

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

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

Vol. LV No. 45B - 1:30 p.m., Thursday, May 27, 2004

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Eighth Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 27, 2004

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PETITIONS

Alzheimer's Disease

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

Alzheimer's is a debilitating disease.

Cholinesterase inhibitors are known to slow or even prevent the progression of Alzheimer's.

The provincial government asked for the development of an Alzheimer's strategy in 2000 and was presented with nine recommendations in 2002, none of which has yet been implemented.

In the absence of a provincial Alzheimer's strategy, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority put in place a policy in November 2003 whereby Alzheimer's patients entering personal care homes are being weaned from certain Alzheimer medications in a move that the WRHA's vice-president of long-term care has referred to as a financial necessity.

The administrative costs of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority have more than tripled since 1999, to a total of more than \$16 million a year.

In a move that amounts to two-tier medicine, the families of Alzheimer's sufferers in personal care homes may request that the drugs continue to be delivered at the family's expense.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) to ensure that his attempts to balance his department's finances are not at the expense of the health

and well-being of seniors and other vulnerable Manitobans suffering from this debilitating disease.

To urge the Minister of Health to consider reversing his decision to deny Alzheimer's patients in personal care homes access to certain medications.

To request the Minister of Health to consider implementing a provincial Alzheimer's strategy.

Signed by Lawrence Lavallee, Robert Rockola, Ray Nedohin and others.

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

Minimum Sitting Days for Legislative Assembly

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

The background to this petition is as follows:

The Manitoba Legislature sat for only 37 days in 2003.

Manitobans expect their government to be accountable, and the number of sitting days has a direct impact on the issue of public accountability.

Manitobans expect their elected officials to be provided the opportunity to be able to hold the government accountable.

The Legislative Assembly provides the best forum for all MLAs to debate and ask questions of the government, and it is critical that all MLAs be provided the time needed in order for them to cover constituent and party duties.

Establishing a minimum number of sitting days could prevent the government of the day from limiting the rights of opposition members from being able to ask questions.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to consider recognizing the need to sit for a minimum of 80 days in any given calendar year.

Signed by Donna Anderson, Angela Sumka and Ana Gomes.

Proposed PLA—Floodway

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

* (13:35)

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by Menno Rempel, Marilyn Rempel, Ryan Rempel and others.

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Province of Manitoba has tabled legislation in the Legislature that may result in the \$660-million expansion of the Red River Floodway by the summer of 2005.

The Premier of Manitoba plans to subject all work related to the project to a Project Labour Agreement (PLA).

The proposed PLA would force all employees on the project to belong to a union.

Approximately 95 percent of heavy construction companies in Manitoba are currently non-unionized.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated that the forced unionization of all employees may increase the costs of the project by \$65 million.

The chair of B.C.'s 2010 Construction Leaders Taskforce has stated, "Major industrial projects built under project labour agreements from the energy sector in Alberta to off-shore development on the East Coast have repeatedly incurred cost overruns, labour disruptions and delays."

Organizations including the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Merit Contractors Association of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Construction Association, the Construction Association of Rural Manitoba and the Canadian Construction Association have publicly opposed the Premier's plan to turn the floodway expansion project into a union-only worksite.

Manitobans deserve an open and fair competition that protects taxpayers from unnecessary costs and respects workers' democratic choice.

Manitobans support the right of any company, both union and non-union, to participate in the expansion of the Red River Floodway.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider ending his government's forced unionization plan of companies involved with the Red River Floodway expansion.

To request the Premier of Manitoba to consider entering into discussions with business, construction and labour groups to ensure any qualified company and worker, regardless of their union status, is afforded the opportunity to bid and work on the floodway expansion project.

Signed by Clayton Smeltz, Marion Jenkyns, Liz Foster and others.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development Third Report

Ms. Marilyn Brick (Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Third Report of the Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following as its Third Report.

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Social and Economic Development presents the following as its Third Report.

Meetings:

Your committee met on Tuesday, May 25, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building.

Matters Under Consideration:

Bill 21—The Non-Smokers Health Protection Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)

Membership Resignations / Elections:

Substitutions received prior to commencement of meeting:

*Mr. Rocan for Mr. Goertzen
Mrs. Driedger for Mr. Schuler
Hon. Mr. Struthers for Ms. Brick
Hon. Mr. Rondeau for Hon. Ms. McGifford
Hon. Mr. Smith for Hon. Mr. Selinger
Ms. Brick for Hon. Ms. Allan
Mr. Santos for Hon. Mr. Smith*

Public Presentations:

Your committee heard 20 presentations on Bill 21—The Non-Smokers Health Protection Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur la protection de la santé des

non-fumeurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives) from the following organizations:

Rob Cunningham, National Cancer Society and Canadian Cancer Society Manitoba Division
Aaron Yanofsky, Manitoba Youth for Clean Air
JoAnn Douglas and Vhana Moldowan, Manitoba Lung Association
Dr. Jay Duncan, Manitoba Medical Association
Mervin Toderian, Parkland Regional Health Authority
Deanne Olson, Rivercrest Motor Hotel
Walter Kuz, the Rennie Hotel
Dr. Sandra Burt, University of Waterloo, Political Sciences Department
Heidi Howarth, Trails West Hotel
Edna Milne, Fort Rouge and Imperial Veterans
John Petrinka, Veteran's Association
Murray Gibson, Manitoba Tobacco Reduction Alliance
Margaret Bernherdt-Lowdon, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Manitoba
Dr. Dhaliwal, CancerCare Manitoba
Ken Leslie, Alliance for Prevention of Chronic Disease
Dr. Sande Harlos, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Dr. Joel Kettner, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Jim Baker, Manitoba Hotel Association
Rob Hilliard and Pete Walker, Manitoba Federation of Labour
Sheila Babaian, Duke of Kent Legion

Written Submissions:

Your committee received 4 written submissions for Bill 21—The Non-Smokers Health Protection Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives), from the following organizations:

Roslyn Cullen, Assiniboine Regional Health Authority
Larry Hogue and Carmel Olson, Brandon Regional Health Authority
Michael Ferrabee, Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association
Randy B. Lock, Regional Health Authorities of Manitoba

Bills Considered and Reported:

Bill 21—The Non-Smokers Health Protection Act (Various Acts Amended)/Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs (modification de diverses dispositions législatives)

Your committee agreed to report this bill with the following amendments:

THAT the proposed clause (g) of the definition of "enclosed public place", as set out in Clause 2(2)(b) of the Bill, be amended by striking out "other than a licensed premises of a class prescribed by regulation."

THAT the proposed clause 1(2)(b), as set out in Clause 2(6) of the Bill, be amended by striking out "that is an enclosed public place under subsection (1)."

THAT the proposed clause 9(1)(a.1), as set out in Clause 7(a) of the Bill, be struck out.

Ms. Brick: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen), that the report of the committee be received.

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

**Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs
Fourth Report**

Ms. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Vice-Chairperson): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs.

Madam Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs presents the following as its Fourth Report.

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

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

Meetings:

Your committee met on Tuesday, May 25, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Building.

Matters under Consideration:

Bill 5—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Claimant Advisers)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba (conseillers des demandeurs)

Bill 12—The Highways and Transportation Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Trucking Productivity Improvement Fund)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la voirie et le transport et le Code de la route (Fonds d'amélioration de la productivité de l'industrie du transport routier)

Bill 24—The Travel Manitoba Act/Loi sur la Société Voyage Manitoba

Committee Membership:

Your committee elected Ms. Irvin-Ross as the Vice-Chairperson.

Substitutions received prior to commencement of meeting:

*Hon. Mr. Lemieux for Ms. Brick
Ms. Irvin-Ross for Mr. Dewar
Hon. Mr. Robinson for Hon. Mr. Mackintosh
Mr. Cummings for Mr. Hawranik
Mr. Maguire for Mr. Loewen
Mrs. Taillieu for Mr. Reimer*

Substitutions made by leave during committee proceedings:

*Mr. Penner for Mrs. Taillieu
Mr. Nevakshonoff for Ms. Korzeniowski*

Public Presentations:

Your committee heard four presentations on Bill 12—The Highways and Transportation Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Trucking Productivity Improvement Fund)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la voirie et le transport et le Code de la route (Fonds d'amélioration de la productivité de l'industrie du transport routier), from the following organizations:

*David Rolfe, Keystone Agricultural Producers
Michael Martel, Forest Industry Association of Manitoba
Bob Dolyniuk, Manitoba Trucking Association*

Chris Lorenc, Manitoba Heavy Construction Association

Your committee heard three presentations on Bill 24—The Travel Manitoba Act/Loi sur la Société Voyage Manitoba, from the following organizations:

*Jim Baker, Manitoba Hotel Association
Max Johnson, Ministerial Advisory Council on Tourism
Jim Carr, Business Council of Manitoba*

Bills Considered and Reported:

Bill 5—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment Act (Claimant Advisers)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba (conseillers des demandeurs)

Your committee agreed to report this bill without amendment.

Bill 12—The Highways and Transportation Amendment and Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Trucking Productivity Improvement Fund)/Loi modifiant la Loi sur la voirie et le transport et le Code de la route (Fonds d'amélioration de la productivité de l'industrie du transport routier)

Your committee agreed to report this bill without amendment.

Bill 24—The Travel Manitoba Act/Loi sur la Société Voyage Manitoba

Your committee agreed to report this bill without amendment.

Ms. Irvin-Ross: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Radisson (Mr. Jha), that the report of the committee be received.

* (13:40)

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table a report entitled *A Review of Legal Aid Manitoba*.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 47—The Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Amendment Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that Bill 47, The Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'aide juridique du Manitoba, be now read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Attorney General, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance, that Bill 47, The Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Amendment Act, be now read a first time.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, among other things, this legislative proposal on an administrative basis gives no right to choice of counsel to legal aid applicants.

By giving Legal Aid Manitoba the ability to select lawyers, it enables staff lawyers to conduct the defence in complex trials by eliminating conflicts of interest, prohibits eligibility for assistance to criminal organizations and requires mandatory investigations into the assets of individual applications or applicants charged with criminal organization offences, strengthens investigative and collection powers of Legal Aid and streamlines and focusses the Legal Aid governance and creates a new advisory committee.

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

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today Her Excellency Veronika Stabej and members of the Slovenian government delegation.

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

In the public gallery we have from Pineview Mennonite School from Barwick, Ontario, 12 Grades

7 and 8 students under the direction of Mr. Robert Heatwole.

Also in the public gallery we have from Red River College English Language Training Centre 19 English as a second language students under the direction of Ms. Lorna Hiebert. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Energy, Science and Technology (Mr. Sale).

Also in the public gallery we have with us today 50 nursing students from the University of Manitoba. These students are under the direction of Linda West.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, now that the government has released the Wally Fox-Decent report, can the Premier tell us if his government will be accepting the recommendations including the ones that force non-unionized workers to pay union dues?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I wonder whether the Leader of the Opposition agrees with the sensibilities that are contained within the report that include a balance, starting with the fact that there will be no strike and lockouts as part of a master labour agreement and a pretty sensible approach that has been proposed by Professor Fox-Decent.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, the recommendation is for non-unionized workers to pay union dues for services that unions will be providing, services, I might add, that are not required. This report recommends everything be negotiated between unions, the Building Trades Council and the Floodway Authority which has misled and simply not told the truth from day one.

Is this Premier going to support a recommendation that gives the unions a seat at the negotiating table, Mr. Speaker, and puts the industry on the sidelines?

Mr. Doer: Dealing with the issue of services, Mr. Speaker, in 1995 the former Minister of Labour, Mr. Vic Toews, stated in this House, "We believe that workers who are part of our bargaining unit, who get the benefits of a collective agreement whether they are union members or not, should also pay," listen to this, "also should pay for the services that the unions provide for them." I have no problem defending the Rand Formula, the Rand principle. It is a historic compromise and in fact does a great good, generally speaking, for workers who need a collective voice.

That was the Conservatives then. This is the extremist view of the member opposite now.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Before we get too far into Question Period, I would like to remind all honourable members of the Speaker standing. All members should be seated and the Speaker should be heard in silence. I ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

Mr. Murray: The question was directed to the Premier and I hope the Premier would answer what he is going to do. He is the Premier of the day.

* (13:45)

It is very clear that it is the companies that take the risk. It is the companies that provide the safe workplace. Yet if this Premier accepts this report, the control would be taken out of the hands of employers and put into the hands of the unions who would be the ones doing the negotiating, the ones who are responsible. Surely the Premier would agree with this, the ones who are responsible are the ones who should be doing the negotiating. When the majority of the workers that will be working on the expansion of the floodway are non-unionized, does this Premier not agree that employers and employers' associations should be doing the negotiating, not the unions?

Mr. Doer: Obviously, the member would understand there is also the Floodway Authority as proposed. I am shocked, Mr. Speaker, that not only is the member opposite to the right or more extreme than the former Minister of Labour, Mr. Toews, he is not embracing the recommendations of Wally Fox-Decent who has provided advice to Conservative governments and NDP governments in the past. He has settled countless disputes that have been very, very difficult in a very, very balanced way. Part of that balanced—*[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The floodway project will be considered an open project where union membership is not required. Therefore, the term "forced unionization" which was repeated like Pavlov's dog by members opposite for the last three weeks, a term invented by Barb Biggar for political purposes as suggested by public comment, is not an issue.

Their whole argument fell like a house of cards with Wally Fox-Decent's report and they should be mature enough to recognize it.

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): We have repeatedly asked questions about the potential for forced union dues in this House. The vast majority of workers in Manitoba's construction industry have already made a decision. They have made the decision to work in non-unionized workplaces and they have made the decision not to pay union dues. The floodway report recommends that all non-unionized workers pay union dues for services that could have been otherwise provided in different ways. It is a tax on their labour and it is a kickback for the union.

Does the Minister of Water Stewardship have the integrity today to stand up for workers' decisions to say floodway workers from non-unionized companies will not be forced to pay union dues?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, let the public be aware that this government banned union and corporate donations to all political parties. The only one talking about kickbacks is a party that is committed to returning corporate and union donations in Manitoba. It will not happen under our watch.

Mr. Goertzen: Under the report's recommendation, workers will be forced to pay a union due for services that could have been provided many other ways. Manitobans will not be fooled. This is not a fee for service. This is forced union dues and is an NDP kickback to his union-boss buddies.

