name of the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

#### GOVERNMENT MOTION

##### Federal Reparation for 1999 Farmland Flooding

**Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Lathlin), that

WHEREAS excess rainfall in the fall of 1998 and spring of 1999 resulted in over 1 million acres of land going unseeded, primarily in the southwest, but also in other areas of the province; and

WHEREAS the federal government has recognized the disaster situation and is compensating people for mould and other property damage under the Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA); and

WHEREAS farmers lost chemical and fertilizer inputs and incurred extra costs to restore their land and for weed control at the same time as they had no 1999 crop to sell; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Government has repeatedly requested support from the federal government, which has the lead responsibility for disaster financing for farmers who sustained damage to their land; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Government pursued support for compensation under section 25 of the DFAA, which specifies loss of applied

fertilizer and land restoration and was turned down by the federal government; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Government requested a Canada/Manitoba agreement for the provision of assistance similar to the levels provided in the 1996 Saguenay River flood, the 1997 Red River Valley flood and the 1998 Eastern Canada ice storm, and the federal government has refused; and

WHEREAS there has been all-party co-operation on lobbying the federal government for assistance for Manitoba farmers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to reconsider its position on funding for the 1999 flooding, which occurred throughout the province, but specifically in the southwest, and include loss of applied fertilizer and land restoration as eligible costs under the DFAA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to consider programs and assistance similar to that provided for disasters such as the 1996 Saguenay River flood, the 1997 Red River Valley flood and the 1998 Eastern Canada ice storm.

*Motion presented.*

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise today in the House to speak on one of the most important issues facing Manitobans and indeed the producers of Manitoba and, in particular, the farmers of southwestern Manitoba who were unable to seed last year due to flooding caused by heavy precipitation.

Certainly, when we look at the numbers, we see that there were an estimated 1.1 million acres of land that was unseeded.

*Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Certainly, there was recognition of this area being a disaster. There was federal government support for property losses or mould to buildings, but there was not any recognition of

the difficulties that the farmers are facing due to their loss of input costs and fertilizer losses and now the loss to their infrastructure.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, although we have had discussions on this and we have raised this issue in the House, I think that it is important that we have a debate here in the House and that we have all-party support for this resolution so that we can then send it off to the federal government to have them recognize that they have made a mistake in how they have treated the people who suffered because of the floods of 1999 and that this flood has had a dramatic impact on the economy of Manitoba but has had an even more serious impact on those producers who were not able to seed a crop last year and those producers who are getting ready to seed a crop this year. Because of the financial situation that they are in, it is going to be very, very difficult for them.

I really urge the members opposite to support this resolution so that we can then take it to committee and then send it off to the federal government to show them that we are united in this very, very important issue. Certainly farmers went to Ottawa and made it clear. While certainly the media attention to the 1999 flood was not the same as the media attention that we got for the Red River flood, it was a serious situation. Rainfall in excess of 500 percent of normal precipitation is a dramatic event, but I remember that, when the whole situation was on last spring and we raised the issue here in the House many times, the issue did not get the media attention that the Red River flood did get. Of course, it is much more dramatic when you see water all around a house or you see boats going down over property and people pumping water away from their houses. It makes for much better television, but the situation nonetheless is as severe as, and I believe more severe than, the situation that was faced by people in the Red River Valley.

When they had the flood in the Red River Valley, yes, it was very dramatic and there was a lot of tragedy that went along with it, but the water was over the farmland. When the water receded, farmers in fact were able to put in a crop that year and got, in most cases, a very good crop. In the southwest part of the province, there was no crop planted. There was a huge

weed problem, and those people who ended up putting in a crop ended up with a very poor crop and high expenses.

Now, as a province and as a provincial government, since we took office we have been doing things to address this situation. We have made some changes to crop insurance, so that this year should there be this kind of a disaster again, where there is excessive moisture, farmers will not have to push to get that crop in because there is unseeded acreage insurance. We have also made some changes to crop insurance to help people who are not able to pay their crop insurance bills, but those are not going to address the situation that farmers are facing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

\* (16:00)

I want to say that we recognize the seriousness of this disaster. We have been working, and we are going to continue to work, on this issue. It is an issue that we should not be addressing in a partisan way. When we raised the issue with the government last year, the previous government, we talked about having an all-party committee address this issue. The previous government chose not to address it in a non-partisan way and did not choose to lead a delegation to Ottawa to have this situation taken seriously. However, when we formed government, that was one of the first steps that we did. We pulled together farm leaders, municipal people, members of the Opposition, and said: Let us take the politics out of this and let us stand together to make sure that we get the federal government to recognize how serious this situation is. We took this delegation to Ottawa, and we talked about two issues. We talked about the serious financial shortfall that producers were facing because of low commodity prices, as well as lack of support in transportation by the federal government. We talked about the issue of the southwest part of the province where there was and continues to be a very serious problem.

Since last April, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we were in Opposition, we raised questions in the Legislature on a regular basis on the flooding in the southwest part of the province. Premier Doer, then-Leader of the Opposition, attended

the farm rally in Melita, which attracted over 1000 farmers and gave our commitment to continue to work on this issue. Many members, many of my colleagues, the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and other members, went to the southwest part of the province and gave our commitment to producers that we would work with them on this issue.

I have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that since taking office my colleague the minister of transportation and Minister responsible for Government Services (Mr. Ashton) has pursued the issue with the federal agencies responsible for DFAA. He has pursued the matter with Mr. Eggleton, Mr. Axworthy, Mr. Duhamel; as well, we have met with all Manitoba Liberal MPs to try to get them on board on this issue, to get them to recognize this serious situation.

I have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when I was in Ottawa to deal with the safety net programs, I raised this issue with the federal Minister of Agriculture, as well as the Secretary of State of Rural Development, Mr. Mitchell, in each case, asking them for fair treatment for our producers, the same kind of treatment that the producers in other provinces got. We have raised it, and we are going to continue to raise this matter with the federal government until we get fair treatment. We met as recently as last week with the members of the Manitoba Liberal caucus and asked them to recognize this situation and asked them to go back to their colleagues to get some support.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a lot of frustration amongst the farmers. I think that one of the things that we can do, as elected members out of this Chamber, is to stand together on this particular issue and pass a resolution that we can then pass on to Ottawa to say that, yes, we have a united front, we continue to have a united front in our support for the producers of southwestern Manitoba.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we talk about the people of the southwest part of the province and where we should get assistance for them. Certainly we were very disappointed when we learned that Mr. Eggleton, Minister responsible for DFAA, said that farm expenses

such as lost inputs and land restoration would not be included as eligible payments under DFAA.

Now, we have had people raise the issue about why do you not raise the issue of JERI? Why are you just pursuing DFAA? Well, I want to tell you we have pursued every avenue possible. In fact, in November, on November 22 my colleague the Minister responsible for Government Services (Mr. Ashton) wrote a letter to Mr. Duhamel and asked that we have the same kind of assistance for the farmers in the southwest as for those in the Red River Valley.

Of course this involves a 50-50 agreement. We have tried to get the 90-10 agreement, we have tried to get the 50-50 agreement, but we are not getting the support from the federal government that we need on this particular issue.

For my colleagues who are not from a rural area, I would want to emphasize that I think we have to recognize how important the agriculture industry is to Manitoba. When you have one in nine jobs in the province related to agriculture, you can tell that that is of substantial importance, but when you lose a million acres out of production and you have families who do have not a source of income because all of their land has been under water and they are unable to produce their crop and have no income, that is a very serious situation.

The spin-off is dramatic. There is a negative impact on the municipalities. There is certainly a negative impact on the businesses in those rural communities, and we have to think about that. We are going to see more effects this spring when farmers get out to prepare to go on the land as many are doing right now and they are not able to afford their input costs. So that means some producers are going to put in a crop anyway because they have to put in a crop, but they are not going to put in the same amount of fertilizer and chemical that they have.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been distracted. I want to get back to my comments and the fact that there is going to be an impact this year on the businesses, the fertilizer and the chemical dealers. The negative impact on the farm families will continue on. So it is a very

important part of our economy. We have to ensure that that economy can continue on. Producers are trying very hard to change over to new crops, to change into more livestock, but when you have had a year like the people of the southwest have had where they have not had a crop, they do not have the cash flow. It makes it very difficult to then try to diversify into livestock or new crops or any of those things. That is why it is so important that we get the federal government to recognize this very serious issue here.

I have to say that there have been many proposals that have been put forward, proposals by farmers who travelled to Ottawa with their MLA talking about a \$25-an-acre payment. There have been various things put forward. We recognize that these producers, no matter what form the federal government chooses to take, there has to be some support for them, and it is unfortunate that it has taken this long for the issue to be addressed, but we are not prepared to let it die at this time.

The federal government has the responsibility of addressing disasters. The legislation dealing with disasters is federal legislation. The legislation requires that there be a sharing of the funding between the federal and provincial governments, and as a provincial government, just as other provincial governments have done no matter where they are in Canada, we are prepared to put our fair share into the funding of the costs of the disaster, as has been done in the past by these governments. But if the federal government is not prepared to recognize the disaster and put their money into it, then it makes it very difficult for a province to take on that responsibility. I do not think that there is any province that is willing to take the responsibility of disasters away from the federal government.

\* (16:10)

If you look at it, you know, somewhere in Canada there could be a disaster this year just as there has been in the past, whether it is ice storms or floods or fires. In all of those situations, it is the federal government that takes the lead on this responsibility in addressing it. There is no way that provinces can and should



take on these roles on their own. The provinces just do not have the financial ability to do it.

As Canadians, we expect the federal government to help, as they did in the Saguenay flood in Quebec, as they did in the eastern ice storm and as they did in the flood of 1997 in the Red River Valley. I have to say that if Quebec farmers could be compensated for the loss of their maple trees—and I believe that this happened both in Ontario and in Quebec—so should the flooded fields of southern Manitoba be compensated. The maple trees of those farmers is their infrastructure, and the soil and land of the farmers in southwestern Manitoba is their infrastructure, and there has to be a way that there should be support for them.

I have to say that as a province, as a government, we have requested a number of different funding arrangements to get the money into the southwest. Many will say, well, why are you not trying to get JERI? We have. We have asked the federal government to consider a program that will be 50-50 funding. We have asked for DFAA, which is a 90-10 program funded under the Western Economic Diversification. Each of those requests have been denied.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why it is so important that we can stand united in this House and say that, yes, as elected members we recognize this as a disaster and we want the federal government to reconsider its decision on the funding for the 1999 flood. We want them to reconsider the lost input costs of applied fertilizer and land restorations as eligible costs under DFAA. We want the federal government to consider programs and assistance similar to that provided for disasters, no matter where they are in this province.

You know, there was a bit of false hope built up for our producers when we had a member of the federal government come here, when Mr. Axworthy came and delivered a letter on behalf of Mr. Eggleton to our Minister here indicating that there was going to be some support for the southwest part of the province. It built up hope for the farmers that, yes, their disaster was being considered but, unfortunately, in one breath that hope was put out and very shortly after that there

was a phone call to the Minister's office to put some numbers together that could be considered for funding. Then very shortly after that, there was no program there.

Now, the other issue that I want to bring up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the issue of the \$100 million, the grain transportation support that was put into Manitoba. I really welcome that money. I am really proud that as a province we recognize that there is a shortfall of money and that we will be able to put in \$40 million along with \$60 million from the federal government to help with this transportation support, but that was never intended to address the southwest part of the province. That is a whole separate issue.

During those discussions there was talk about some money for the southwest part of the province separate from the transportation support, but that money disappeared. I believe that it is unfortunate that we play with people's lives like that. I think that we have to send a strong message saying, yes, if you can recognize disasters in other parts of Canada, the federal government should recognize them here.

I know that members of the farming community and people in the southwest are very disheartened when they hear about supports for people in other parts of the world who are suffering from a disaster. I think that we should be offering supports to people in other parts of the world when they suffer from a disaster. That is Canada's nature. We are recognized around the world for being leaders in recognizing disasters around the world but, at the same time, we should be recognizing that there is a disaster, there was a disaster in southwestern Manitoba. It was recognized because there is some funding coming from the federal government.

There was recognition, but they are just not prepared to bend or look at the rules under the particular section where they could have made the changes. Under section 25 there is flexibility. If there was the political will to do it, it could have been done. What we have to do is ensure that we continue that pressure on the federal government to get that money there.

I know that members opposite are going to say that, you know, the Province has failed,

provincial government has failed to address this situation. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that we have to put those kinds of politics aside and work at it together. I know the Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner) made some partisan comments at the rally and just got very bad press on it from the people in the southwest part of the province, in the Brandon paper, where they were very critical of him for being partisan on such an important issue.

I raise that because very negative coverage, bringing partisanship into it, again, I say, this is one of those issues that is too important. Let us continue to work on it together. Let us send a strong message to the federal government to ensure that they recognize this matter and put their money on the table as well.

When we talk about whether or not this government has supported producers, I have to say that there has been support. I am proud of what we have achieved. Certainly the federal Department of Agriculture has expended \$70 million on the \$50-an-acre payment in the southwest, but also an additional \$37.5 million has been spent on the AIDA program. There has been approximately \$20 million spent on enhanced AIDA. Just more recently, as a province and as a government, we contributed \$40 million in the Canada-Manitoba Adjustment Program. I know I heard someone say, you know, what is \$100 million, but I have to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people who have been able to get that money, even though it does not address all of the problems, any bit will help. When that money comes into their hands, they certainly appreciate it. As a province, as a government, the Government of Manitoba in the last year spent almost \$170 million to help out the farmers through this difficult situation.

I do not want to mislead anyone by saying that all of this money goes to the southwest part of the province; it does not. Seventy million did go to the southwest part of the province; that is where it went, but the other money is spread out across the province to help farmers who are facing many difficulties. That is not to say that we should not do more, and that is not to say that we will not continue to do more and try to get the federal government to work on this one.

\* (16:20)

Just as recently as last week, my colleague the Minister of Highways (Mr. Ashton) and I met with members of the Liberal caucus to talk about what it is we can do to get them to recognize that there is a crisis. We are trying to get them to recognize that as a province there has been a lot of money going into the agriculture situation and a lot of money that has gone into the southwest. The federal government has to come to the table as well, and we are working diligently to try to get them to recognize that situation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are going to continue to fight in the interests of southwestern Manitoba's farmers. It is imperative that the federal government join Manitoba in recognizing the urgency of the situation and clearly identify what money is available for southwestern Manitoba. It is not fair to just have people say, yes, we recognize this situation, and then have somebody come with a letter and say, yes, there is going to be some money coming, and then the next day say, no, there is not. It is not fair to people. They would not get away with this in other parts of the country. They should not be getting away with it here. Somehow we have to get them to recognize us.

We continue to call on the federal government. We continued as recently as last week to call on the Manitoba Liberal caucus to urge the federal cabinet to reverse the decision made by Mr. Eggleton and provide support for the producers of southwestern Manitoba. We have to continue in that effort to have him change his mind. There is room within DFAA to correct that. We are urging the federal government to assume its seat at the table in good faith in keeping the commitments that Mr. Axworthy made when he was here in Manitoba very recently. I believe it was in February when he visited my colleague's office and dropped off the letter.

We want them to consider the historical precedence that had been set when there had been other disasters, when they have been able to look at the sections of DFAA, when they have been able to design new programs. It is surprising that during the Red River flood it did

not take very long to design a new program. They were out there handing those cheques out so quickly you did not know what the heck was going on. We are a year now since this whole situation in the southwest part of the province started and still no recognition by the federal government that this is a very serious situation. Families are in a disastrous situation. Families are at risk of losing their homes and of losing their land, and farm families should not have to go through this kind of a situation here in Canada.