The Minister of Water Stewardship has delayed. He has deflected. He has dithered. Why will he not

take his Premier's lead in handling past reports and say that forced union dues is not going to be an option?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Water Stewardship): Mr. Speaker, if you have ever wanted an indication of how out of touch the opposition is with the way we do things in the province, it is the fact that we released the Wally Fox-Decent report at 11:30 a.m. and already here in Question Period, they are dismissing it out of hand.

* (13:50)

Wally Fox-Decent, a well-respected Manitoban, someone whose great abilities in terms of facilitating served a great deal of time, Mr. Speaker, to work with stakeholders, release a report, a very balanced report. We are reviewing that report. I can tell you one thing. Compare what we are dealing with here the Manitoba way, which is trying to reach consensus wherever possible, to the exaggerated, bombastic rhetoric for the member opposite talking about kickbacks, talking about all those kinds of terms. We are doing it the Manitoba way. We brought in Wally Fox-Decent, and if they are opposed to Wally Fox-Decent's report that is fine. We are going to give it the due consideration it deserves.

Mr. Goertzen: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Water Stewardship should be talking to his Premier because that is the Premier who rejected a report before he even saw it regarding education financing. He did not give it any due consideration. He decided that something was not an option. That is what we are asking for here today. Workers have made a democratic choice not to join unions. They made a democratic choice not to pay union dues.

If the NDP does not want to be a democratic party, they should remove it from their name and they can become the no-principle party. Why does he not just stand up and do what his Premier did only a week or two ago? Stand up and say, "Forced union dues will not be an option."

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the member opposite has talked to his member of Parliament. I hate to quote Vic Toews as the voice of moderation because I think we all know what the Stephen Harper Conservatives, how out of touch they are with mainstream Canadians, but we are

seeing today this Conservative Party in this House is even further right wing than the Conservative Party of Stephen Harper. That is out of touch with Manitoba.

Red River Floodway Expansion Master Labour Agreement

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is simply this. It is clear the companies that are going to be working on the floodway are 95% non-unionized. That is a fact.

So I would ask this Premier: Knowing it is the companies that are responsible for the safety of the workers, knowing it is the companies that are responsible for the training of those workers, why would he agree to a position that would not allow them at the negotiating table?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is taking a mediator's report that was prepared by a qualified, experienced person who has shown the wisdom of Solomon in past disputes in this province and provided resolution to many difficult situations.

I recall that former Premier Filmon called in the same Mr. Fox-Decent during a doctors' strike in the middle of the 1990 election. I think it was a sensible move on behalf of patients in that election.

I remember numerous occasions under which the former Conservatives brought Mr. Fox-Decent into situations. I have been proud to be on the Meech Lake Task Force committee with Mr. Fox-Decent. I was proud to have our members on the Charlottetown Constitutional group with Professor Fox-Decent. He has provided incredible advice to the people of Manitoba.

He has been a head of the military, the Navy Reserves. He has been in charge of labour-management relations. He has taught public administration. He is the chair of a labour-management group that is made up of business and labour. He knows his stuff. If I have to take advice from anybody, with the greatest deal of respect to the member opposite, if I have to take advice from the member opposite or from Wally Fox-Decent, I think I will take the advice of Wally Fox-Decent.

Mr. Murray: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting. When it became apparent that the Premier's task force on education funding looked at adding 1 percent to the provincial sales tax, he jumped up quicker than a jack-rabbit and said, "No. That is not on." When it came time to the Earl Backman report he jumped up quicker than a jack-rabbit and said, "That is not on."

Mr. Speaker, this issue comes down to what position is the Premier of Manitoba going to take on the expansion of the floodway? Is he going to allow only unions to be at the negotiating table or is he going to understand that 95 percent of the construction companies involved in the expansion of the floodway are non-unionized, but if he agrees to this report, he is excluding them from the bargaining table? Why would he do that?

* (13:55)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the only jack-rabbit in this legislative Chamber was the member from Emerson, who said, "Raise the sales tax to eliminate the property taxes." There was only one jack-rabbit—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. When making references, in general I do accept it but when making references personally to an individual, I think we should be a little cautious so I would caution all honourable members.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the whole issue here is we have a mediator's report produced in consultation with the various stakeholders. There are some groups that will be required in the floodway construction work such as crane operators because I believe there are at least six bridges on the northeast quadrant alone of the floodway that require major work so you could argue that they are all, quote, "under the building trades contracts and unionized."

The bottom line is, Mr. Fox-Decent looked at the issue of union and non-union companies. He looked at the issue of union and non-union workers. He looked at the issue of union and non-union skills and he came forward with a proposal that starts with no strike or lockout. Why did he come forward with no strike or lockout? He came forward with no strike or lockout so the floodway can be built for the people of Manitoba for flood protection.

I congratulate Mr. Fox-Decent. He wrested the issue of the, quote, "forced unionization" which was the kind of last vestige of members opposite in terms of this debate. Mr. Speaker, he has come forward with a series of compromises to reach a consensus. Why? To build the floodway on time. The only ideological extremists in this debate are the members opposite.

Mr. Murray: Well, the Premier mentions ideology. It was the heavy construction industry and the construction industries of Manitoba that built the Z-dike on time, on budget, without any union dues. Surely this Premier would realize one thing, that those companies that should have earned the right to apply and ensure that on this floodway expansion they will not be forced to have their workers, the non-unionized workers, pay union dues. He is also, if he agrees with this report, excluding the employers and employers' association from the bargaining table.

I ask the Premier, why would he ensure that 95 percent of our construction industry that is non-unionized, why would he exclude them from the bargaining table to ensure that only unions do the negotiating. Why would he do that?

Mr. Doer: As I read it, Mr. Speaker, the Floodway Authority, just like the government when you are hiring public employees, by the way, all of whom are covered under Rand formula. I want to point out to members opposite that since the Roblin government was in place, the Rand formula was introduced in the 1960s and has carried on for—*[interjection]* Well, I know the member opposite does not care about the law and only cares about ideology, but he should know that that is already in place. The floodway—*[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: On top of the fact that there is no work stoppage or work slowdown as part of the proposed—

An Honourable Member: Like the Z-dike.

Mr. Doer: Well, the member opposite will know that Brian Mulroney brought in a—

* (14:00)

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Mulroney government, as a matter of fact, between the years 1994 I believe and 1997, had a no-strike, no-lockout full unionized Rand formula XXX kind of agreement under the Canadian Labour Code.

The employer is obviously the Flood Authority. The employees are covered under this agreement and it says also, "working in close association with relevant employers' or employer associations." There are lots of references there. The bottom line is there is a set of recommendations to arrive at a consensus.

On the one hand, there is no strike or lockout proposed which is good for the people of Manitoba which of course is the responsibility of the Floodway Authority. That is good for the people. It is certainly good for those of us who are responsible for the funds that will be expended. On the other hand, there is no, quote, "forced unionization" which was the concern raised by some of the people on the employers' side. It looks to me like Mr. Fox-Decent again has crafted a document that allows us to move forward. The members opposite want to stick in their ideological path. We are going to move forward, Mr. Speaker.

Health Care System Medical Errors

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, this Minister of Health has, on numerous occasions, tried to convince everybody that he has a very functional, critical clinical occurrence system in place. Now we learn that there are huge reporting gaps in that system.

Can the Minister of Health tell us why the Health Sciences Centre, the largest hospital in the province and one under the total and direct control of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, has been allowed to avoid reporting these critical clinical occurrences?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, there was no critical incident reporting regime in place in this province during the 1990s, which resulted in an inquest into 12 baby deaths at the Health Sciences Centre and resulted in a whole series of measures that have been put in place by this government including clinical incident reporting, a patient safety institute, a series of four major province-wide seminars, Manitoba taking the lead in patient safety and reporting information starting I

might add in September of 2002, that we reported across the country. None of that was in place during the 1990s. That was identified by Justice Sinclair as to one of the reasons why those baby deaths occurred and said to us that should not happen again. That is why we put our resources in place. That is why we are going forward and going public.

Mrs. Driedger: He fails to say that his reporting system is full of gaps and huge, huge holes. The Minister of Health has said this information will make the health care system more transparent and more accountable. If he really means that, one has to wonder why he has allowed such reporting gaps to remain in place for as long as they have.

Can the Minister of Health tell us, will he now issue a directive that the Health Sciences Centre must immediately start reporting these occurrences.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian reporting system, for the first time, reported patient errors, et cetera, across the country. The first national study, the Norton Study that came out this week, studied 20 hospitals anonymously and reported mass information. This province is the first jurisdiction where a region has provided this raw data and information to the public, first one in the country. It did not happen before. It has not happened anywhere else in the country. I think that says volumes about the different approach taken by this government.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, in 1999 when we came to office, the government of the day said there were no waiting lists. We report them. They said there was no one in the hallways. We report them. They said there was no problem with critical incidents. We report them. There were no summary budgets. We report that. They cannot say one thing and have done nothing for 11 years.

Mrs. Driedger: If the minister is so pleased with all of his results, I have to wonder why he stands up and is so angry in his response to us. This Minister of Health has said that there are 350 preventable deaths in Manitoba per year, and yet this new report is only showing 19 deaths. There is obviously a significant amount of data missing which calls into question the reliability of his whole new system.

Can the Minister of Health explain these differences and what information he has that he is not sharing, that is not included in this report?

Mr. Chomiak: I will make a copy of the Norton Study that was a national study, the first time done in Canadian history that came out on Tuesday of this week, for the first time in Canadian history that talked about patient injury and deaths. I extrapolated from that report 350 to 400. I did it a year ago, I did it six months ago, I did it two months ago, and I do it now based on the national data of 20 anonymous hospitals. Yesterday, we released raw data from the Winnipeg region, the first time done in the country and we provided—*[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Chomiak: If the member wants to compare Manitoba data, she can look at our report of September 2002, where we compared not only favourably but better than most jurisdictions on mortality and other rates in this report.

It was a national study done by Manitoba and done nationally. The member is trying to poke holes in an argument which for 11 years the previous government did nothing and ignored.

Vulnerable Persons Wards of Public Trustee

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): This morning CBC reported that a young lady who is disabled due to a medical condition is currently a ward of the Public Trustee. The Public Trustee is there to protect vulnerable and disabled persons if they are incapable of protecting themselves, and if no other competent and willing relative comes forward. This young lady has a sister who is competent, willing and able to look after her affairs, but the Public Trustee refuses to step aside.

Can the minister tell me what is his policy with respect to competent relatives who may wish to look after their relatives who are wards of the Public Trustee?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I am pleased that the member asks a policy question because this is an individual case that has been adjudicated by the courts. The Public Trustee, as a matter of policy, does support client relationships with family in situations where the family's involvement would be supportive to serve the best interests of the client.

Mr. Hawranik: The Public Trustee seriously compromised the safety and well-being of this disabled woman who, while under the responsibility of the Public Trustee, was sexually assaulted in hospital in 2002. The Public Trustee never contacted the sister who is her closest relative to inform her that the sexual assault even occurred.

Can the minister tell us what is this minister's policy with respect to informing relatives about crimes committed against disabled persons who are within the care of the Public Trustee?

Mr. Mackintosh: I know the Public Trustee has to act in the context of the information that it has at hand about family members. The decision to involve family members will depend on many factors including the family member's relationship with that client of the Public Trustee and on whether the advice on involving that particular family member will assist or not in the client's best interest.

Mr. Hawranik: The Public Trustee obtained a restraining order in this case against the sister of the disabled lady who was only advocating for her safety and well-being, and the restraining order was thrown out in court.

Judge Hanssen stated when dealing with a contempt charge against the Public Trustee, "The way in which this matter was handled by the Public Trustee's office was surprising and disappointing." Will the minister who is fully responsible for this matter which occurred under his watch investigate and get to the bottom of this on behalf of all Manitobans living with disabilities?

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Public Trustee has as a policy responsiveness to the individual client needs. The decision of the Court of Queen's Bench has to speak for itself, of course. The Public Trustee has noted the findings of the court as it does in all cases. I think the decision has to speak for itself, and it is not just with one sentence but in its entirety.

Vulnerable Persons Wards of Public Trustee

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): The situation speaks for itself is what the Attorney General indicates: A young woman who, against her sister's wishes, was first placed in an all-male group home, a

seniors' home and then a hospital situation where she was sexually assaulted.

Does the Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities (Ms. Melnick) feel this is an appropriate treatment for disabled people who she has ultimate responsibility for?

*(14:10)

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, just on the policy level it should be noted that the Public Trustee is appointed as a committee of property and the personal care of Manitobans who are incompetent to manage their affairs. The appointment is made by the Director of Psychiatric Services and sometimes by the Court of Queen's Bench. As well, in terms of the policy around clients in psychiatric facilities, that is a medical decision made by medical personnel under The Mental Health Act.

Mrs. Rowat: Vulnerable people are under this Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities (Ms. Melnick) watch so my question is to the minister: Is it the policy of this minister to ignore the family's wishes and to keep families' rights out of the loop when developing care plans for disabled individuals?

Mr. Mackintosh: The member is going to specific instances here and the government is not at liberty to talk about the individual clients and the other matters, Mr. Speaker, but there is a court record available, I understand, that should be available to members opposite. I think it is important that we respect that, without the proper release, there cannot be a discussion about a particular client of the Public Trustee of Manitoba in this House.

Mrs. Rowat: Manitobans deserve this minister's personal assurances that this situation and others similar are being investigated and being taken seriously. What discussions has this Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities had with the Minister of Justice to deal with the issue that family wishes were ignored in developing appropriate care plans for vulnerable disabled persons? What is this minister going to do in response to this outrageous treatment of a young, vulnerable person?

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, Mr. Speaker, I will return to where I started. That is with the policy of the Public Trustee and that is to support client relationships

with family members where the family member's involvement would be supportive of the best interests of the client. That is the general policy direction. In terms of the specifics of the case, that is a matter that for obvious reasons is not something that should be the subject of discussions in this House without full releases.

Wildlife Unlicensed Hunting of Bears

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Conservation. If someone were to shoot and kill a bear in Manitoba without a licence, I am told that the individual must report the incident to a conservation officer and provide some form of an explanation. I wonder if the minister could indicate whether or not that would be correct.

Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Conservation): I commend the Member for Inkster for keeping his eyes peeled close to the action of the bear population in St. Vital Park. It is unfortunate that bear found itself in a situation where it was surrounded by residences, surrounded by people, surrounded in a part of the city where a lot of people do live.