We have called, and we will continue to call, on the federal government for a meeting to work through this situation because it is far too serious. I must say that to work through this we must work through it together. We must recognize that there is a group of people in Manitoba, through no fault of their own, who are going through a very serious situation. There is a group of people who are under a tremendous amount of stress—emotional stress, financial stress. It is not only the farmers; it is the rural communities; it is the businesses in the southwest.

I know that there are people working out there trying to diversify the economy. We just had a meeting to talk about how we can add some new value-added into the southwest part of the province. People are working diligently at that, trying to get new ideas. If they have the time and they have the support, give them a few years, and they will be back on their feet again. They will be paying their fair share of taxes to the provincial and federal government. They will be producing products that contribute to the economy of this province and to the international trade of this country, because agriculture plays a very important role in international trade. What we have to do is give a hand to these people. As a province, as a provincial government, we have been doing what we can. We are prepared to work with the federal government under a disaster assistance program, but we are getting a deaf ear from the federal government, and that is why it is so important. *[interjection]*

As my colleague says, these people want a hand up; they do not want a handout. They want the ability to get on with their lives. We need to stand together on this particular issue. We have

asked time and time again, and we have had it from the members opposite, to set politics aside and lobby the federal government together. That is what we have to continue to do. Give these people a chance. Give them the support that they need to put that crop into the ground or at least a signal that there is support there for them.

We have made some changes as a province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I have outlined those. Changes that will help them with paying their crop insurance bills. We have looked at ways that we can help through the Agricultural Credit Corporation. We have made the unseeded acreage due to excess moisture a permanent program, rather than an ad-hoc program. We are looking at how we could do that, but this is a crucial time for the people who are getting ready to put in that crop and we have to be able to send them a signal. We are telling those people: we are ready to stand with you. We have been and we will continue to do that, but we have to convince the federal government to put their share of money into it.

These people should not be treated differently from people who suffered disasters in other parts of Canada. That is all we are asking the federal government to do. Reconsider the position that they took as far as the DFAA funding. Look at developing programs that will treat these people the same as the people in the Red River Valley or when they had that flood in the Saguenay or the ice storm, nothing different for our producers, for our farmers, just a fair program.

Let us convince the federal government of it. I think it is very, very unfair of what we have had over the last little while. There appears to be an olive branch out there, saying, oh, yes, here is the letter, and then going out in front of the media and saying, oh, yes, there is going to be something for the southwest part of the province—and then nothing happening.

That is unfair to those people. Those are humans. There are children out there who are facing real challenges and families worrying about how they are going to put that crop in. I call on members opposite to put aside partisan politics, to put aside any attacks that there might be. Let us join together to deal with the federal

government on this important issue. Let us pass this resolution and tell the federal government that we indeed do think that they made a mistake through DFAA. Ask them to reconsider that decision that they made and ask them to treat our producers as fairly as the producers in other parts of the country were, no more, no less, but look at the rules.

\* (16:30)

What is infrastructure? What are costs that can be covered? Come forward with something. As a provincial government we are prepared to stand with the producers. If you look at the amount of money that we have put into the various programs up till now, we have stood with the producers. It is unfortunate that we still have an outstanding issue as far as input costs from the previous years. It is very unfortunate that that is still an issue out there and that that issue puts the kind of pressure that it is putting on farmers right now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I have stated very clearly why we have put this resolution forward. We had certainly hoped that the members would be bringing this kind of resolution forward to show their signal that they were prepared to stand up with us on this important issue and give some signal to the producers that they were prepared to support the provincial Government in their efforts to try to get some support for the producers. I think that is what we really have to look at here. How do we set aside politics? How do we get the support from the Opposition to send a strong signal?

The federal government is just looking for an excuse. If they see some bickering between the Government and Opposition, then they say, oh, well, they are not sure what they want. Let us stand together and show the federal government that we are all serious about this issue. They made a mistake; they have to correct it.

Now, the member says show a little leadership. Imagine that. Why did they not show a little leadership and pull together an all-party delegation to address this issue when they were in Government? We did not see the leadership from that Government at that time.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, 50 bucks an acre is leadership. Where was she?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** There is no point of order.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I recognize there is no point of order there and that there was no leadership from the Opposition to try to pull people together, but we have to set that aside now and work together. We pulled all people together to be able to take this leadership role on this when we were able to get people to go to Ottawa on these important issues. We were able to pull people together to try to set politics aside. We are asking the Government to set that aside right now and look at ways. We wait for the federal government to address some of the proposals that have been put forward. We have to tell the members opposite that we continue to work at ways that we can play a role in this whole matter as a province, but disasters are the responsibility of the federal government.

I am sure that the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) is not saying that he wants the provinces to take over the responsibility of disasters. It never happened under the previous government, and I do not think any province would want that. There is a role for the provinces to play, and we want to ensure that the federal government continues to take a lead responsibility. I do not know why the Opposition should think that it should be the Province. When they were in government, the federal government was the one that took the lead role in the whole flood of the Red River Valley. Let us get a strong message to the federal government.

So I would encourage the members opposite to look at this resolution, debate the resolution and let us send it off to the federal government so that we can let them know, yes, we believe they made a mistake. I am sure the members opposite believe that the federal government made a mistake on their decision on DFAA. I am sure that they believe that that is a mistake.

Let us send a strong message to the federal government that our province, our farmers in southwestern Manitoba should be treated no differently than the people who suffered in the ice storm or people who suffered in floods in Ontario and Quebec. All we want is fairness. We want the kinds of programs that were designed for them. Whether it be JERI, whether it be DFAA, let us put together a program, the kinds of programs that since we have formed government have continued to lobby the federal government to put in place.

We think sometimes they hear us and they make announcements that they are going to be supporting and then they pull the money off the table. Let us get a clear message from the federal government and try to convince them that they did make a mistake on this very important issue.

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I guess one of the reasons that we were elected to this Legislature was to represent our constituents in an honest, straightforward fashion. I say this with some difficulty, because I have known the Minister's brothers, both of them, who have served in this House with distinction and always in a very straightforward and an honest fashion. I have truly appreciated how the Minister's brothers have served their people. When they came to this House, they had their facts straight and they were sincere. They came to this building with a heart.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what I want to address to you today is the sincerity and the integrity with which a government must, at all times, address, especially issues that are of a disastrous nature. To try and play politics with that kind of an issue leads people to do some very inordinate things. I think it behooves us all—  
[interjection]

If the Honourable Minister of Highways (Mr. Ashton) wants to do a speech, I would sit down and welcome him to speak to this issue.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to you this: Those of us who have gone through disasters know the kind of mental state many of those people are in, especially at this time of year when the pressures of putting a crop in the ground without any support, without any money available to buy the input costs and what kinds

of feelings that creates, without having the kind of political rhetoric put on the record that we have heard today.

It is a good thing that those people who live in the southwest and the southeast part of the province, and even, I dare say, in the Red River Valley, cannot hear what was said here today. They can read, but they cannot hear. They cannot hear the absolute blame from a minister of the Crown to another minister of the Crown, without giving any assurance at all that our Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) for this province is willing to put forward any assistance on her own, and even combine the efforts.

Oh, yes, she said: I led a delegation to Ottawa. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have seen so many ministers fly either to Washington or travel to various parts of the world and even to Ottawa, back and forth, without any results of this Government. This is the Minister, the Government that has put itself off as being a friend of the federal government, and they are not able to come to agreement on assistance that should be afforded those who have faced the disaster in southwest Manitoba. It is both the federal and provincial governments that are grandstanding on the backs of people's emotions, and this grandstanding has to stop. The Minister should be ashamed that she will stand here and do nothing but blame the federal government.

Well, the federal government did come with roughly about \$16 million to assist in rebuilding the roads, to restoring the washouts on farmland, to restore culverts and bridges, and all the other infrastructure under DFA, which are named under DFA. That is what DFA was designed to do. The DFA program kicked in and has picked up, in my view, what it should have picked up, as it did in the Red River Valley. The DFA did what it was designed to do. But then there were the circumstances that were not covered under DFA, such as business restoration, the huge job losses that were created by the flood, all the other kind of inordinate kinds of things that were not recognized under DFA.

\* (16:40)

The federal government and the province met—and these are, of course, the bad guys now—

and they devised a program that would do the inordinate, cover the inordinate costs such as a custom seeding program, such as a fertilizer restoration program, such as a business restoration program to help those businesses that had huge economic losses during that flood period of time, to restore help and restore even some of the economic and employment opportunities but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was done under a special program. It was devised through negotiations between two levels of government, the province and the federal government. It was called the Jobs and Economic Recovery Initiative, and it had a number of components to it, a number of components.

But before I get into indicating what those components were, I want to remind the Minister and the Premier (Mr. Doer) of this province, indeed, all of cabinet and the members opposite, that they have failed significantly the people in the southwest by not recognizing what the previous government did when they saw the impending disaster, and they did it virtually immediately. By June of last year, the Filmon administration, indeed, the Premier himself, met with people in the Melita area who drove to the southwest, flew to the southwest, took a personal interest in the lives of the people who faced the disaster.

There was a coalition of organizations that was formed to approach government and ask for some significant assistance beyond what had been done before. Indeed, at a meeting I believe some time in July in Brandon, we met with the coalition of organizations. They expressed to us the need to No. 1 do an acreage payment to those people who had not been able to seed, not able to put a crop in the ground, and to help those people who needed to restore their feed and their ability to grow feed for the cattle and their livestock, to help those who could not put their own crop in the ground because they did not have equipment of the right kind for a custom seeding program, and we did that.

We spent, the Filmon administration—and this Minister today was trying to put herself off as their administration having made the decision to spend \$70 million, and that is why I say I am disappointed in her because it was not her

administration. It was the previous administration. I say to the Minister that it will fly in her face. Her brothers were straightforward, and they had integrity. The integrity was lost in the debate today.

**An Honourable Member:** No.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** It was, because trying to take credit for something that you have no part in is indeed misleading. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to you that the program that the Filmon government put in place, \$75 an acre for forage crop restoration and \$50 an acre for—*[interjection]* Maybe the Minister of Highways (Mr. Ashton) wants to rise and speak—the \$50 an acre paid to the producers in the southwest area for acreage that was not able to be seeded and the \$25 an acre for pastureland restoration and for covering feed cost and the \$10 an acre for custom seeding that was put in place cost the provincial government \$73 million was done under the provincial Conservative administration.

We asked the federal government to participate in that program. The federal government said they would through AIDA, through the AIDA program. We accepted that, recognizing full well that even through the AIDA program the province would contribute another 40 percent of the \$25 an acre, so the province actually picked up more than 50 percent of the cost of that program. Yet when I listened to the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk), it is nobody's fault but the federal government's fault for not coming to the table under DFAA, and she said they had approached the federal government.

I believe it is imperative, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the federal government does come to the table. I find it most interesting that the federal government has not come forward and taken the initiative, as I believe they should have, because they did so in Québec and they did so in the Red River Valley and they did so in other areas of the country, taken the initiative and come forward and said, yes, we will participate in a jobs and economic restoration initiative and, if nothing else, drag the province to the table, if need be, for participation, but that has not happened. These are, of course, the

people that our Premier (Mr. Doer) says are their friends in Ottawa, and they will show us, they will show the people of Manitoba what it is to take the lead in negotiations. I have seen none of that. I have seen none of the abilities to negotiate with anybody on anything so far, because we have seen no results or very few results.

Yes, I give the Minister of Highways, the Minister in charge of disaster assistance, full credit for recognizing that he picked up 10 percent. It is a bit more than 10 percent, is it not? because the first \$5 million are covered by the Province and the next \$2 million or \$3 million I think are a percentage of and then it ratchets down to 10 percent provincial participation and 90 percent federal, which is fair ball. That is the design of the program. We should recognize that. I do recognize that, because I think the province deserves full credit for having done that, but let us not take credit for things you did not do.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important to note that the jobs and economic restoration initiative that was negotiated by the previous administration to cover inordinate costs in the Red River Valley, we need to identify what they were. They provided financial assistance of up to \$100,000, which includes cost of re-establishing the business, including temporary relocation costs and extra-ordinary start-up cost. What has this government done? What have they said to those small businesses out there that are hard-pressed to stay in business? and some of them are. We have seen the closures, the announcement of the closures. Why did we not provide some assistance to those small businesses when they faced the kind of economic disaster that they are facing as well, and nobody talks about them?

It includes coverage for all reasonable cost, repair or replacement of buildings and other physical assets at depreciated cost, replacement of damage of inventory, cleanup related to physical damages. Have we offered that to the small businesses, to the farmers out there through the Jobs and Economic Recovery Initiative? No, we have not. We have not seen this government do any of that.

It covers costs incurred during interruption, including fixed overhead, operating expenses,

and economic losses related to replacement of inventory, including—and I want the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) to listen to that—the livestock. What has this administration done to recognize the disaster? Nothing. They took credit for everything, but have done nothing in that regard.

\* (16:50)

It provides assistance for business interruption. Assistance may be provided to restore operations during the period of revenue disruptions based on the needs of business and the availability of funding under the program. That is another thing that this Minister has not recognized the need for, nor has the Premier (Mr. Doer) of this province even discussed the possibility of giving assistance to those small business people out there.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

Then there was the Business Resumption Loan Program. The Business Resumption Loan Program will assist businesses with immediate cash-flow needs that cannot be postponed if the business is to continue operating. I think there would have been some very happy business people, that went out of business, that closed their doors, if this provincial government would have come forward, including their partners in the federal government, and said: We will provide that assistance to you.

This program will also provide interest-free financing to meet the short-term cash flow requirements and to finance the difference between depreciation and replacement cost of assets. Have you offered that to the people in the southwest part of the province? Have you? No, they have not.

The program will also provide assistance and will determine and demonstrate the need to a maximum of \$100,000 interest-free basis maximum terms of a five-year repayment period. Did you offer that to the farmers and the businessmen out in the southwest area? No, you did not, because DFA does not include that. It is not part of DFA. It is part of the JERI program, the special program that recognized the need that we had a disaster. *[interjection]*

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) says the federal government rejected a JERI program. Nowhere have I seen any documentation or nowhere have I heard of any discussion that she or her Premier (Mr. Doer) has had. Has the Premier called the Prime Minister and asked for that kind of a program? *[interjection]* No, she has not, but our Premier Filmon was on the phone immediately to the Prime Minister and said: Can we share this kind of a program?

### Point of Order

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Mr. Speaker, the member just said that at no point has he heard anything or seen anything about us raising the issue with the federal government. Well, I am sure the member was not listening to my comments and has not been reading the package of information that has been available, where our Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ashton) wrote to the minister responsible, Mr. Duhamel, asking him to implement programs similar to those in the Red River Valley, including a JERI program, and they have refused it.

The member is wrong when he says that we did not raise it with the Prime Minister and that we did not raise it with Mr. Duhamel.

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, clearly the Honourable Minister does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts, and if she had gone down and done her job and gone to Ottawa and at least put some real money on the table, we might have something today.

**Mr. Speaker:** On both points of order, it is clearly a dispute over the facts.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Jack Penner:** It is very evident that this is a very touchy and sensitive issue for the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) because she tried to put this resolution forward, I believe, as a sort of interventionist measure to delay any of the impacts, and she is blaming the Opposition now for not having come forward with a resolution. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would say to you this, that

she has not yet recognized that she is the Minister, and it is time that she did. It is time that she recognized that if she wants to wear the shoe, she better get the right size or else the toe is going to pinch pretty hard.

Where I was interrupted before, Mr. Speaker, the eligible costs that are included is the difference between the depreciated and replacement costs of capital assets required to restore an operation related to employment at pre-flood levels. This would include equipment, furniture, fixtures, buildings and facilities. Extraordinary start-up costs and operating costs are also eligible, it says. Some examples include restoring stock, replacing inventory or repairing equipment and machinery, special advertising costs and other operating costs.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hour being 4:55 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings so that the royal assent ceremony, as previously announced by the Government House Leader, can be conducted.