We try, in Conservation, to make sure we minimize the number of human-bear contacts, whether it is in the city or throughout our province. We work together with the Winnipeg Police Service to make sure that proper procedures are followed in order to take care of these sorts of situations. I want the Member for Inkster to be aware, to understand, that those precautions were taken.

Mr. Lamoureux: Over the past number of years, the member from Interlake shot and killed three bears without a licence and in fact had stated, "I did not have any licence to hunt bears when I took this action but I did so in defence of my property and in defence of my family." I have talked to conservation officers, hunters and others, all of whom have expressed real concerns.

My question to the minister is this: Will the minister make a statement to all Manitobans under what conditions are you allowed to shoot bears if you do not have a licence?

Mr. Struthers: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Member for Inkster that my department is working

very hard to minimize the number of occasions in which bears and humans have been brought into contact. I also want the Member for Inkster to know that every step was taken to make sure the bear that was in question in the media this week was dealt with in such a way that it reflected the co-operation between the Winnipeg Police Service and my department. The issue of safety of the people living in that area was paramount in the decisions that were made. They were done in conjunction with the Winnipeg police force and my department.

Mr. Lamoureux: Conservation is there in part to protect our wildlife. Whether it was the hunters or the conservation officers that I was talking to, there was genuine concern that the government needs to be very clear not only to the public but possibly to all of its own members within the NDP party.

Can the minister indicate how many bears are actually shot in self-defence in the province of Manitoba, and what is done with the dead bear itself? It is quite serious. I talked to one conservation officer, and he says that, in his years there, he is only aware of two cases where it has occurred. I think the minister should indicate how frequently we get bears being shot and killed in the province under self-defence.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It is telling that of course during the federal election campaign a Liberal member in this House wants to get up and reiterate the federal Liberal position that even with a bear attacking one's family, they should first of all go and get the gun registered.

I just say this in answer to the member's question. I would urge him to reconsider his position on gun registration in this country. That is a terrible waste of tax dollars. It is a huge boondoggle. I wish he would join with others in opposing this scheme and trying to make that point to his federal colleagues. I know he supports it. I think that is unfortunate.

Farm Income Statistics Manitoba Update

Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples): My question today is for the Minister of Agriculture and Food, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has just released updated farm income statistics. Can the Minister of

Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives update the House on the situation in Manitoba?

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives): I thank the Member for The Maples for raising this issue because it is a very important issue. Our farmers have been under extreme pressure with the border closure, with low hog prices, with the higher Canadian dollar and certainly the drought impact on producers, but the first results that were released today indicate that Manitoba farmers are faring better than other provinces when you look at their income.

I want to pay tribute to the Manitoba farmers who have diversified their operations so that they are not just dependent on one commodity. If you look at it, across Canada there was a decline of about 2.5 percent. In some provinces there was a decline of up to 19 percent. In Manitoba our producers are not in a negative position, they are in a positive position of 1.2 percent.

Graffiti Control and Removal

Mr. Jack Reimer (Southdale): Mr. Speaker, while in opposition the current Minister of Justice was very vocal about the graffiti problem in Winnipeg.

In fact, I quote, "It is no longer good enough that we continue to treat graffiti as a mere mischief or as a very minor misdemeanour. I think over the years this kind of wrongdoing has been virtually decriminalized."

Since he became Minister of Justice, the problem has actually gotten worse here in Winnipeg, particularly since he has decided to ignore the problem from a criminal standpoint and rely on the cities for the cleanup.

*(14:20)

My question to the Minister of Justice is this: Why did the minister talk tough while in opposition but turn a blind eye to the problem that is facing the people here in Winnipeg right now?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the evidence is not of a blind eye, not only eyes wide open but action. First of all, this government on coming into office

put in place a prosecution policy to strengthen the prosecutions when it comes to graffiti offences that come to the courts.

I do not think it is widely known but the government is partnering with the City of Winnipeg and the community centres of Winnipeg for a program called Off the Wall and that is to engage offenders in the removal of graffiti. I can advise that in the last three months of last year over 3600 instances of graffiti were removed by Off the Wall, and I can go on. I would like to remind the member of Neighbourhoods Alive! and 24 projects for graffiti removal at a total of \$411,000.

Mr. Reimer: Mr. Speaker, I want to remind the minister that back in 1998, again in 1999, we introduced two bills, private members' bills, The Graffiti Control and Consequential Amendments Act, asking for action, demanding action to be done because of the graffiti problem.

Now will he reintroduce these bills that talked tough and acted tough on graffiti and do something? He wanted it in '98. He wanted it in '99. We are willing to support it here in 2004. Will he bring these bills back in?

Mr. Mackintosh: This is a choice moment, Mr. Speaker. When you are in government you have the ability to have action and that is what we have. Under the Urban Green Team, we have okayed 39 positions to remove graffiti. I want to know why is it that when the members were on this side they would not support that legislation. They said it was not needed. There was not a problem. We never had boo from them on graffiti and now they are standing up. Well, standing up is not good enough. We are out there. We are doing the action.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

United Nations Peacekeepers

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): This coming Saturday, May 29, is the first International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers following its establishment by the General Assembly last year. The day is intended to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in UN peacekeeping operations, as well as to honour the

memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.

Every day around the world, men and women serve under the flag of the United Nations to build and maintain peace, to relieve human suffering and to promote human rights and sustainable development.

Achieving peace for our world has been difficult but hope and opportunity remains, especially with our young people. Recently, 260 000 Canadian school children took part in the Postcards of the World project, where they wrote every day about the issues and challenges of world peace.

Jens, whom we also know as Jimmy Johnston, a Grade 5 student from Strathmillan School in Winnipeg, was selected as the first prize winner. He will be delivering 10 000 postcards that were written by Canadian young people to the Prime Minister during a special meeting with him.

Jens is no stranger to peacekeeping. His parents are peacekeepers who have been posted overseas. His father Paul has been deployed in Bosnia and Afghanistan, and his mother Sheila wrote a children's book on peacekeeping.

Currently, Canadian peacekeepers are serving in 14 operations in Europe, Asia, Africa, South America and the Middle East, but Canada's involvement in so many trouble spots has not come without a price. More than 100 Canadians have been killed while on peacekeeping duties around the world.

I would like to congratulate Jens Johnston and all the students who took part in the Postcards of the World project. They show us that a peaceful world is possible and give hope for the future.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all the members of the House, I would like to recognize the 1819 UN peacekeepers who have died while on missions over the past 55 years. They have made the ultimate sacrifice with integrity, commitment and courage so that we may meet humanity's greatest challenge of a peaceful world.

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski, Acting Speaker, in the Chair.

Convergys

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): It was 10 years ago, and thanks in a large part to the climate created in Manitoba under the Filmon government, that Convergys Customer Management Canada established Winnipeg's largest contact centre.

Convergys operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing customer service and technical support to customers and clients in the telecommunications technology and financial services industries. It is a global leader in integrated billing, employee care and customer care services provided through outsourcing or licensing.

Convergys serves top companies in telecommunications, Internet, cable and broadband services, technology, financial services and other industries in more than 40 countries. It also provides integrated outsource, human resource services to a leading company that crosses a broad range of industries.

Madam Acting Speaker, when Convergys started out in Winnipeg in 1994 it employed approximately 400 individuals. That number has since grown to 1700 persons. There will soon be 14 call centres across Canada, the newest one being established in Brandon.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the corporate executives who came up from Cincinnati and other cities in the United States to participate and also to personally thank John Hallonquist, the senior director of the Winnipeg division, for giving me the opportunity to express my personal views and gratitude to Convergys for being a valued corporate citizen. Convergys has received a wide range of commendations for dedication to civic leadership, non-profit organizations and the call centre community in Winnipeg.

I appreciated the opportunity this morning to represent the federal government through the Honourable Reg Alcock, president of Treasury Board, and the provincial government through the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology (Mr. Sale), who was unfortunately detained because of a condolence motion for June Westbury, a former member of this Assembly, who represented the same constituency as the minister.

On behalf of the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen), where this facility is situated, who is also

participating in the same condolence motion, to all the employees at Convergys congratulations once again on behalf of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

Flin Flon Area Businesses

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Acting Speaker, it is an exciting time to be an entrepreneur in Manitoba, and particularly in the city of Flin Flon. Recently a number of new shops and restaurants have opened and more businesses are expected to open the door shortly.

Right next door to my constituency office on Main Street in Flin Flon is Fresh Finds, a store that specializes in hemp and hemp-derived products. They sell interesting clothing and shoes as well as other goods.

Across the street and to the right is a new restaurant, Adelphia, which opened a few months ago and serves delicious Greek and seafood, among other items. Another recent addition to Flin Flon is The Connection restaurant which just opened a few weeks ago. I hear that they have a very good Mexican-style menu.

And I cannot forget to mention the Orange Toad, a combined store for used books and a coffee shop that was opened for business four months ago by Meghan McKeachnie. My wife and I not only enjoy browsing there and buying from their wide selection of books but also enjoy their specialty coffees.

Also the Flintoba Shopping Centre continues to expand and add components with the latest addition of three more businesses.

Former Flin Flon resident and avid fisherman Mitch Duncan has partnered with Selina Malko to open The Village Fish Cafe in Winnipeg's Osborne Village. They serve delicious fish from northern Manitoba, and the cozy restaurant is studded with fishing pictures from the Flin Flon area.

I am proud to be part of a government that supports small business development through many programs and tax incentives. Our Northern Development Strategy continues to focus on expanding education, employment and economic opportunities.

I would like to recognize all the entrepreneurs and employees who are involved in these new

businesses, and I wish them a very busy and prosperous future.

* (14:30)

Farm Income

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): I rise today with a heavy heart because of the huge decline in income that our farm community has had to endure last year, during the 2003 year. The BSE situation, a huge drop in hog prices last year, the decreases in yields in the grain sector and many other things, such as the provincial government's lack of contribution of the transition program to the farm community which would have amounted to between \$40 million and \$80 million last year, have decreased the farm net income to the province of Manitoba by 51.2 percent.

It is the largest decrease in net income since 1977 and is clearly a record of the performance, or an indication of the negative performance, that this NDP government has demonstrated during a year where farmers were in crisis and when the minister should have gone to her Cabinet, and the Premier (Mr. Doer) of this province should have said yes, we recognize that our farmers are in deep, deep financial strife. It should have been this government's clear indication that they should have contributed their 40 percent as they had signed on to the APF agreement, their 40 percent, of the transition program that other provinces paid to their producers.

That, Madam Acting Speaker, is one of the main reasons why our net income has dropped by 51.2 percent in the province of Manitoba. I believe it is clearly an indication that this government, this NDP government, has abandoned its farm community. That is why we have asked continually of this Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) in this House whether she would contribute fully to the—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Korzeniowski): The member's time has lapsed.

Sisler High School Refugee Camp

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Acting Speaker, there are many people in this world who have been forced to flee their country or home because of persecution due to their race, nationality

or political affiliation. Understanding the plight of the millions of displaced persons and refugees around the world ought to be an important part of our education.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

Sisler High School, in my constituency, has been trying to understand the difficulties faced by refugees and displaced persons by helping to develop a program which will be part of the public school curriculum.

On Friday, April 30 and May 1, students from Sisler and other high schools participated in a 24-hour refugee camp at Birds Hill Park. This camp was part of an experiment called in exile for a while, and was part of the Refugee and Exile project.

This project was designed to give students experiential learning and a practical application of understanding life as a refugee.

Sisler High School received a \$35,000 grant from the Canadian International Development Agency's Global Classroom Initiative.

They took the lead in partnership with Vincent Massey collegiate, the Canadian Food Grains Bank, the Manitoba Council for International Co-operation, the University of Manitoba and Manitoba Education, Training and Youth.

To help gain awareness about the life of a refugee, the students were exposed to real life situations facing refugees. These included such things as encountering intimidating border guards, rude camp employees, mistreatment of women and children, rationed food, military roadblocks, rogue military forces and many other unpleasant surprises.

I would like to thank the teachers, Chris Banfield and Ken Corely, for helping to develop the curriculum, and other teachers and participants from Sisler High School, Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School, Vincent Massey High School, Murdoch MacKay Collegiate, Daniel McIntyre High School, and the many students who partook in the project for enlightening us all as to the plight of the refugee. It was a good learning experience, which we hope will be replicated by many other schools across Canada.

ORDERS OF THE DAY**(Continued)****GOVERNMENT BUSINESS****MOTIONS OF CONDOLENCE****(Continued)**

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, we will continue with condolences. We will just take a couple of minutes, and then we will proceed with condolences. We will proceed with the condolence motion.

Israel Asper

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): I move, seconded by the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard), that this House convey to the family of the late Israel Asper, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of his devotion to duty and the useful life of active community and public service, and that Mr. Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Doer: It is a day to celebrate the true Manitoba, Winnipeg and Canadian icon and hero of many of ours and also a day to formally, as members of the Legislature, pass on our condolences to Babs, Gail, David, Leonard and their spouses, their grandchildren, the grandchildren of Izzy Asper and brother Aubrey and sister Hettie. On behalf of all members of the Legislature, we today, again, celebrate Izzy's life, and we offer our sincere condolences on his loss.

Mr. Speaker, in witnessing a few months ago at the Asper residence the Canadian human rights museum proposal, there are some wonderful, wonderful clips and memories on video of Izzy and his dream and his vision for this museum. But there is also a very telling sentence in the video that should be and is an inspiration, I believe, to all of us, where he said to the Canadian people and the people here in the Legislature that he was not interested in building something that would middle along, so to speak. It would not be just a middle effort. It would be a world-class museum, or Izzy Asper would not be involved in it. "I am not interested in doing something that is second-class; I am only interested in doing something that is first-class."

For me, that symbolized all my contacts with him over the years, all the opportunities I had to meet with he and his family over the years. He had a passion, an energy, a brain, a skill that would allow him to lead our country in many ways, and lead our community in many different ways. I am confident that, as we talk about this Canadian human rights museum, we continue to pledge our support. I know all members of this Chamber are committed to both financial and community support for the Canadian Museum for Human Rights or Canadian human rights museum. We will have to and we will always remember that challenge to us as we carry on our work.