\* (17:00)

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 21 minutes remaining.

## ROYAL ASSENT

### Bill 19—The Holocaust Memorial Day Act

**Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Blake Dunn):** His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

*His Honour, Peter Liba, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne. Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour in the following words:*

**Mr. Speaker:** May it please Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly, at its present session, passed a bill, which, in the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour and to which bill I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

*To this bill the Royal Assent was announced by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly as follows:*



**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** Bill 19, The Holocaust Memorial Day Act; Loi sur le Jour commémoratif de l'Holocauste. In Her Majesty's name, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor doth assent to this Bill.

*His Honour was then pleased to retire.*

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for private members' hour.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

#### Res. 3—Post-Secondary Education – Accessibility and Affordability

**Mr. David Faurchou (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), Post Secondary Education—Accessibility and Affordability. The resolution reads:

WHEREAS investment in post-secondary education results in higher skilled, higher paying, more rewarding careers; and

WHEREAS all Manitobans benefit from a vibrant economy provided by a highly productive workforce; and

WHEREAS post-secondary education must be affordable and accessible to students from all regions of Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the previous Progressive Conservative Government had developed initiatives with the establishment of the Council on Post-Secondary Education that supported Manitoba students from all regions of the province; and

WHEREAS the current Government has pledged to cut post-secondary costs and double enrolment at Manitoba's three community colleges; and

WHEREAS rural students face additional financial constraints as compared to their urban counterparts that Campus Manitoba and satellite college campuses are addressing; and

WHEREAS it is imperative to retain our highly skilled and trained students; and

WHEREAS the current administration's plans, as revealed to date, fail to address the issue of ensuring all students including those from rural Manitoba continue to have access to affordable post-secondary opportunities in Manitoba as well as the issue of retaining our post-secondary graduates.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Government of Manitoba to consider providing Manitobans with a detailed plan and time frame outlining their commitment to ensure affordable and accessible post-secondary education for all students as well as retaining our post-secondary students upon their graduation.

#### *Motion presented.*

**Mr. Faurchou:** I am once again privileged to present a private member's resolution to this House. I do want to draw attention that the two resolutions sponsored by myself have had the opportunity to be so highly placed on the Order Paper. I truly believe that a power greater than thou is in fact looking favourably upon these resolutions. I trust that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba will view them in the same light.

This particular resolution I believe will garner the support of all members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. I truly hope that before this hour has elapsed that the Assembly has had ample time to debate the resolution and sees in its favour to pass this resolution and adopt it into the minutes as such.

Mr. Speaker, this particular resolution has had on numerous occasions by the present Government, the support being shown not only through the text and discussion and debate of this Assembly, but that the Government has demonstrated their support through the Throne Speech. The Government committed to doubling college spaces in Manitoba over the next five years and to make post-secondary education more affordable.

Through the Throne Speech Debate, numerous individuals had opportunity to make reference to the Throne Speech text. I would like to cite the Honourable Member from Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), who stated on December 7 that a

very strong commitment has been shown by the new Government in making post-secondary education affordable. Further, the current Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) went on to say on December 8 that the Government is committed to restoring the excellence in post-secondary education and to making post-secondary education more affordable and more accessible so that the hopes of our young people for college and university degrees are based upon ability and not on financial ability.

I am very pleased that the Minister of Education is recalling his words and is still in support of them.

The First Minister is also on record throughout the Throne Speech debate in stating that education and accessibility to post-secondary education should be based on educational merit and the desire to go to university and to community colleges. We are absolutely committed to rebuilding the bridge for kids in high school to post-secondary education.

Based upon those comments, I would like to ask the Assembly to support this resolution because it asks that not only this particular issue be paid attention to by the words of the Honourable Members of this Assembly, but I would like to see them commuted into action. That is the reason for this resolution.

It is vitally important that we take the opportunity to support our students on numerous fronts, and the one that I might suggest right off the hop, Mr. Speaker, is, in fact, to address the student loan situation that many students coming out of high school are attempting to garner to further their education, not only that that program recognize the ability of parents to provide for their students, but I would like to see an analysis of that program that, in fact, analyzes the willingness of parents to provide for that student's further education. In this particular case—I will speak of my own situation—my parents through their course of employment on our farm had, in fact, raised dollars that could have been provided for my education. However, I am certain that the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) appreciates that there has to be reinvestment in that business, and the demands

in today's agriculture require heavy, heavy investment in the farms of today so that they remain viable.

\*(17:10)

So in that light, even though my parents had, in fact, a positive income, the Manitoba-Canada Student Loans Program disallowed my application on the premise that my parents could, in fact, afford to send me to university. Mr. Speaker, that could not have been further from the truth because the demands upon that income were required to be reinvested in the farm. Hence I had to provide for myself the monies that were required to go to university. Fortunately, I had the ability to garner employment that allowed me to continue my education, but that is not always the case, and that is why I am asking that the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) consider review of the Canada-Manitoba Student Loans Program to effectively analyze and provide for and make the program much more universal in that regard.

I also want to recognize the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) and his participation in education, allowing for health care dollars to be expended in educating persons in the health care field. I really would like to commend him in that respect because the previous government through the health care department provided for the extension of licensed practical nurses training, two satellite points within the province, those being Killarney and Carman. Both those programs, Mr. Speaker, were fully subscribed. In fact, they were over-subscribed and only 25 students were allowed to enrol in both those programs. I might say that the selection program was a good one, that there are 24 and 25 students still enrolled in those programs respectively. I really appreciate that because the program is very intense and very demanding, and for those young people to be maintaining their standards in that program and continuing on certainly speaks highly of their abilities. I wish them well to the conclusion of their studies.

But I would like to ask the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education to continue what the previous government had started, and that is providing for the education of young people throughout the province. Even though the

Capital Region has more than half the province's population, there is almost half the population that is not within the Capital Region. Those individuals that live outside the Capital Region have need of education the same as anyone else, and I would encourage those decision makers to recognize that fact and to in fact provide more dollars to the satellite campuses of Assiniboine College and Red River College, Campus Manitoba, Keewatin Community College so that they have the ability to provide programming for students regardless of what region they live in in Manitoba, because all Manitoba will benefit from that.

I also want to encourage the Minister in regard to the Council on Post-Secondary Education to appreciate that body and what they have been able to accomplish. That body is made up of 11 individuals that are appointed by Government. They are tasked to find and effectively build that bridge of which our First Minister (Mr. Doer) spoke between high school and university as well as a bridge between our post-secondary education facilities, institutions, to that with business, because business drives our economy. From the economy comes the tax dollars so that we in this Legislative Assembly have the ability to provide services. So it is critical that that bridge between high school, post-secondary education and the business community within our province is one that is strong and indeed intact.

So I would like to encourage the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) to carry on with that particular body and to appoint those individuals that will be recognizing of their mandate and to appoint those that have the qualifications, that understand the importance of those bridges and not to be partisan to any one of the three components. I know it is a challenge, because there is a lot of emphasis placed upon the instalment of individuals that are of the academic persuasion to this particular council, but it is equally important that you regard the individuals from the business world for their expertise in this regard.

So, having said all of that, I would like to once again encourage all members present to adopt this resolution and to truly show their support for the words of the Honourable

Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell), the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Doer) and others that have stated within this Chamber their support for an accessible and affordable education regardless of what region or of what persuasion our young people that are seeking higher education come from. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the House's time.

**Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Education and Training):** Just before getting into the text of the resolution, I would like to thank the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou) for bringing forth this resolution. I have had the opportunity to discuss it with some of my colleagues, and there are some very excellent suggestions in the resolution. As well, some of the text itself is something that those of us on the Government side of the House can agree with wholeheartedly. So I would like to take the opportunity to review some of the body of the resolution with members present to discuss a little bit more fully what the view of the Government of Manitoba is on these issues.