I can recall the meetings that I had with Izzy Asper on this museum, with Gail and with others, where he very definitely said we are not interested also in a museum that just portrays one set of victims of human rights abuses. We are not interested in having just a one-issue human rights museum. We want to portray the struggles and the victims of abuses of human rights and we also want this museum to celebrate those people, those individuals, those communities, those Canadians, who rose up against intolerance, against racism, against hatred, and took a stand to make our world and our country and our communities a safer place. But it also is to inspire our young people. It is to inspire our youth of Canada and youth of this community that the work of heroes in the past on human rights abuses can never be taken for granted. We can never rest on our laurels.

Just the other day I heard of an incident here in Winnipeg of racism. We read of incidents in Montréal and Toronto that remind us every day that the fight for tolerance and peace, and respect, is not an end but, with the museum, will be a better journey.

* (14:40)

Just the other day I was with Gail, Rick Waugh, who is from Winnipeg, and the Leader of the Opposition's spouse, Ashleigh, and Babs, and we were part of a \$1.5-million announcement from the bank to the museum, but also we were part of a group of students that eloquently talked about their experience at the Holocaust Museum that was sponsored by the Asper Foundation, that visit. Again, the creative passion that they brought back with them and are now investing in their own community with

their own friends, I think, is a kernel of what Izzy dreams for this community and what I want to say in the start of my remarks is our torch that we will carry with the family, with the foundation, with the community, with the country, and with people all over the world that are committed to a society based on tolerance and human rights.

Izzy was a leader all his life. He was a student leader. He was a legal leader. He was a political leader. He was a business leader. He was a community leader and, from what I understand, the only place he did not lead in such a direct way was in his family, with his family and his children, and his grandchildren and his spouse. He was an individual that, throughout his career, always was the one who led.

When he was a lawyer, he was, according to all the people I talked to in law school before he graduated as a lawyer, a formidable, formidable debater. I think all of us could imagine we would not want to be on the other side of those debates. He, of course, graduated from law school here at the U of M and received his Master's of Law, and then he became the leading tax lawyer in Canada.

Through that success, he was, obviously, called on to write columns for national papers and national publications.

He was a leader in his political life. He was Leader of the Liberal Party of Manitoba. Of course, knowing that Izzy did not want to do anything in a middle way, it was probably difficult for Izzy to be Leader of the Liberal Party dealing with political parties that sometimes—not our party, of course—but sometimes political parties would try to hug the middle for votes, and that was not Izzy's way.

So his great strength was also one of his political liabilities, I would suggest, but certainly he did not lose his personality, his character, his world-class view of how we had to do things, his view that we had to not muddle our way along or "middle" our way along. We needed really, really strong actions to deal with the challenges that were presented to the province of Manitoba.

He, of course, left the leadership position in 1975, and some columnists say that this was a blessing, because he went on to buy the one TV station. Of course, all of us attended the 30th anniversary just recently. I hope I have got the dates

right, 30th or 31st. I do remember his comment to me that he was glad to see Duff Roblin and myself there. Of course, it was always Duff's ditch, and I think he said something about our project would always be considered a son-of-a-ditch, I think was the term he used. His humour was always part of his speech even when it was being a little bit of a twist at the end of the comment. He went on to form his one company which, of course, in itself is a huge David versus Goliath story, a huge successful story where he was able to take an abandoned Safeway store and now have networks in various lands across the world and, of course, buy the *National Post*, and then they, in turn, buying the Southam chain and be a media mogul, as they say, or having a media empire as part of his business success.

It was always interesting to hear him talk about stories in the night with Mr. Schwartz in the past, who was one of his business partners, whom he was praising and commenting on just a few months ago, and other people. I have heard Mr. Rogers' stories, and some of the ways in which negotiations went on for various business agreements, shows brains, character, confidence and a lot of backbone in terms of taking those risks, because here is a very successful person who is risking when he is expanding or risking when he is going to another land and risking when he is going into another business and in other operations, but always anchored, always centred, always really centred in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

We celebrated with him when he would comment to the people of Toronto, the people of Montréal and the people of Vancouver, when he commented to other businesspeople, about the great community of Winnipeg and how he had no other desire to live any other place based on business convenience, because of the wonderful roots he had in this community.

Speaking of the community, he certainly was, again, a leader of community giving. He practised his beliefs, his values in giving back to our community and that giving continues on today in so many different ways. Again, he would do it with tremendous personal contributions, and he would do it with such humour. I remember being with the family, again, a couple of years ago at St. Boniface Hospital, and he had negotiated with the Mayo Clinic a research and development capacity with St. Boniface Research Foundation. The Mayo Clinic

was investing in the St. Boniface Research Foundation and the Asper Centre there. He had negotiated a tremendous agreement, and he, of course, had held out his own personal contribution and the Asper Foundation contribution to this until the provincial government came on board for an equal share and then the federal government came on board. He would go to the federal government and say: "The provincial government is there. Where are you?"

Then he would go to the provincial government and say: "The federal government is there. Where are you?"

Of course, neither of us had committed, but he knew how to negotiate us into a corner in about a second. Obviously, it was for great, great benefit to our community. But at the time he did so, he made a joke about, "Every time he is there, people are giving him heck about smoking." This is the first time he was not coming in, in the emergency ward. Of course, it was done with such humour that Babs nudged me and said, "Oh, that is going to be the quote on the news tonight."

And sure enough, they did not talk about how much money he had invested, what great decision he had made with the Mayo Clinic, it was just Izzy's humour, even leading his own TV station on the news that evening. It was a great, great strength, but sometimes it undermined some of the great work he was doing, not always identified in some of those news stories.

He was one of the driving forces for the successful U of M capital program. Before the provincial government joined in with what is now a \$200-million capital program at the University of Manitoba, Izzy Asper and the Asper Centre for Business was receiving private contributions, led by Izzy Asper again.

*(14:50)

Then he would call on other people to donate to the law faculty, the agriculture faculty, the Nutra-ceutical and Functional Foods Centre at the University of Manitoba. There is a \$237-million capital program right now at the University of Manitoba, and I believe Izzy's leadership is the reason why we are building that university into a

world-class centre again, based on the capital investments we are making.

The arts communities have been tremendously benefited with the activity of Izzy Asper and, of course, jazz. The Jazz Festival, jazz activity, the jazz media now, Izzy was a person before his time, again, a leader in his choice of music. The demographics on jazz and jazz enjoyment are following his leadership.

I certainly know that every volunteer, every musician, every band, every group that is involved in any way, shape or form in jazz in Winnipeg, and in many other places outside of Winnipeg, were given a bridge from their talent to the marketplace with Izzy Asper and his great dedication to the music he loved, the music he played and the music he has allowed many of us to enjoy through his investments.

He, of course, was a very, very important national figure. Now I am going to tell a little tale out of school. I thought when I was chairing the Premiers group in 2000 as a rookie, first of all I did not know a lot about how we were going to get a deal, but I had some idea, trying to keep a separatist government together with New Democrats and Tories and Liberals and watching this guy Mike Harris and these two people, Ralph Klein and Mike Harris, and then watching Brian Tobin and Roy Romanow.

It was kind of a disparate group. We were trying to get it all together. But I know that Roy Romanow was involved with the Prime Minister, and I did not know until Izzy told me, in June of last year, that they would meet in the boardroom at the Asper house in the basement. Little did I know that these great affairs of Canada, of getting our health care agreement in place in 2000, was shaped in the basement of the Asper family home. Of course, it shows the kind of work he did on behalf of all Canadians to try to make a difference for programs that were very, very important.

The solidarity with Israel and his passion on media coverage were extremely important for the people of Israel. I believe it remains extremely important. There cannot be a "compromise" or a consensus with some people in the Middle East that are absolutely dedicated, not to peace with Israel, but to the destruction of the Israeli state. There is not a one side or the other when one side wants to live in harmony in the Middle East and in peace and another

side, or some parts, not all sides, not all countries, not all people in the Middle East, but there are elements that are out and dedicated to the destruction of Israel.

He was very passionate about media coverage that did not understand, did not deal with that fundamental issue that is so important for us to remember in this House, so important for us to remember in Canada, that it is extremely important for us to recognize that peace is necessary but some people are not dedicated to peace, but rather disruption of the Israeli people and the state of Israel.

It is very, very important for all of us to understand that and I certainly listen to many of the, not a lot, but some of the sessions that he gave to us, or explanations he gave to us very quickly, but right to the point.

He was an excellent negotiator. I mentioned the hospital but I want to say that, and I am sure, in business he was extremely successful in his negotiations, but one of the elements in negotiation that I have always understood, no matter what side you are on at the table, is that your word has to be your bond, because once one deal is over, you are on to the next deal and you are on to the next deal and you are on to the deal after that.

Just a small window of that sense of honour I had with Izzy was when we were trying to deal with funding for the museum and at the same time we had to get funding for the floodway. I always knew that Izzy would never, ever say it was the museum over the floodway. I always knew that he would be supporting both projects, that we would be able to say to the Prime Minister, when I met with the Prime Minister, I knew that Izzy Asper had said the same thing to Jean Chrétien as I had.

I knew when I met with Allan Rock that Izzy had said the same thing to Allan Rock. I knew when we were dealing with staff at the PMO that he had had the same position. Flood protection is not only necessary; it is a good investment because it prevents costs later on.

The museum is a national institution. All national institutions should not be located in Ottawa or Montréal. Institutions have to be located where people live outside of central Canada. That institution has to be funded by the same department

that funds other national institutions, not at the expense of the floodway negotiations, but as part of a national vision for not only protecting people but enhancing our human rights through the location of the human rights museum here in Manitoba.

I respected that. I always trusted that, because sometimes, I am not saying the former Prime Minister, but sometimes in Ottawa you can get somebody saying, "Well, which one is it going to be?" to myself or to a minister, or to Izzy. I knew it was never one or the other. It was both. I knew that. I trusted him, and that is why we have initial funding from the federal government on the museum and that is why we have \$240 million for the floodway expansion project.

Izzy was a multi-tasker. When I was in opposition, I ran into him at one Museum of Man and Nature event, and he had just watched Question Period. I am sure he was watching Question Period, establishing a jazz festival, buying a TV network and working with the Prime Minister, at that time Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and condemning the CBC subsidies while at the same time celebrating their role in Canada.

He would do that all in a matter of three minutes. He was asking me questions about the Rafferty-Alameda dam and claiming it was breaking the law not to have an environmental assessment of that proposal and he had just watched Question Period.

I remember being at the Negev event and he talked about the Israeli policy, what he believed was very important to Canada. He also would be saying at the same time, just before we were going on stage, he would be celebrating the pulchritude of individuals, in a politically correct way I must say, and at the same time celebrating their voice, celebrating the fact that he was going to establish a jazz bar in Headingley and he was going to challenge anybody that has brought in anti-smoking legislation with a Charter of Rights application.

That was a one-minute conversation just as we both went up to speak at the last Negev event I was at with Izzy. Of course, he had an energetic manner, an infectious can-do way that was really, really important to all of us.

He also had a lot of pride. You know, we were at the Order of Manitoba event here. He had already

received the Order of Canada and he was talking about Minnedosa and Neepawa and he was talking about his family. He was saying, "Look at how many people there are from Neepawa and Minnedosa getting the Order of Manitoba. The best people in Manitoba are born in Minnedosa and raised in Neepawa."

Then he would be at the L-G event in 1998 when Peter Liba was being sworn in, and he said, "Well, Liba and I finally got control of this Legislature. We finally have taken control of this Legislature." He had pride in the fact that the two of them that had toiled in political life in the 1970s had succeeded to take control of the Legislature through the L-G's office.

He was proud of his children. He was proud of David with controlling and having the Bombers succeed. He was proud. He would mention Gail and the Theatre Centre. He would mention Leonard and his success with the business, and of course, he always gave tribute to Babs and her ability to allow his full lifestyle to flourish in our community and in our country of Canada.

I know the night that Izzy died, the day that we were informed that Izzy had passed away, I know there was a real sense of loss in this building. That evening I went home, I was out on the street doing a little yard work and for some reason almost everybody was out doing something on the street, this is in North Kildonan. Everybody on the street was really at a major, major loss losing Izzy Asper, saying to all of us that he made us proud, a part of Winnipeg, and he made us proud to be part of the West. He is a person that gave us a bit of our swagger back, the West, Winnipeg.

Izzy Asper was a great man who led a wonderful life. We will all miss him. But I want to pledge to the family today that we will not carry on Izzy's vision, Izzy's dream in a middle way. It is world class, what he has asked us to do. It is world class. We will meet it. Thank you.

*(15:00)

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): "Our job is to challenge the norms, root out complacency, foster idealism in the defence of freedom, democracy and the protection and advancement of human rights." These are words from Israel Asper talking about the

responsibility of his media empire to do more than just make money. I think it applied not just to his work in business but it applied even more than that to his efforts in the political arena.

I rise today to second the motion of condolence, to express our deepest sympathy to the family, to pay a tribute to Israel Asper and all that he and his family have done for Manitoba and for Canada.

You know, one of the things that he said in talking to people at CanWest Global, and I will quote: "I hate putting pressure on my successors except to remind them that the building is just beginning and that they are now at a decent harbour in terms of strength, financial capacity and human resources to be able to move on to the next plateau."

I think that applies to the business empire. I think increasingly it applies to where we are with the human rights museum, which is moving forward. I hope that it applies to the Liberal Party in Manitoba, which we are trying to build and make sure that Izzy's legacy in politics lives on and that one day his vision of a Liberal government in this province becomes a reality.

Izzy Asper said, "At the end of the day, you have to have mattered. You have to ask yourself did you make this world a better place than it was when you entered it, or did you just take up space." Certainly, Israel Asper made a difference. He and his family and the friends and the teams that he built at various stages of his life have made an incredible difference in a whole variety of ways.

When he entered politics, when he entered business, when he chose the human rights museum and other projects to champion, sometimes he, and it was certainly true in the human rights museum, his lack of experience in dealing with building museums did not stop him. His success, he himself said, was focussed tenacity, relentlessness, seeing red, keeping your eye on the end point but an infinite one, a mutable one that beckons a person to achieve more than he had set out to.

Israel Asper became Liberal Leader November 1, 1970. His close friend, Harold Buchwald, was instrumental in influencing Israel to take this step. You know, at his nomination meeting, the theme song was "The Age of Aquarius," the dawning of a new age for the Liberal Party and for Manitoba.

Well, it may not have worked out exactly like that, but he sure put a lot of new ideas on the table and a lot of those have seen the light of day in one way or another since then.

He was a man of incredible energy. He was far ahead of his time in many ways in his dynamic vision for Manitoba. He brought a philosophy which blended a commitment to social progress with fiscal responsibility in achieving it.

The Premier (Mr. Doer) has said that Izzy might have difficulty in achieving the middle way. I think we can look at him a bit like Wayne Gretzky as a centre, right up the middle, but the ability to move around very adroitly and to put the puck in the net very cleverly. And yes, he was in the middle of the political spectrum, socially responsible and fiscally responsible at the same time, with an incredible forward vision. But he used his skill in many ways, just like Wayne Gretzky in hockey, to be in the centre. But I think when it came to the political realm, that he may not always have had the patience that it takes. That was one thing about Izzy. He got an idea, he latched onto it and he wanted to move it quickly.

When he became Liberal Leader, people were not sure whether to consider him as maverick or a messiah. No one ignored him. Many asked why he left the reported \$100,000-a-year income in the tax consulting field, the best tax lawyer in the country, to take up a hazardous, strenuous and probably thankless task in politics. The answer, he said at the time, was simple: "Fundamentally, I was so frustrated with the way things were going in this province that, in order to live with myself, I had to do something about it."

That tells you a lot about Izzy, that he would not stand on the sidelines; he wanted to be where the action was and to make a difference.

He was a whirlwind. It was written about him at the time: "The dark, smiling, slightly built Liberal Leader has set himself a pace that would kill many a messiah and many a maverick twice his physical size."

He did not hesitate. The travelling that he did, often with Peter Liba, the early and late days. The incredible effort and pace that he set was really extraordinary. But he never lost that folksy charm of a country boy, and he knew rural Manitoba well. He

had grown up, and when he was at the theatre, the theatre owned by his father, his family, he was an usher. Day after day, and night after night, or evening after evening, he was there working away. In fact, the interesting thing is that, and his memory was like this, he memorized the scripts, so that years later he could see the movie and turn off the sound and repeat the script for others who were in the room. Quite a memory and quite a feat, but he had started with humble beginnings as an usher.

Izzy Asper's mother snuck out of Russia at the age of 16, past the rifle fire of border guards. His mother and father went through discrimination and pogroms and abject poverty of the Great Depression and the agony and uncertainty of World War II. It was not an easy time.

His mother had been a concert pianist. His father was a violinist trained at the Odessa Conservatory. Israel, interestingly enough, saw himself early on as kind of the black sheep of the family, because of his artfulness, his non-conformity, his puckish sense of humour. The breadth of his creative intellect, perhaps, first manifested itself during his years at the University of Manitoba where he was involved with and excelled at a wide variety of activities ranging from championship debating, writing for and editing the new student newspaper, participating in the student parliament.

In 1956, he married his lifelong partner, Babs. For the first year she worked, supporting him to complete law school. It was not the first time that her efforts were instrumental in keeping the family going and moving things forward and it was not the last. He was called to the bar in 1957.

He joined forces with his friend Harold Buchwald to create the Pitblado, Buchwald and Asper law firm. He was one of Canada's foremost experts on taxation. His book, *The Benson Iceberg*, was a best seller.

As a leader, he travelled extensively around the province promoting liberalism, holding public meetings, talking to students around the province in dozens of high schools.

*(15:10)

It was interesting to look back at the Asper approach. As was said at the time, the whole

emphasis of the Asper program is on the individual with all action directed to improve our quality of life, local and consumer rights, jobs and earnings and government itself. The key to success is develop the creation of new job opportunities and a broader tax base.

He was always standing up for Manitoba and the West. He would at one point say we are the orphans of Confederation and we resent it, and he certainly stood up time and time again for Manitoba. When he became Liberal Leader, Pierre Trudeau was the Prime Minister, Jim Richardson was the senior federal minister in Manitoba. Of course Richardson, who died recently, was a well-known community leader in the province who served very ably and was important in bringing the Mint to Manitoba. It was a fascinating and interesting time to be the Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party.

June 16, 1972, Asper was elected to the Legislature in Wolseley. It was quite a victory. I think that that seat had been held by Duff Roblin, Tory Leader. It was achieved against rather long odds. Asper set up the first constituency office. He knocked on every door in the constituency five times. He was systematic when he approached politics. He identified the serious problem with the brain drain of students and qualified people. He identified the problems with the economy and he had some specific solutions.

The program he took into the election of 1973 was bold and imaginative like everything else that he did. It included broad measures to change Manitoba taxes, to provide for more equity and rights for individuals and imaginative measures like a proposal for an avenue of nations, which maybe we should take up again. The avenue was to be part of downtown redevelopment in Winnipeg, with ethnic shops and exhibitions, and was to be associated with a cultural heritage park highlighting Manitoba's diverse heritage.

The program put forward then was wide-ranging and in many respects very forward thinking. It balanced a very aggressive approach to making Manitoba more tax competitive, with initiatives which would allow for specifically targeted spending, in ways that would improve the province's economic performance and provide for better social and economic situations for Manitobans. It provided for the introduction of an identicare program for

children, for an institute of child care to develop new programs, new policies, new ideas and new studies in this area of great importance and of growing endeavour.

The program provided for a senior citizens' income supplement and it included legislation for a Manitoba bill of rights, a strengthened Human Rights Commission, and for legislation establishing rules of disclosure of the investment and holdings and the avoidance of conflict of interest by members of government, members of the Assembly, civil servants and government staff who have access to classified information. He recognized the need to overhaul the welfare system. A person, in his words, "A man must have an incentive to work and produce if the economy is not to stagnate."

Consideration was to be given to a guaranteed annual income to operate by means of a negative income tax to provide incentive to people to work, replacing a host of existing welfare programs and eliminating the needs of what was then a means test.

He was first and foremost at that point a politician and he was quite a campaigner. Lloyd Axworthy later would remember campaigning with Asper on Osborne Street and shaking hands with people as they got off the bus, but of course that was not good enough for Izzy Asper. He jumped right on the bus and shook hands all the way down to the next stop and then he got off at the next stop and came running back. He was exuberant; he was so full of energy. It was not an easy time for the provincial Liberal party. I think that Izzy was always disappointed that he was never able to be Premier, but he certainly did an incredible amount, even though he did not become Premier.

The election of 1973, it is interesting, it was hard-fought and the mark of this is that that election had the highest voter turnout since 1914, 78 percent, much higher than now. That was due to the nature of the election and how hard-fought things were. Richard Kroft, now a senator, and Peter Liba, the Lieutenant-Governor, were very much involved. But things did not work exactly as hoped and perhaps, certainly in my view, a great opportunity was missed for Manitoba.

After the election Israel Asper and four other Liberal MLAs—of course Lloyd Axworthy, Fort Rouge, Stephen Patrick in Assiniboia, Gordon

Johnson in Portage la Prairie and Joseph Paul Marion in St. Boniface—were there; they soldiered on through the session of 1974. It is interesting to look back at the Throne Speech of the time. Izzy was more than anything else somebody who was passionately in support of democracy. He said, and I quote, "History will judge us harshly if for expediency or for momentary political partisan gain any of us, in carrying out our responsibilities and duties, do anything other than to strengthen and fortify the great tradition of parliament which we all seek to serve." Something we need to remember.

You know, he would say that, and at the same time he was not only a debater, but he would provide a rather intense attack as you can only imagine on the government's Throne Speech of the day.

He would say and I quote, "I am bound to say that those of us who so eagerly awaited a declaration of what the government's new mandate would offer to Manitobans in the years ahead, or even the months ahead, feel a sense of astonishment, frustration and overwhelming disappointment at the barren Speech from the Throne that we were tortured with." He did not mince words.

He went on, "What is particularly frightening is if the abdication of responsibility to lead is so obvious and so evident from this, the first speech from the new administration that Manitobans expected so much, much more of and have good reason to reconsider the choice they made in the election. For it is clear that the government has become snug and complacent, more concerned about finding ways to reward their political supporters than in launching new efforts on behalf of the people in Manitoba." He did not mince words.

We want to celebrate his achievements and we are doing this in a non-partisan way, but we do recognize that part of what Izzy was, was very partisan when he was leader and that is something which we remember with fondness and with admiration. Asper recognized then, and I think it is important now, that public-sector spending was no substitute for private-sector investment. He spoke of the need for Manitoba to do as well or better than the rest of Canada when it came to economic growth and economic policy. And he looked at the economy, at the environment, at social policy in a way that really brought together a wonderful level of ideas and a

synthesis in the same way that Wayne Gretzky would bring to hockey in his role as a centre.

* (15:20)

When Izzy stepped down as leader, he went on to begin his third career; tax lawyer to Legislature leader to third career as businessman. He remarked later, "My second career, that of being Leader of the Liberal Party in the Manitoba Legislature, had fully drained my savings." Even back in those early 1970s, it was difficult to support a family on a salary of \$14,000 a year. Man does not live on idealism alone. Well, he certainly got a long way, but there were some realities.

Later, Izzy would say to his son David, after David had been through himself a big loss, and this is quote from Israel Asper, "You need in your life to lose really badly, because only if you have lost and plummeted the depths of being a loser can you begin to appreciate even small successes."

He continued to be active in politics in one way or another for the rest of his life, and had a tremendous loyalty to people like John Turner who had helped him and had been an important presence in his campaign in Wolseley. So, when John Turner became Prime Minister and John Turner was running in Quadra in British Columbia, he did not hesitate to get involved. Izzy flew to Vancouver and spent hours and days on the phone with others calling for support to make sure that John Turner was elected in the constituency of Quadra as Prime Minister. John Turner had taken a big risk in deciding that that was where he was going to run, but Izzy was there for him after John Turner had been there for Izzy.

Out of the missed opportunities in politics and the recognition that he had to fight the media in politics as well as his opponents, he kind of regrouped. He got into the media business in a big way. He bought a small TV station in North Dakota and turned it into CKND TV and then built a national and international media empire.

You know, one of the interesting things, and it points out to the kind of sacrifices, the kind of involvement, of the rest of Izzy's family, Gail had a choice, was very interested in being involved in the arts and in pursuing a career in the arts, but when her dad was in the precarious position, betting the farm as it were on a risky venture in business, you know,

she and her mother talked, I gather, and Gail decided that she had better get a law degree and be able to support her dad in case things did not work out. It tells you something about the way the whole family pulled together. I think that has been very important in terms of the success, is that everybody has pulled together in that kind of way.

Most important, perhaps, to Israel Asper was his fourth career launched in 1997 when he resigned as the CEO of CanWest to become the executive chairman and focus on giving back to the community. The Asper Foundation, created in 1983, was the vehicle for much of his philanthropy.

The Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba, the Lyric Theatre in Assiniboine Park, CanWest Global Park where the Goldeyes play baseball, the Manitoba Theatre for Young People at The Forks, the Asper Research Institute at St. Boniface are just a few of the many, many legacies that Israel Asper leaves to us in Manitoba and to us in Canada.

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights will be his greatest legacy. His family and all of us, I think I can speak collectively, are dedicated to make sure that that is achieved and done in a way that will be a landmark and a drawing place for people from around the world. We are dedicated to make sure that that will be a place that will not only draw people but will provide a venue for people to visit and learn about human rights, about tolerance, about how we build societies in a constructive, forward-thinking, positive way.

Israel Asper received numerous awards, the B'nai Brith International Award for his work for international peace and security and to try and build a better world in the Middle East; the Canadian Broadcast Hall of Fame Award in 1995; the Western Canadian Entrepreneur of the Year in 1996 and many, many, many others.

I will close with just a few quotes from his family which I treasure. From David Asper, Passover, the Jewish celebration of freedom, "He had instilled in all of us of all ages from youngest to oldest the importance of this event. The opening prayer we say at Passover goes in part as follows, 'We pray that we shall become infused with a renewed spirit and understanding. May the problem of all who are downtrodden be our problem, may the

concern of all who are afflicted be our concern and may the struggle for all who strive for liberty and equality be our struggle.' That was what dad was all about." Words of David Asper.

As we know well, David has worked for those who are downtrodden, David Milgaard, for example. Certainly, it is of interest and particular memory today that this morning we had condolences for June Westbury. They, clearly, were of a very similar tradition and very similar approach.

Secondly, I quote from Leonard Asper when he said, "He told me that an entrepreneur was somebody who stood on an empty lot and imagined a building there, somebody who saw not what is but what could be." That is what Israel was, a forward-thinking visionary.

He went on, "Dad believed passionately in individual rights and liberties and he fought for that belief in a variety of arenas, from his days as a tax columnist and author to his days as Liberal Party Leader in Manitoba and right up to his days as a proprietor of newspapers. His drive to teach others in the importance of these fundamental principles and how fragile they can be is what the Canadian Museum for Human Rights is all about."

Now a few words from Gail Asper. "Part of dad's genius was his astonishing ability to see the big and the small picture, a trait that drove us lesser mortals crazy. On the one hand, he was extremely organized and obsessed with minutiae, always carrying around his long check list of jobs to do. I saw this as the Broadway-musical side of him, very regimented, verse, chorus, verse, chorus, that is what I like. But on the other hand, and what set him apart from everyone else was that he could move right into jazz, with its convoluted structure, lack of form, and meandering, indirect themes. That is also when his thought processes became wildly flexible, improvised and free, which the best jazz, apparently, is." That also was Izzy Asper.

Izzy, we still mourn your loss but we celebrate your achievements. We thank you for what you have done for Manitoba and we thank the family members for all the sacrifices and all the contributions that you too have made. Thank you.

* (15:30)

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I stand in my place today to pay tribute to a tremendous man, a tremendous father, a tremendous husband, a tremendous Manitoban, a politician, all of those things.

I would like to just compliment both the Premier of the Province of Manitoba (Mr. Doer) for his remarks and the Leader of the Liberal Party for his remarks. I think that they were eloquent and very well-thought-out and I would like to just pay tribute to what they put on the record.

Mr. Speaker, this is a somewhat daunting task, perhaps, because everybody that had an opportunity to meet Israel Asper became very, very comfortable and I think he is one of the few people that when you say the word "Izzy" everybody knows who you are talking about, and that is whether you are in Winnipeg, whether you are in Toronto, whether you are in Tel Aviv, whether you are anywhere around the world, Izzy is somebody who is known by his first name.

It is because of the way that he had a relationship with the people that he met. I would like to just pay tribute to Babs, his lifelong partner, their three children, David, Gail and Leonard, and, of course, their spouses, Ruth, Mike and Sue and their eight wonderful grandchildren who I know meant the world to him and continue to do so to Babs.