The first WHEREAS, Mr. Speaker, "WHEREAS investment in post-secondary education results in higher skilled, higher paying, more rewarding careers," is something that all of us in this House can agree with. I think that the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou) makes an excellent point when he recognizes that post-secondary education and investment in post-secondary education is something that provides young Manitobans and indeed all Manitobans with career opportunities that would be otherwise unavailable to Manitobans in the absence of a strong post-secondary educational system. This Government, as you know and as Manitobans know, is committed to an aggressive expansion of post-secondary seats at the community college level. We are committed to a goal of doubling the amount of college spaces in the province of Manitoba over the next five years, the most ambitious expansion in the college system in the province of Manitoba's history. That commitment is something that we take very seriously.

In the college sector we have, as the executive director of the college expansion initiative, Dr. Curtis Nordman, heading up that

college expansion. Doctor Nordman, as many Manitobans know, was Dean of Continuing Education at University of Winnipeg previous to taking this appointment, and we are very fortunate in Manitoba to have an individual of Doctor Nordman's skills and capability leading the college expansion initiative on behalf of the Government of Manitoba.

\* (17:20)

Mr. Speaker, those of us on the Government side of the House are very cognizant of the importance of investing in post-secondary education in the province of Manitoba and achieving the results of a higher-skilled, higher-paid workforce as a consequence.

The second point in the resolution from the Member from Portage la Prairie, "WHEREAS all Manitobans benefit from a vibrant economy provided by a highly productive workforce," is something again which members on the Government side of the House can agree with wholeheartedly. There were comments, when the member was speaking to his resolution quite eloquently, that perhaps he should join those of us on the Government side of the House. Certainly his perspective from the first two points of his resolution indicates that he is of one mind with us on this side of the House on this particular issue. So I commend the Member for Portage la Prairie for his views in these first two points of his resolution, particularly because they line up and are in complete accord with the sentiments of those of us on the Government side of the House.

The third point that, and I will dovetail the second and third WHEREASes, is "WHEREAS post-secondary education must be affordable and accessible to students from all regions of Manitoba." This is something that we have also taken very, very seriously on the Government side of the House, and we are committed, as I mentioned earlier, to the doubling of the college spaces over the course of the next five years. We are also committed very, very strongly and will be instituting a 10% tuition reduction in the college and university system for the province of Manitoba this coming September.

Again this is something that we believe in very strongly. We believe that every Manitoban deserves to have opportunity for access into our post-secondary system, and we also recognize that affordability is a major component in guaranteeing that access. So the 10% tuition reduction that the Government of Manitoba proposes to have in place for September is on track. It will occur. It is a commitment that we are fully intent on carrying through with, and I fully expect that after the 10% reduction is put in place for the September 2000 school year that we will have some very exciting initiatives rolling out in the future around a more comprehensive strategy for accessibility and affordability in the post-secondary education system in the province.

Towards that end, Mr. Speaker, I have to add as well that we have engaged in active consultations with the leadership of Manitoba's universities and Manitoba's colleges as well as the leadership at the administrative level and board level as well as the leadership at the student association level.

Mr. Speaker, about two weeks ago I had the pleasure of having I guess it would be my third or fourth meeting with the presidents of the student unions and student associations in the province of Manitoba, seeking their advice on issues of affordability, issues of bursaries, issues of student loans and issues surrounding providing resources and funding support to young Manitobans entering the post-secondary system in the province of Manitoba.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that the consultations from that level, from the student level, have been most interesting and most informative, getting the perspective of those individuals who are taking part in our post-secondary system as students and who have a real appreciation of the many challenges, the many fiscal challenges, the many time challenges that so many Manitobans, young Manitobans, have when they attend university or community college.

I was interested, Mr. Speaker, because the Member opposite from Portage la Prairie mentioned that he had to work to help sustain his

own student career at university when he was a student, and I shared that same experience.

**An Honourable Member:** We have pictures.

**Mr. Caldwell:** They have pictures, yes, they do. I still owe money on my student loan, as a matter of fact. I speak from some experience myself in terms of having to have student loans to help myself through university and also having to hold down jobs while putting myself through university, something that students in Manitoba have had a long experience with.

Over the last decade, and I guess I have to also point out while praising the first three points of the Member's resolution that over the last decade the reality for students in Manitoba has been quite the opposite from the picture that the member portrays in his resolution. Tuition rates have more than doubled during that time. Student debt has increased dramatically. I make reference quite frequently to a young friend of mine who graduated last year with a four-year Honours degree in Music from Brandon University, one of the most prestigious schools of music in the country. This young man has a \$40,000 debt to pay for his four-year degree. It is virtually insurmountable for him. He has for all intents and purposes taken on a debt load that equates to a home mortgage. As a 25-year-old now in the workforce, he was fortunate enough to find employment very quickly after leaving his studies, but at the rate of pay he is afforded as a young man entering the workforce, it is everything he can do to stay on top of his student debt load.

I know, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, it has been a decade since I have been out of university. I still have some student debt myself. It was worth it taking the debt. I would not be able to have a university education without the opportunities afforded by the Canada Student Loans Program, but it is something now with younger students just finishing that it is virtually insurmountable in many cases. That sort of horrendous debt load is really a consequence of the misplaced priorities of the previous government in terms of support to the post-secondary system, in terms of support to young Manitobans entering the post-secondary system in the province of Manitoba.

I also have to say, Mr. Speaker, besides accessibility and affordability on the post-secondary side, the Government of Manitoba is looking at an approximate capital deficit in the system in terms of capital infrastructure of a quarter of a billion dollars in our university and college sector, which is a huge hole to be trying to climb out of in today's climate of fiscal responsibility and the responsibility of managing precious resources in the best way possible.

The post-secondary system in the province of Manitoba has experienced tremendous hard times over the past decade. Young students in Manitoba have experienced tremendous difficulties in affordability and accessibility over the past decade that this Government, the Government of Manitoba today, is very committed to redressing in a very aggressive and very active fashion. So, while I criticize policies that placed our post-secondary system and our student population in the difficulties they are in today, I also have to praise the Member for bringing forth a resolution that does at least recognize, in a very formal sense, what those of us on this side of the House when we were in opposition and now what those of us on this side of the House are stating as government must be redressed. Truly, a resolution, at least for the first three points, could not have been written any better than it was written by the Member opposite by those of us on this side of the House.

\* (17:30)

The fourth resolution, the fourth WHEREAS or the fourth point of the member's resolution, Mr. Speaker, "WHEREAS the previous Progressive Conservative Government had developed initiatives with the establishment of the Council on Post-Secondary Education that supported Manitoba students from all regions of the province," the previous government did indeed establish the Council on Post-Secondary Education. It arose from the University Grants Commission, the organization that previously existed, predated the Council on Post-Secondary Education, and I think that it is a very good body for managing the affairs of post-secondary education in the province of Manitoba.

I think, Mr. Speaker, my time is just maybe up, if that is correct? Two minutes. Well, I will wind up my remarks quite quickly here then.

In the broad main, the Government can agree with a great many of the points of the Member from Portage la Prairie's (Mr. Faurischou) resolution. A great many of the points made in the member's resolution are very much in accord with the beliefs of the Government of Manitoba. There are a couple of partisan points in the resolution that we can all smile at because the nature of partisan politics is such that we should praise our own party and condemn, from time to time, the party we are—

**An Honourable Member:** It was not easy for you to find anything something to praise in this area. I tell you. You worked hard.