I had an opportunity to spend time with Izzy on numerous occasions, but I found some of the most interesting anecdotes, I guess, came from people that knew Izzy. I had a chance to talk to some of those people and I would like to just pass on some of those anecdotes because I think it really does speak to this individual and what a human being he was and maybe a little bit of a flavour about what Izzy was all about.

I know that there were some discussions with Paul Desmarais and, of course, Izzy was always interested in looking at businesses and had no particular person that he would care to do business with. He just wanted to do business. I know that he had a discussion at one point with Paul Desmarais and, I think, during the business discussion at one point, Desmarais said to Izzy, "You know, the problem, Izzy, if I do a business deal with you, you're so litigious, you're always going to court." Izzy responded, "Well, you know, Paul, when I go to

court, I always win," and Paul said, "That's what worries me, Izzy."

So I do not know where that deal went, Mr. Speaker, but that was just a little taste of that. I know that I got a chance to share some time in Israel and after with a good friend, Mr. Mel Manishen and I said to him, "You know, Mel, I have to have the opportunity, at some point, to pay tribute to Izzy in the Legislature and I wonder if you had an anecdote or two that you might be able to pass on."

Of course, he had many, but the one I would like to share is Mel recalls sitting down with Izzy and saying, "You know, you have small children here, Gail, David and Leonard. Have you ever given good advice to your children and if so, what advice have you given?" And he said, "Well, yes, I have given my children advice. The best thing I think I can do for my children, I advise them to keep their options open." So Mel thought that was pretty good advice. As he recounted the story to me, he said, "I saw Izzy last summer and I was reminded of the great success that their children have gone on to do." But he said, "You know, Izzy, I remember asking you years ago when the kids were small if you had any advice for them and I just wondered, if you had that same advice today, would you still give it to them?" He said, "Yes, absolutely, Mel, I would and I did. As a matter of fact, I added something to it. I always said to my children keep your options open but do something." In fact, they have gone on to do more than just something.

I know that I had a chance to sit with Izzy at numerous events, as a lot of us in this House have, and I was always amazed at how he had the ability, at his stage in his life, I know one year, I believe, he went to Australia, I believe it was 11 times in one year. You know, I sometimes get a little exhausted going back and forth to Brandon. Well, 11 times he went to Australia, and he told me it is because he was very organized. He said, "I can leave anywhere at any given time on 15 minutes notice. I know what I am going to take and I am ready to go." I think it is proof, Mr. Speaker, because he never, ever once showed the wear of somebody who was a globetrotter, the way that Izzy was.

I know that at one of the recent dinners, Justice Guy Kroft had a chance to share some of his thoughts about Izzy. In particular, I thought it was very interesting because he talked about his career

and how he started out in politics and how Izzy always had the ability to get onto the radio. As the Leader of the Liberal Party there he was out in Neepawa giving a speech and to those that would be listening to the radio they would have thought, wow, what an amazing speech. Listen to that crowd roar. Well, in fact, the crowd was made up of Babs and Peter Liba, clapping and stomping away and making noise and that is what came through on the radio, but only those in the studio would know the truth.

I do know that I had a chance to bring Izzy to a Young Presidents' Organization to speak to a bunch of business leaders and of course he in his own way would just mesmerize them all talking about his successes. But, as the member from River Heights said, he stopped everybody in their tracks when he recommended that every business operator go broke once, because that is how you learn to never, ever do it again. But, I am telling you, the eyes were wide as saucers in that room on that kind of advice. It was the kind of impact that he had on people.

There are comments made about being a tax expert. Indeed, during the federal Liberal years, he clearly challenged Edgar Benson, who was then the Finance Minister under the Liberal government, and he wrote a book called *The Benson Iceberg*. It is amazing, because I know we have all used the expression when you are making reference to somebody who is very good at what they do, they always say, well, he wrote the book on such and such. He wrote the book on such and such. When it comes to tax, Izzy wrote the book. It is not a figure of speech; it is a fact of life. I think it was very unique because in those times people knew Izzy was a Liberal, but he was so ingrained in taxation and a knowledge of it that he had the ability to challenge the Finance Minister in a way that it became a bestseller.

I know that a lot of us in this Chamber have had opportunities to be touched by Israel Asper. I think that all of us here know that his legacy will always be remembered because of the things that he did. No matter who you talk to, he was so passionate about this Legislature when he was here, he was so passionate about business, he was so passionate about human rights and his passion was so evident that you talk to people who knew him at a young age, it had nothing to do with his ability to create the kind of wealth that he created, he was passionate about that years ago because that is who he was. That

is the kind of person that he wanted to be remembered.

I would say that, as far as legacies, I know that the Canadian human rights museum is something that he believed in, that he championed and that indeed I know he has passed the torch, not only to Gail, but to all of us. The Premier spoke so eloquently about how we must support it because it is the right thing to do. But I would argue that it will not be his greatest legacy because, if he were alive, he would have done something else. There would have been something else that he would have gone on to, because that is how he chose to live his life.

* (15:40)

I remember having a conversation with Israel Asper about Meech Lake. We were on different sides, and of course I would not even begin to say that I had an argument with Israel Asper. That would be giving me way, way, way too much credit. I disagreed with his opinion, but I was never so drawn in by somebody at the end of the debate. He had the ability to put his position forward that was against your position, but you were never offended. As a matter of fact, you came away and said I do not agree with him but did I ever learn something, and that is something that I will always remember.

I travelled to Toronto one time on an airplane and I watched Izzy re-jig the entire mid-section of the airplane. By the way, for the record, he was not flying business class. I watched him re-jig the entire airplane so that he could bring his management team together and have a board meeting as they flew from Winnipeg to Toronto. It was quite a sight to see, and he was the kind of person that was able to do it. By the way, for anybody that might think that they had to give up that aisle seat that they cherished so much, Izzy had the ability to make you give up the aisle seat, sit between a couple of people like this a few rows back and feel good about it. I do not know how it was, but that was the kind of person that he was.

I know that Ashleigh and I had a tremendous opportunity to travel to Israel with 60 other Manitobans on a solidarity mission. That was a tremendous experience. One of the highlights was we went to our sister city in Israel, Beersheva. In that community there is a community centre that is the Asper Community Action Centre that we had a chance to visit and it was an amazing place, because

there were these young children who would never have an opportunity to sit down in front of a computer screen or hear music or play on a field of grass, but they can, because of Izzy. I think the bus that stopped out in front somehow had a sign about Winnipeg, Destination Winnipeg. You got a sense at that moment that this man was truly a great human being, because we were miles and miles away from Winnipeg, from Canada, and his impact on the community of Beersheva was as powerful there as it is here in our city. Mr. Speaker, that is why paying tribute to somebody like Israel Asper is a challenge, because he truly was a very special human being. We, in this city, in this province, in this country, are blessed that he has left not only a tremendous direction for us, but clearly the strength lies in the basis that he has a wonderful family that carry his strength and his belief and, I know, will make a huge impact on the province of Manitoba.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I remember when Henderson scored the goal in the 1972 Summit series. I remember as a very young person coming home from school and my parents telling me that John F. Kennedy had been shot, and I will always remember the day that I arrived at Cool FM to do a session called "Stranded." The receptionist was white as a ghost when I said that I was there to do this program. She was white as a ghost, and I said, "Are you okay?" and she said, "Not really." I said, "Is there something I can do?" She said, "I don't think so. We just heard that Izzy has passed away." That was a pretty powerful moment for me. I think, as the First Minister said, I do believe that things came to a stop when the news got out that we had lost a true believer in human rights, a true believer in making life a better place.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to close by something I thought was very fitting which was a verse from the Broadway musical *Pippin*. It goes like this, "So many men seem destined to settle for something small / But I won't rest until I know I'll have it all. / So don't ask where I'm going, / Just listen when I'm gone, / And far away you'll hear me singing softly to the dawn." Thank you very much.

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, you cannot possibly invent a future that you cannot imagine. Human imagination is what makes it possible for those who are blessed with imagination to create a future. However, imagining is not nearly enough. You have

to have the courage, You have to have the luck. You have to have the toughness. You have to have the friends. You have to have great gifts to be able to take that imagined future, that possible future and actually make it happen. Very, very few of us have those skills that combine both the mental agility and the deep ability to create loyalty and friendships and, frankly, the combativeness to see it through that Izzy Asper epitomized in our community and in the broader community of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Israel and other places in our world.

I did not know Israel Asper on any kind of personal level, and I am sorry about that, but I did not, and I will not pretend that I did. I did have various opportunities in the last number of years to go to places that he helped to create or that he touched in very special ways.

I was recently in the museum at the Israel Asper Jewish Campus out at the old Fort Osborne Barracks. It was so plain there and so plain in the commitment to the human rights museum that Izzy knew how to combine ideas and the touching of the human spirit to create change.

Creation of a possible future is a great task, but it is an even greater task to create in the human spirit a shared desire for that possible future. When you see young students who through efforts not only of the Aspers but of many in our community whose understanding of what the human project of inclusiveness, of respect, of human rights entails and when you see them moved to make a commitment in their lives to make the difference that Izzy and others in his community and of his generation saw as possible, then you see the real fruits of the commitment of a person of Israel Asper's stature to not just imagine that possible future and not just put heart and mind and friendship and courage and money and, yes, luck into the creation of that future, but you see the reaching out, which the members of the House who have spoken already, our leader, the Leader of the Liberal Party and the Leader of the Conservative Party, the ability to touch others and to enrol them in this great task.

This was a person who clearly from an outside observer position knew how not only to create change himself but to engage others in the honourable process of creating a human community that was more peaceful, more respectful, more

inclusive and from the public events, at which I at least had the opportunity to attend, more fun as well. I think one of the great moments was the anniversary celebration CanWest Global held about a year and a half ago at which the family traded barbs that were pointed and not at all gentle. They were funny and they were certainly born out of a family whose table I would love to have observed and listened to over the years, because I am sure that that was a table at which no prisoners were taken. It was a table at which a great deal of love, a great deal of humour, a great deal of seriousness must have always been a characteristic.

* (15:50)

There are others, I know, in the House who wish to join in this tribute, but I want to close by the memory that I will have of Izzy, perhaps most clearly, and it is not one that I was there in person. I was watching television one evening after he had made a very major commitment to the University of Manitoba. I am sure some of you were there. I was not there, but I hope my memory is correct of this. Izzy made a very kind of modest response in response to the thanks that he had been given, spoke of his commitment in very, very modest terms, as he always seemed to do, and then he smiled, kind of looked a little sideways, and said, besides, it was mostly Conrad Black's money anyway. In the light of what has happened to Conrad Black, I think that takes on an added poignancy.

Izzy made the commitment in his fourth career, as the Leader of the Opposition spoke, to make this city and this country a richer place in terms of its endowments in the arts, in sports, in human rights, in every endeavour. He did it with style. He did it with modesty, and he did it in a way that has raised the bar for all of us in our commitment to our community, to our country to give back some of the immense benefits that we have been given through his work, through the work of our forebears, through the work of all of those who stood for the kind of community that Izzy, his family and, I hope, all of us stand for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured and humbled to be able to speak today on the life of Israel Asper and to pass my deepest sympathy and my family's sympathy to Babs and Gail and David and Leonard.

Izzy was a great man and he has left a great legacy to the province of Manitoba. I first came into contact with Izzy back in the 1970s. I did not really know him all that well, but his name was spoken frequently around our household and, I think, a real tribute to Izzy, his sense of fairness and his determination for equal rights for all people.

It was under his leadership of the Liberal Party of Manitoba that for the first time in the history of a political party in Manitoba, a woman was elected as president of that party. That happened while Izzy was the leader. I know from many discussions I have had with my mother, she enjoyed her time with Izzy as they worked closely to help build the cause of liberalism.

She has reminded me many times how she and Peter Liba, who was also working for Izzy at the time, would meet in Izzy's office and how they would try to keep up with Izzy's thought track and all the wonderful and brilliant ideas that he had. She would say, she would constantly look over to Peter and say, "Peter, did you get that? Did you get that Peter?"

Izzy, I think one of his greatest talents was the alertness and the quickness of his mind. Sometimes I think that got in his way a little bit because he could no sooner finish, in fact, many times he could not even finish a sentence on one thought before there was another thought coming out at the same time. I am sure the family experienced that on many, many occasions over the years.

I know my mother enjoyed her time working with Izzy. She has had and continues to have the greatest respect for Israel Asper, for what he stood for, for what he was able to accomplish. He is a man who has been ahead of his time for many, many years. Back in his early days in politics he was talking about big picture issues that most people in the rest of the country had not caught on to.

Many of them were referenced by the Leader of the Liberal Party. He was talking at that time about the need for a strong western Canada, about the dangers in western alienation and about how Manitoba needed a better deal in the confederation of the provinces. He understood full well the necessity of growing the economy. This was at a time back in the seventies when the concept of growing the economy and a better deal for western Canada was

not yet a popular movement. But Izzy was there speaking out loudly for it.

I have had the opportunity to go through my mother's scrapbook and take advantage of some of the newspaper articles that were printed and some of the ideas that Izzy put forward in the Liberal newsletters of the time. It is really significant, the issues that he chose to talk about. He talked about the North and how it was very important for cities like Thompson and other one-industry towns to expand their horizons, expand the base of their economy because those industries might not be there forever. If those cities were going to reach their potential they needed to have more than just one industry. Again, a concept that I do not think had garnered much attention at that time.

As has been mentioned, Izzy was always one to speak his mind regardless of whose toes he stepped on. He went to battle many, many times for the province of Manitoba against Liberals in the East where the seat of power really was. Izzy, in everything he did, stood up for Manitoba. I remember reading that in one of the interviews he granted that he felt one of his greatest accomplishments was going to a Liberal convention in the East in the early seventies and persuading all those eastern Liberals to adopt virtually every idea that the Manitoba Liberals and that Izzy brought forward at the time. At the time it was quite a remarkable feat. I know he stood side by side, although I am sure they differed on many issues, with James Richardson who has recently passed away as well, in terms of their fight for a better deal, not only for Manitoba and all Manitoba, but a better deal for all of western Canada.

Izzy made the sacrifice. He left, as has been said, a very lucrative tax practice in order to step up to the plate in Manitoba because he felt he had some ideas that he needed to put out there. He was an honest man. He was an honest politician. He stood up and said what he believed and believed what he said. Whether people voted for him or not, it did not change the way Izzy viewed the world and the way he talked about the world.

I do want to just go back a little bit in history and bring forward a few quotes from Israel Asper, and this one comes from the *Spectrum*, which was the Liberal Party news release of the day. This is really about some of his memorable moments. Certainly, one of his most memorable moments that

he always carried with him was the fact that he was able to win that seat in Wolseley.

Like many people who enter public life, particularly in a small center like Winnipeg, your motives often come into question. At the time I remember the discussion around the dinner table at our house was that people were saying that well, you know, Izzy Asper chose Wolseley because he was not going to win and that would be an easy out. How little they knew of the man. Izzy Asper chose Wolseley because he knew it would be hard to win. He knew that if he could win Wolseley, which he felt he could, he would make a statement and he would prove to the people of Manitoba and Liberals in Manitoba that there was a place for their thoughts and their ideas. He chose that seat because he knew it would be difficult. As has been said, it was his tremendous organizational skills that Izzy brought to the table and the people that he brought to the table with him, brought to that election, that made him successful in that Wolseley by-election.

*(16:00)

This is a quote from Izzy, "the thing I learned about politics in the last few years is that I misjudged the public's ability to know about how government works and the issue of the times. I found the awareness extremely low and politics on an emotional rather than an intellectual basis. It has also been evident that a large portion of the public could not care less about issues that do not directly affect them. Certainly a more selfless view is needed by the populous and these factors make it hard to rationalize serving in public office."

That was Izzy, he believed it and he said it, maybe not the politically correct thing to say today or then, but it was the truth as Izzy saw it, and there was a great deal of truth in it. Izzy was an intellectual, had a tremendous intellectual capacity and many of the thoughts and ideas that he brought forward were not only difficult for the party to grasp, they were difficult for the citizens to grasp during an election, but he remained true to them.

Just another quote from the *Free Press*, August 3, 1974 and this is an article dealing with Izzy's resignation, the headline, "A man of many talents, Asper leaves imprint on politics." Again, a quote from Izzy, "Certainly, I have learned that the profession of politics is the most noble, the most

selfless and the most outstanding calling one can assume." He believed that and he was in politics for the right reasons. He was in politics to make Manitoba a better place. He was in politics to help people, to help achieve equality for the downtrodden, and he was in politics to bring forward the ideas that he felt needed to be grasped and latched onto in order to make Manitoba and to make Canada a better place.

It was interesting times back then and there must have, you know, we were going through the whole issue of how the West was being treated within Confederation was coming up. Pierre Elliott Trudeau was the Prime Minister. He had a certain view which I think both Izzy and James Richardson disagreed with in terms of the position of the West in Canada.

I found it interesting to look at an invitation to a Prime Minister's dinner that took place in Winnipeg on May 26, 1972. Of course, the Prime Minister at the time was Pierre Elliott Trudeau. He was introduced by the Honourable James Richardson, the Minister of Supply and Services at the time, and was given appreciation by Mr. I. H. Asper, Leader of the Liberal Party in Manitoba.

I had to think that, unfortunately, I wish we could turn back the clock and I wish I could have been at that dinner because I am sure it would have been a very interesting time and I am sure there were interesting discussions that went on before and after the dinner as each of those three great gentlemen expressed their views on Winnipeg and on Manitoba and what needed to be done.

Certainly, Izzy regretted not being the Premier of the Province of Manitoba, but he knew he gave it his best shot. He knew he had done his job in terms of reinvigorating the Liberal Party in Manitoba which had been decimated in the 1969 election. I think by the time 1974 came around, Izzy realized that it was time for him to move on to other things and it was time also, he recognized it was time for the party to have a new leader with a little different ideas.

As was in Izzy's nature, he never went away quietly. I have another article published about six months later and, sure enough, Izzy is chastising the new leader of the party, Charlie Huband, because in his view, Charlie was trying to take the party too far to the left. Charlie was focussing his efforts and his

energy on fighting the New Democratic Party, and Izzy felt quite strongly at the time that the way to gain power and the way to election victory was to move the party a little farther to the right and focus on the economic necessities of the world.

Never one to go away quietly, Izzy always spoke his mind and was and is to be respected for it. I think that was one of the great attributes that Israel Asper brought to politics in Manitoba as well as his great sense of humour. In 1974, Izzy went back to private life and, you know, it is again interesting to read of his departure, all types of speculation on where he would go, some speculation that maybe he would end up doing something with CanWest Broadcasting which was a client of his at the time. I believe Izzy knew exactly where he was going and knew exactly what he was trying to accomplish.

I think, again, from my experience and my dealings with Izzy and from the knowledge I have of people that have worked with him, you know, there is this impression out there that entrepreneurs are these great risk-takers and they roll the dice every time and put everything on the line with everything they do. While Izzy did take a lot of risk, it was a calculated risk. I believe, and I know from talking to people that Izzy had a plan from day one, a very detailed plan about how he was going to build a national network, and I do not think there was any doubt in his mind when he decided to go ahead and purchase CKND. It was the first step in a very, very well-thought-out and well-detailed plan about how he would build a broadcast empire, a media empire across Canada. He set out on that journey and he took to that task a tremendous focus and that along with his great intellect and his other great skills as a business person led to what we know today as the CanWest Global empire.

Izzy also understood clearly, I think, in politics that there is a time to walk away. I think, again, that was one of his great traits as an entrepreneur. He knew going in what he wanted. He knew what the benefits of each deal could possibly be. He had in his mind a price that he was willing to pay. I daresay he probably never had to pay that price in any deal he did, because he was such a skilled negotiator. He also knew very clearly when it was time to fold the cards and walk away because a deal was not going to be the deal that he wanted and/or needed. I think that trait carried him through a number of experiences in his business career.

I did not really get to know Izzy all that well on a personal basis during that time but as I said he was always spoken of fondly in our family. I did have a wonderful opportunity, in very trying circumstances at the time, to get to know the man on a more personal basis. That was in the mid 1990s, in 1995 when we were trying to figure out a way to keep the Jets in town. You know, there was a large group of us working on that project and I guess, to be frank, we reached a point when it was not going very well. We all knew from the beginning that somehow we had to get Izzy's attention because Izzy was going to be the key to making this deal work.

But true to Izzy fashion, at the time, he was off in Britain. I think he was trying to buy TV3, one station over there. Do you think you could get a hold of Izzy? Do you think you could reach Izzy to get his mind around what was going on in Winnipeg and the Jets? You could make the call, but he was very clear, "I am here on a mission. I am here with a purpose and my focus has to be on this deal at hand. Once that deal is done, I will be back in Winnipeg and maybe we should talk then." True to his word he did come back after negotiations on that deal were through. He came back just about the time that the whole situation was cratering and of course because of his leadership and the position in the community, everybody looked to Izzy to walk in and save the deal.

* (16:10)

My first experience, and this is the irreverence of the man as well, my first experience on that side of it was being marched into a press conference in the Norwood Hotel with Izzy and Jerry Gray and a number of other business leaders. We were all sitting up at the front and just before the press conference was to be held, Izzy kind of grabbed Leonard by the scruff of the collar and said, "Leonard, you're coming up here, too." So Leonard came along and Izzy, of course, as he always does, took command of the press conference right away and the first thing he said, and no disrespect meant here, but the first thing he said was, "I'd like you to meet my bastard son who got me involved in this." That was Izzy's way. He meant it in the kindest and most loving way, but he said it like it was.

It was a wonderful experience dealing with Izzy during that whole episode. Again, his brilliance showed and his ability to see the big picture because

he was not talking about saving a hockey team. He started talking about the "Order of Good Cheer" that we needed to have in Manitoba and how we should all put our efforts toward raising \$100 million so we could set up this "Order of Good Cheer" that would not only serve to save the hockey team but it would make contributions to the ballet and to the symphony and in general to the cultural fabric of the city of Winnipeg. Again, when everybody had a pretty narrow focus at the time, Izzy was seeing the big picture and seeing where things had to go.

I will say that during that whole time, Izzy was always open to meeting and to putting his time and effort into it. He never criticized any of us that were involved in anything that we tried to do. He was always encouraging. He was always encouraging to the group that we should continue to pursue a goal until we had reached the last possible alternative. He was never negative. He was always willing and able to lend his expertise and his support to the cause and I will be always grateful for that.

It would have been easy for him to come in and say, "Well, it's too late. You did this wrong. You did that wrong. You should have done this. You should have done that." Never once did Izzy go down that road. To his credit, when it did not work, who stepped to the front, but Israel Asper. It was Izzy that picked everyone up by their socks after. It was a devastating loss for the city to see the hockey team go. There was a very big struggle to keep it here, but after it did go, Izzy was there to pick up the pieces.

I think if we look back in history, it will become evident that that was really the time when Izzy started to be the great philanthropist that he became, because he could see at the time that it was important for the spirit of the city to have reasons to carry forward and to carry on. Once again, he rose to the forefront and showed tremendous leadership in terms of his ability to keep the spirits of the city up.

Izzy had a purpose in life. He had many purposes in life, but his focus, I think, his ability to focus in on the task at hand was possibly one of his greatest strengths in terms of being as successful as he was. Izzy unfortunately has left us far too early in life. He will be sadly missed.

I do want to, Gail and Babs, put some words on the record. My mother wrote a note where she asked me to express some of her thoughts to you. Izzy was

elected as the Leader of the Liberal Party in 1970 and elected to the Legislature in 1972 in a by-election. My mother's recollections were they were always in election mode. There was either a by-election coming or there was a general election coming and Izzy was always focused on his election.

I will quote from her. "His views of a better deal for the west often conflicted with his federal colleagues, but that didn't prevent him from speaking for Manitoba and western Canada. To me, he was a dynamic, articulate leader and a very loyal supporter of the party after his resignation.

"He was a person blessed with great leadership skills. He never lost contact with the people who walked beside him during his political career and was always very generous with his thanks to those people who helped him fulfil his goals. We had a mutual respect for each other that I will always cherish."

I also want to quote from an article that I think says a lot about Izzy. It again is his response to the party upon his decision to retire. I am flipping through this scrapbook here to find the article. Well, I am sorry, I cannot seem to put my hands exactly on it, but basically what he was saying was that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time in politics, and really what he wanted to do was to offer his thanks and his gratitude to all the people that had walked beside him during his election campaign.

He was very grateful for all of the candidates who had stood beside him in the election of 1973. He was very grateful to all of the individuals who had worked alongside of him. To me again it speaks tremendously of the man who was just always thankful for the people that travelled the road with him and supported him.

True to his word, he never did forget the people that he worked with. I know that when I had the good fortune to be invited to the anniversary celebration at CanWest, I was fortunate enough to take my mother, who had not seen Izzy for a number of years, but it was like they had just seen each other yesterday. I still remember walking into the place, and Izzy heading right over to Win, cigarette in hand, arm around her shoulder, just like it was back in the early 1970s.

Israel Asper has left a lot of legacies to the province of Manitoba. He will never be forgotten. He

has served his community tremendously. I do just want to enter this quote. This is directly from a letter, a leader's message from Israel Asper around the time of the convention.

"To the magnificent men and women who stood for office alongside us in the 1973 general election, to the presidents and the dedicated members of the executive over these years, to the courageous caucus who served with me in the Legislature and to all of you who are the foot soldiers, the backbone, as well as the heart and the soul of our Party, Babs and I offer our profound thanks for not only your loyalty and dedication in our common cause but for that most cherished prize, your friendship. My successor will count himself a lucky man if you will give and do as much for him as you have for us."

I think sums up the class that Izzy Asper showed regardless of what he did. With regard to legacies, as I said and others have mentioned, the museum, in terms of a physical presence, I am sure will be Izzy's most lasting legacy. I know how dedicated the family is to ensuring that that comes to fruition. From my own perspective, the most lasting legacy that Izzy Asper has left for this community will be the values that he has lived his life by, the leadership he has shown. I know that those values are values that he and Babs have passed on to their children, Gail and David and Leonard. I know from the work they do in the community that they will continue to carry forward those values for their lifetime and that they will pass those values on to their grandchildren. I sincerely believe that that will be the greatest legacy that Israel and Babs Asper will leave to the province of Manitoba.

In closing, I would just like to pass along, not only from myself and my constituency, but from my family, our deepest sympathy in the loss of Israel Asper.

* (16:20)

Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, I rise here to pay tribute to the memory of a legend, a statesman and a true Canadian leader and icon, Israel Asper.

It is a great honour for me to be speaking from this Chamber, that this great man, whom I call immortal, was a member of this Assembly. Israel Asper's physical body is not in existence, but his soul will remain. As one of the statements in my religion,

called Gita, says the soul never dies. I think Israel Asper will remain as long as humanity remains on this earth.

His contributions are enormous which we have all spoken of here. The Premier (Mr. Doer) has spoken, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) has spoken and the other members have spoken. But I would like to speak of some of my personal experiences with this great soul whom I met in 1974 when the student India Association was celebrating a function and he was the chief guest. I had three little kids that came from India and tradition says that when you see a guest you garland with marigold flowers. So we made those flowers and he was garlanded. He hugged the kids and they felt so good, their first experience in Canada, to be hugged by Israel Asper, is the memory that my three children remember.

The second encounter I had, when I was trying to build my own business, and I saw Mr. Asper's image as a person with vision. As you said, you go in an open field and dream of a building. In a small way, I had that dream when I landed in Canada, to build something of my own. He was really a giant in my memory. In my dreams, Israel Asper will remain a great giant.

I had one function that I would remember all the time. My brother-in-law in Houston and I wanted to decide to make a film here. So I was trying to see where I do the shooting because the story required a lawyer's office. So through my own connections with a law firm and knowing Mr. Asper, I went and looked at 155 Carlton Street where that grand staircase is, which used to be very unique at that time, so I asked, "Where do I do the shooting?" I was amazed when Izzy Asper himself said, "You can shoot that in my office." So the whole CBC crew, which came from Toronto with all the cables, when the films are being shot in his office; the film was shot, and he was such a great man that he felt very cautious when he would get in and out of the office to step very carefully so that he would not disturb.

I was feeling very guilty about that, such a great man, I am shooting in his office at no cost to me, and he is very polite. He asked me, "Can I do anything for you?" I said, "No, no, no, that is enough, sir." After the film shooting was done, he called me, congratulated me because that was the first film made in Manitoba for international theatrical release.

He congratulated me and he said, "If I can be of any help, please do not forget."