**Mr. Caldwell:** Well, it had to have been a task, Mr. Speaker, as one of my colleagues suggests, to find good things to say about the previous government's record on post-secondary education, but certainly the resolution that comes before us today is one in the main that the Government appreciates. I certainly appreciate the member bringing it forth. I look forward throughout the mandate of this Government to continuing to build partnerships with business and post-secondary institutions, to doubling enrolment in our college system, and to providing tuition relief and enhancing accessibility to Manitobans throughout the province of Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** I rise just to make a few short comments with regard to this resolution, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, as the seconder of this resolution, I do hope that, since the Government and the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) have basically endorsed the resolution, this resolution will be passed by the House, so that indeed it shows that there is a unanimous approach to a willingness to work for the betterment of the affordability of students who pursue post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, in my years as Minister of Education, I dealt with this issue long and hard, and it was not an easy matter. It was not that easy a matter, and I am sure that the new Minister of Education is going to find the same, because basically the Student Loans Program is handled by the federal government, and we simply administer the program for the Canada Student Loans office.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me say that there is a bit of a disparity between what rural students have to pay for education and what is paid by students who live in the centres where the universities are. There has always been that disparity. It is not something that is new; it is not something that has just happened; it has always been there. So I think governments need to strive to try and correct those inequities in the system, and it is far too early for us to pass any kind of judgment on the new Minister of Education because we have not even seen the first budget. So we certainly await the budget to see whether or not the Minister's words indeed have any credence at all.

Mr. Speaker, students across this province have striven to achieve the best possible education that they can because they know that they are competing in a global environment, not any longer against provinces or against perhaps our neighbouring friends to the south, but indeed we compete in a global economy. For that reason, our students have to get the best possible education that they can. I think we have some very fine institutions in our province that can provide that quality of education for our students.

Yes, what we need to do is encourage more students to enrol in our institutions and make it more affordable for these students to enrol in our institutions but not at the expense of the institution. I think that is very important, and although it is bold for the new Government to say they are going to freeze tuition fees and give a reduction of 10 percent to students—and I applaud that—I have to say that care must be taken that indeed it is not at the cost of the institutions themselves, that indeed it is the Government who can find the means to be able to have those reductions to the students and not that those reductions come at the expense of the institutions, because we know what is going to happen. If institutions do not have the necessary funds to carry on the programs, programs are going to be cut. That means that the universities and the colleges are not going to be able to provide the variety of programs that they now provide. The class sizes are going to increase, and indeed the costs at the end of the day are going to be borne by the students who are attending those institutions.

So, Mr. Speaker, I certainly support this resolution that has been put forward by the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou), and indeed I do urge the Government and this Assembly to ensure that we work very diligently at providing an environment where students in this province can afford the cost of education, can afford to become highly skilled, so that they can indeed become ready for the workforce and ready to contribute to this province.

But I think it is also important that we provide an environment of incentives that will keep those graduates here after they have finished their education, because it is no good if we simply educate those students and they leave our province because we are not competitive, because we do not provide enough job opportunities for these young people. It is for that reason that the former administration, our Government, and I think that is the Government that the Member for Portage la Prairie was talking about, did put in place programs that would be attractive to people when they graduated from universities, so that indeed they would be motivated to stay in our province, to find jobs in our province and work in our province.

We worked very hard both in rural Manitoba and in urban Manitoba to ensure that we tried to retain as many of those graduates out of our post-secondary institutions as we could, and indeed we tried to attract back students who had left this province, people who had left this province to get a higher education. We tried to attract them back in ways by which they could get a rebate on their income tax if they came back to work in our province. I think that is a positive approach.

Now, in a partisan way, the new Government can say, oh, well, that did not work. Well, I ask them to consider it, and if there are some good points about it, to make sure that they build on that because this is for the benefit of people who are coming back and are working and for the graduates of institutions who are coming back to the province, and we need them desperately. I do not care if they are nurses or if they are people who work in the computer fields or in the technology fields or if they are professionals or very highly skilled people in the

academic field, we need them all. The more we have of them in our province, the better, and the richer our province is going to be. *[interjection]* Yes, the member just to my left here keeps talking about nurses—he is the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale)—and indeed we do need nurses. We need nurses in this province. Every province in Canada is asking for nurses. Saskatchewan, which has been under NDP rule for who knows how long, still has a shortage of nurses. So I do not think that the Government should be too boastful about being able to fill that void and that lack of professional nurses in the next short while.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude, I say to you that indeed I support this resolution, and I think all of us owe it to the students of our province to work together to improve the quality of education and the affordability of education for students in our province. Thank you.

\* (17:40)

**Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia):** I would like to thank the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou) for another good resolution. I have to agree with him. We do need, it is essential that we have affordable post-secondary education. As our economy and jobs continue to become more technical, be more difficult, what we have to do is have an educated workforce. We have a choice in this province whether to head to the top and be the best trained, best skilled, and have good solid employment and compete at the high end, or we have a choice as to whether we are going to do low-skilled, low job, et cetera. We want to do the high-skilled, high job.

What we want is we want a job where people feel like staying in the province. What we want to do is have the jobs where people can earn a decent living, where people have a decent future. So, if we can create an environment where people can get educated, where people have high skills, a high degree of training, employers will come here and provide employment to those individuals. If those individuals have a decent standard of living, have a decent job that they can go to, they will stay in Manitoba. They will raise their families in Manitoba and help the whole economy.

So it is essential that, rather than compete at the low-wage, low-skilled jobs, what we have to do is make education affordable, make training available, so that we can compete at the high end, and this Government is going to do that. We are committed to maintaining affordable post-secondary education for all Manitobans. That is not just having jobs or education opportunities available in Winnipeg, but what we want to do is investigate distance education programs, investigate different ways of delivery so that education is accessible to all Manitobans.

In the past, I worked for Frontier School Division. In Frontier School Division, which encompasses two thirds of the province, what would happen is it would cost a fortune for kids to come down to Winnipeg and take post-secondary education. What we can do is real easy. If we offer things by distance ed, if we offer things by computer-assisted learning, if we offer different methods, we can have them where the tuition, which is only a small part of their entire cost of going to school, if we offer alternative methods of delivery then what will happen is school is cheaper. By making school cheaper, more kids can take it. By making education more accessible, then we can actually have a system where more people are trained, more people can fill jobs, and we can go further as a province.

During the election, we pledged to give students hope by reducing tuition fees by 10 percent. This is essential. In the last decade, tuition fees doubled. It is interesting to note that two years ago I took a university course, one single course. The course cost more than my whole first year university cost counting books and tuition. That is ridiculous. When I went to school and university, I was able to actually go work for the summer and have a part-time job and afford university tuition, afford the books.

**An Honourable Member:** How many decades ago was that, Jim?

**Mr. Rondeau:** Only two-and-a-half decades ago, I was able to work in a job and be able to afford school without a debt. What has happened is that in the last few years tuition has gone up so much that almost every student is forced to work very, very hard to scrape and strive to get

enough money to borrow money to acquire money to go. What has happened is that more and more students are going part time rather than full time. More and more students are taking longer to complete their degree and their training because they cannot afford to pay the tuition and the costs. More and more students are forced to go part time rather than full time because they cannot afford it.

So what we have to do as a government is make education accessible by lowering the tuition and keeping the tuition reasonable. We cannot allow people, students to mortgage their future. We cannot allow them to take longer and longer to go to school and finish their post-secondary training. We need to do it now.

Of particular interest to me are some of the programs, like apprenticeship. We must do something about apprenticeship. People in apprenticeable trades are growing older and we have not done anything strongly to address this issue. What we have to do is increase the opportunities for apprenticeship, increase the opportunities for co-op education.

Again, with Frontier School Division, one of the things I was doing was developing business education partnerships, and what we have to do is have students get the experience necessary to become productive members of society. The way you do this is develop the co-op programs, develop apprenticeship programs so that people have a chance. We can fill the vacancies that are coming, because a lot of the tradespeople presently are getting a little older. What we are going to have to do is look at replacing them in the workforce. That is where our post-secondary plan has to come up. We have to plan in the future to fill the vacancies in our economy.

The next thing is we have to increase the enrolment across the board in all our colleges. It appalled me when I found out that we had, I believe it was, the lowest participation rate across Canada in colleges. Well, those are the jobs that are the backbone of our society. Those are the jobs that build the bricks and mortar. They are the ones that fix the infrastructure. They are the ones that work on the tools that make our society run. What we have done is we have neglected the college sector. We must take



our time, build up the college sector in the technical and trades skills, and this is essential. We cannot allow our community college enrolment to be the worst in the country.

Manitoba's community college enrolment rate for students between 18 and 21 is among the lowest in Canada, 5.6 percent compared to a national average of 24 percent. That is very, very sad. We believe, and I believe, that Manitoba's college and university tuition fees should be among the lowest in Canada so that people are able to afford these training systems.

Now what happens? If people can afford the post-secondary training, then what happens is they can get into the employment, get a decent job and start paying taxes. This is a positive input to society.

At the Manitoba Century Summit—and the Chamber of Commerce has said time and time again, the No. 1 problem is lack of skilled, trained employees. It is the Government's role to fill that need. So what we have to do is look at how we fill the spots. We have to set up the programs. We have to fund them appropriately and allow a tuition fee that people can afford. So what we need is programs and we need the fees. We cannot allow what happened in the last decade where we allowed the tuition fees to double. We cannot allow that to happen. We have to control tuition fees.

We need the highly skilled workforce. We need a tuition fee structure that people can afford. We need a system where all Manitobans have accessibility to post-secondary education. More importantly, we cannot mortgage our future for our province and our students to long-term debt.

The other exciting thing is using technology. I think that this government is taking a good shot at distance ed technology, interactive technology, computer education, and I think that is essential. For people outside Winnipeg and Brandon and The Pas, to take courses costs a small fortune. Why? Because they have to not only pay the cost of tuition and books, but they also have to pay the cost of relocating and the room and board and the apartment rent, et cetera. By using new technology—*[interjection]* We have it. You are right.

By using the new technology, we will reduce the amount of money it costs. By using the new technology and investing in the technology, we will be investing in Manitoba's youth so that we will have a future, regardless of where they live. A lot of my students from Frontier School Division, one of the major problems is that they could not afford university or college or post-secondary training. What this means is that by using the Internet, by using other methods, they will be able to afford to get the skills so that they can become productive members of society, faster and better.

\* (17:50)

During the summit, the representatives from business, labour, government and the community met and said that this was our No. 1 priority. What we are going to do is work together with all our partners, work together with the colleges, with the universities, with the employers, with the students and develop a plan and a system where people can afford to get post-secondary education and also be able to become productive members of society. Thank you very much.

**Mrs. Joy Smith (Fort Garry):** I have to commend the Minister of Education (Mr. Caldwell) and the other side for the kinds of commitment they have to the affordability of post-secondary education.

I was very impressed with my colleague Mr. Fauschou in presenting this resolution to the House. I think the affordability of post-secondary education is of paramount importance to students and families across Manitoba.

There is another variable that I think we need to speak about, and that is, along with the affordability of colleges and of universities, we also have to think about the high standard of education that we have to put in place for the global job market.

Here in Manitoba, the NDP government and the Honourable Minister have committed to decreasing the tuition fees. On this side of the House, it is something that we definitely want to see, but along with that we have to have an education in place where the people who take the

courses have the courses available. So I want to talk, Mr. Speaker, about the infrastructure in the colleges and in the universities.

Many people do not stay in Manitoba. Many people do not attend the universities and colleges in Manitoba if they do not have the courses available to them to provide them with the very important skilled labour that my honourable colleague Mr. Rondeau has referred to. It is true that highly skilled labour, particularly in the area of technology, is of paramount importance. I have had students speaking to me on a regular basis about the fact that they need more courses, both at the college and the university level, to allow for that skilled labour to occur.

As you know, we are in a competitive market now, in a global market. When our students leave our post-secondary education, even though they remain in Manitoba, they have to have the ability to communicate with different parts of the world and they have to develop jobs and educational practices that will meet with the world market. So affordable and accessible education is extremely important. Doubling enrolment at Manitoba community colleges is extremely important. That is something that our government has committed to.

My colleague Mr. Rondeau talked about the highly skilled courses that the Chamber of Commerce has demanded of our students in post-secondary education. I think it is of paramount importance that the government be mindful of the fact that that infrastructure has to be in place when university and colleges have to shut down courses because they cannot afford to bring the professors in or when they have to address the fact that in the labs and in the facilities at the university and the colleges they are wanting for the actual infrastructure to allow the students to be able to experience the courses and the technology that they need.

Having said this, it is one thing to make a commitment, Mr. Speaker, about lowering tuition fees. Along with that, lowering the tuition fees is only half of the equation. As I said before, the other half of the equation is to make sure that the infrastructure is in where the students not only are able to take the courses, but the courses are in place for them to take.

I know I was speaking to a professor at the university yesterday that bemoaned the fact that there are certain things that could not be accomplished at the university level, because the infrastructure was not there, not provided for them, to provide the courses to the students. I know as they look over the syllabus at the university and at the colleges, you will see that different courses have not been put in place, because the infrastructure in the colleges and the university is not available to them. So we have to talk about two things to address the need that is there in our students in Manitoba. We definitely have to support the reduction in tuition for our students to support the families and the parents and the students going to post-secondary education, but if we want to keep our students here in Manitoba we have to make sure that that infrastructure is there.

This government has to be very aware that monies have to be put into buildings, monies have to be put into core structure, monies have to be put into the professors that are engaged at the universities to allow for those courses to be available to the students. So I think that both sides of the House are very aware of the needs that are there at the post-secondary education. I think quite categorically we both agree that the tuition fees are something that have to be addressed to make the courses more affordable for the students.

The other challenge that I would put out to our Legislature, to our House, is the fact that we need to address the infrastructure in a very meaningful way. As my colleague mentioned a few minutes ago, Mr. Fauschou mentioned a few minutes ago, the funding is crucial. How we deal with the funding at the post-secondary education will either take away or support what we have just talked about in the resolution that Mr. Fauschou brought forward so eloquently.

We have all agreed that the highly skilled and trained students are imperative to have, to equip these people for the job market in the new millennium. The high standard, academic education has to be put in place for all students to allow that to happen. The other part of the equation I talked about and am addressing at this point is the infrastructure that has to be put in place. I am calling on the Government not only

to lower the tuitions but also to make sure that the courses are available and the infrastructure is in place so we can allow for this high-standard, skilled labour to be in place in Manitoba, and we would all be very proud to do that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin-Roblin):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to stand and speak on this resolution brought forward by the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou). The previous speaker I think touched a few very good points that all governments should be concerned with and working towards a detailed plan.

Well, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, there was at one time a detailed plan in this province. Unfortunately, it was the previous government and their detailed plan including cutting and cutting and cutting. The detailed so-called plan of the previous government was to let buildings at the University of Manitoba crumble while they cut capital programs to that same institution. So it gets a little tiring to sit across here and listen to members in this House who for 11 years neglected the problem and now want us on this side of the Government, in a short span of six months, to clean up their mess. Well, I will take on that challenge, and we will do a much better job of providing for the institutions and for the infrastructure in this province for post-secondary education. I do not mind that challenge at all, and I think we will do a much better job than what the previous government did.

I want to draw everybody's attention to something that needs attention as well, and that

is distance education. This province has a big challenge if we cannot get rural students into the cities because of some financial barriers, some financial obstacles, that are in place, so we have to start thinking of creative ways to get the education out to the people of this province.

Now, my colleague the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Rondeau) points out something that I think we all should be very cognizant about. The No. 1 barrier for rural students to come into the city and take courses is the high cost of room and board. Now, it does not matter if you are from Dauphin or from Portage la Prairie or from Thompson or from Shamattawa, it is a lot of money to send a student into Winnipeg or to Brandon to take courses, and that becomes a barrier.

I will tell you, in rural Manitoba we see the results of this. When we tried to find a veterinarian at the Ste. Rose Veterinary Clinic, we had a really tough time because there were no large animal veterinarians available. There were a lot of small animal veterinarians available, a lot of veterinarians to deal with dogs and cats and canaries and whatever else. We could not find large animal vets because we have not done a very good job of getting rural students into our universities in order to—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have 12 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

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May 1, 2000

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