5

I was amazed with this man's humanity, human relations, which we talk about, he gave that to me. To a stranger, he gave his office and his courtesy. That made me so, so humble inside. I said, "My God." I mean, this was amazing.

Another function where I met him, which I think Gail will remember, I had commented to her in one of my other encounters that he walked in a very gracious looking man with a tussah silk jacket. Now tussah silk is the pure raw silk that is grown in India in few locations and one I come from. I saw this beautiful jacket, and I said, "God, this must be, where did he get this from?" I went and asked him, "Mr. Asper, where did you get this jacket?" He said, "Guess from where?" I thought Bloomingdale's in New York. That is the place that you buy all of the expensive clothes. He whispered in my ear, he said, "I bought it very, very inexpensively. I got it tailor-made, custom-made." I said, "Where?" "Bombay," where he was with his family and he said that we have just returned from India and I got this made.

I was amazed that this man was so humble, so decent. He admired things. He appreciated things. Such a big soul, such a big, powerful man comes down to the earth when you talk to him. I met him at Toronto airport once and I think at that time CanWest Global was just about being groomed to be international. I said, "I would like you to look, because India has opened up on broadcasting." The country's requirement was that we will allow the broadcasters to come and buy because the international businesses we are acquiring as long as you do not pollute our culture.

I met some of the government ministers and I said that from Canada we have a tremendously powerful group called CanWest Global coming which is led by Mr. Israel Asper, who is a good friend of the Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and gave his references. The government said absolutely no problem.

I remember receiving a letter from Gail suggesting that he was very much in favour of doing this, going to India and doing broadcasting. Things did not work out for commercial reasons then, but I understand now they are trying to. Leonard and I met at the airport again a few days back and he wants to

go to India. I think that the whole vision of his going global and international is so challenging, such a thrilling experience for me, an immigrant coming from India, trying to struggle, but that role model is something I will never forget in my life, neither will my children forget.

I think Mr. Asper's personal dream of building a museum of human rights speaks much, much louder than one can imagine coming from a businessman. He was looking at building that human rights museum which will remain in history because I understand students from all over the world will come, witness the history and learn from that history.

I think it is a tremendous honour for me to speak in this Legislature where he sat once. I think with that remark I would like to close and pray that his great soul will always remain in humanity and I personally on behalf of my family, my constituents, people of Manitoba and, to a great extent, from the country where I was born, that people humbly will respect Mr. Israel Asper, the great soul that was and remains with us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Everything Izzy Asper did he did with passion. He was a passionate businessman. He was a passionate politician. He was a passionate philanthropist and musician. He was a passionate Manitoban. He was a passionate husband and father and grandfather and he was a passionate smoker.

He is the only person I know that when I went out and saw him in public speaking engagements he, rather than having a glass of water on the podium had a little ashtray there for his cigarettes. I thought that was just great. That was who he was. He did his thing and he had a lot of passion for this province and I had a tremendous amount of respect for him for that.

It was either last summer or the summer before, when the Asper family gathered out at Lake of the Woods, at Len and Sue's place and I had the opportunity, down the lake at an old fishing camp that is very well-known for wonderful pickerel dinners and so on, to meet up with some of the members of the Asper family. I had a great chat with Izzy Asper. We talked about politics, we talked about all sorts of things and I asked him, I said, "Can you give me some advice? What advice would you give me as a young sort of person in politics these

days?" He said to me, "Heather, stick to your guns. Stand up for what you believe in and if you do you can never go wrong." I will always remember those words that he spoke and I want to thank him for his advice and I have a tremendous amount of respect for him.

Izzy may not be here with us today physically but we know that he is with us in spirit. Certainly I know that his legacy will live on through members of his family and the hearts of so many in our community.

Leonard shares his passion for business; David, his passion for politics; Gail, his passion for arts and the community. I think they all share his passion for jazz, for music. They certainly all share his passion for Manitoba and, indeed, this incredible Canadian human rights museum, that his legacy will live on through that, which I think is just a tremendous accomplishment for something that he has done in his lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, there was a quote in the obituary that I know other members today have read out but it was something that really hit home to me and the kind of person that Izzy was, "At the end of the day you have to have mattered. You have to ask yourself, did you make the world a better place than it was when you entered it or did you just take up space."

Well, Izzy did not just take up space. He did matter and the world is a much better world when he left it than when he entered it. I think that is a tremendous thing and a tremendous accomplishment in and of itself.

I know that there are a number of other members here that would like to say some words as well but just in closing I would like to say to Babs and Gail, to Leonard, to David, to your spouses, your children, your grandchildren, I want to extend my deepest condolences on behalf of my family, my father, Hugh McDonald, the Stefanson family, Jason, my kids, just my deepest condolences go out to you all in this tremendous loss of your husband, your father, your grandfather. He was indeed an incredible leader in our community and an incredible Manitoban. Thank you.

* (16:30)

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make a few comments about

Israel Asper and his family because of the contribution they made in the constituency I am fortunate to represent of St. Boniface. In particular, the contribution they made to the St. Boniface Hospital and, in particular, the Asper research centre, which, as you all know, has recently been completed.

The thing that struck me about that particular project, it was not just bricks and mortar; it was not just a research centre focussing on clinical research with respect to cardiovascular care. It was a project that also linked our community, being St. Boniface and Winnipeg and Manitoba, with another research community, the Mayo Clinic. I think it is characteristic of the man and his family that, when they received a benefit in terms of health care, they also saw the opportunity to share that benefit and expand that and multiply that and make it available to everybody else.

The Asper research centre, in my view, is an example of that because not only does it provide opportunities for first-rate, world-class researchers to come here and generate new forms of health care and new forms of treatment, but it does it in a way that connects us to the rest of the world. It connects us to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, which is one of the pre-eminent research communities in North America, if not the world.

What I liked was that sense of vision that brought not only us together in this community but hooked us up to the rest of the world in terms of the research community. It is that kind of can-do ambition that in my view is something that allows us in this Chamber, even when we have partisan differences, those kinds of initiatives, I think, allows us to build bridges across political differences and connect to a common set of values whereby we all wish to make our communities better, not only for ourselves, not only for those around us but for future generations. That kind of vision, I think, is needed not only in chambers like this, in community leadership, in the business community and in the non-profit sector and the cultural sector, but all across Manitoba.

If we can have those kinds of visions and allow people to overcome their differences across political boundaries and form a common vision together to make a better community, I think we are all better off.

With that, I would like to thank him for his contribution to Manitoba. I would like to thank his family for their contribution. I noticed that evening that it was not just Israel's contribution that helped build the research centre, but it was also the contribution of his wife, Babs, who told some very interesting stories about how she attracted anonymous donors to make large contributions to that centre through her connections and other members of the family and their contributions. Before the evening was over, there was already a vision of having another research tower being built before this one even had its doors open and how that would connect to the museum of human rights that would be just across the way at The Forks over the new footbridge and close to the Manitoba Theatre for Young People. You could see how it all connected together to make for a better community, and I think we are better off for that, and I appreciate the contribution Israel and his family has made to our community.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I rise today to express condolences on behalf of myself, my family and the constituents of Charleswood to the Asper family. I was touched by the reminiscence of his children that was printed in the *Winnipeg Free Press* after Israel Asper had passed away. Their eloquent comments painted a picture of a man with many dimensions, but it also painted a wonderful picture of a man who was their dad.

So how does one properly describe a man who was larger than life? You know, I loved reading about Israel Asper in the paper, and I was always inspired after I did. I felt a very, very tiny connection to him because he was an usher in the Minnedosa theatre and I had been an usher in the little Benito theatre when I was a young girl. Two people with small-town roots and somehow you felt some connection. Reading about him always made you believe that you could make it happen if you were determined enough to make it happen and I truly felt, after I had spent some time reading about his thoughts and his visions, that if you really believed in something and you worked hard, things could be made better.

So what words can properly capture the essence of a man like this? George Bernard Shaw has a quote and I think it really fits, "The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want and if they cannot find

them, make them." As Frank Sinatra said, "I did it my way." I think that certainly describes how Israel Asper approached things. He took his values and his beliefs and his can-do attitude and he made things happen.

I was thinking about him the other night as we sat in public hearings on Bill 21, the non-smokers act. I was actually sitting there thinking about him, you know, I wonder what he would say if he were to come here and make a presentation as part of the public. I sat there for a long time, actually, with a big grin on my face, and I thought if anybody is looking at me right now, they are going to think I am crazy, but I thought you know what, we would have probably heard a very passionate speech from somebody who had a real belief in something, and whether you agreed or not, you have to admire somebody who is of strong conviction that gets up to articulate something.

Izzy left a lot of legacies, and everybody has so eloquently put that forward, whether it has been philanthropy in Manitoba, Canada or Israel, whether it is the Asper campus in Tuxedo, hospitals, universities, health and research, newspapers, TV stations, radio stations and I am grateful to him for the jazz station that we so proudly can have now in this city, the contribution to the arts, and specifically, the Canadian human rights museum. This was a dream and it was a dream of a man who felt this could happen. This dream is going to have a profound effect on the world. This phenomenal legacy is now in the hands of his family and this province. I am sure he thought, if you are going to dream, dream big.

A great legacy that he left was maybe something that you cannot see but it is something that you can feel. He left us with a can-do attitude. He believed in this city. He believed in this province. Winnipeg mattered, Manitoba mattered. He could have taken his business gone to Toronto but he chose to stay here. It was a choice, and he made us believe that we can make anything happen here in Manitoba. You do not have to leave the boundaries of this province to have something great or to be something great. He chose to stay here and make it happen here because he was proud of this place and the people here.

I wish I could have known him. The closest I got to that was sitting beside him and a grandson at a Winnipeg Blue Bomber game. The three of us talked about football, of course, but what struck me the

most at that time was the obvious pride in his grandson and the special look in his eye as he watched this young boy and I carry on this conversation about hockey and school. Listening to the two of them talk, Izzy was not this bigger-than-life icon to this little boy; he was just grandpa, a proud grandpa.

Izzy Asper was a man of vision, passion, generosity, commitment and boldness, a man who made a difference and a man who never let us down so I hope we do not let him down. I hope that we can help this province to rise to its fullest potential. Thank you.

* (16:40)

Mr. Conrad Santos (Wellington): I hesitate to rise to speak, but I know this great man because I attended a memorial service at the Izzy Asper School, attended by all the leaders in the university community, as a spectator there, but this is the only opportunity that I can express my admiration for this great man.

If I had to summarize what I have heard and read about him, it would be a formula: Words + action + plan + leadership + selflessness = greatness.

On words, this man is a man of his word. When he said something it could be depended on. As I heard it, my word is my bond.

On action, I have heard the code, but you have got to do something about it. You just do not theorize. You just do not conjecture, but you have to do something about it.

On organization, before he goes to a negotiating table, he prepares himself. He has all the skills of a well-skilled negotiator, because he is an expert in taxation and also in finances. He knows how to use other people's money in the best way possible in order to build.

Leadership: Leadership is something that is not only a matter of personality or circumstances of time and place. Leadership is the ability to sense the direction of the moment and to concentrate on a particular, specific course of action just like a general concentrating on how to win a battle.

Selflessness: He is a great benefactor. He has given millions to many institutions. You have heard

them all here. I do not want to repeat them all, but the one that I remember is the one quoted by the Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen). I will dwell a little bit on this one. When he was retiring as leader, I have learned that politics is a most noble profession. I had to make a distinction between true politics and pseudo-politics. When you look after the general public interest other than your own, that is true politics, but if you limit it to your own self-interest, that is pseudo-politics. If you dwell on short run, on the expedient only, that is pseudo-politics, but if you dwell on the long-run effect on society and the rest of humankind, that is the true politics.

I would like to conclude now, Mr. Speaker. I do not want to take much time. Solomon said, "For the living know that they will die. But the dead knoweth not anything. Even their love and their envy and their hatred have now gone. Go. Eat your bread with joy. Drink your wine with a merry heart and live joyfully with a wife whom thou lovest in all the days of thy vanity."

This world is temporary. He knew that. That is why he left all the good things that he could have done as evidence before he goes to some other world that I do not know, not anymore. I think it was Bodhisattva who said, and this was implemented by Izzy Asper: I have to pass through this world but once, and a good thing therefore that I can do, let me do it now. For I shall not pass this way again. But in the struggle of life, the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor skill to the men, nor bread to the men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all.

We can say we can make it happen, but without the help of somebody greater than ourselves, it will not happen. But, when we invoke in this the great spirit, then it will happen if we put our minds to it, and we dedicate our heart and soul to the task if we want to be a builder, a founder and a benefactor of humankind. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to express my condolences to the Asper family. In listening to some of the comments, whether it is today or at the funeral proceedings, one cannot help but be touched by just the magnitude of this individual and the many lives that he in fact touched.

The only time I really had what I would classify as a conversation with Izzy, when I knew him it was actually Mr. Asper, was back in 1993. I was a candidate for the leadership of the Manitoba Liberal Party and he was at the Convention Centre. In a very nervous way I kind of approached him, because I always thought of him as some sort of an icon within the Liberal Party. When I was elected in 1988, that is when I first found out who Izzy Asper really was. I was told if he calls, he is the one you really have to pay a lot of attention to.

So it made me a little bit nervous when I was running for the leadership, and here is this golden opportunity for me to kind of introduce myself to him. I was only an MLA for five years at the time, sat down, actually I kind of knelt down beside him. He said, "Oh, grab a seat." True to form, he was smoking at the time. I told him that I was running for the leadership of the party, I hope he does not mind if I just kind of run a couple of ideas by him.

He sat patiently and he listened. The biggest thing he did is he just kind of gave me a vote of confidence as a relatively young individual running to be the leader of a political party. He made me feel good inside in terms of what it is that I was saying and just kind of built my self confidence. That is the only time that I really had to sit down and have a chat with him. I would quite often meet him in passing and say hi and so forth, but that was the only time that I actually had a chance to really have a conversation.

In listening to the comments, whether it was the Premier, the Leader of the Official Opposition or the Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party here, these individuals and many others, whether it was our late Trudeau or Mr. Richardson, Sharon Carstairs, so many other individuals really had the privilege of having a relationship with this individual.

Those are all just political names that I raised. I know that there were so many others. There is a Pastor John Howson with Bridges for Peace, an organization I trust the members of the family are familiar with, where they tried to get the Jewish and the Christian communities working together. Pastor John spoke so admirably of such a wonderful humanitarian, someone who really wanted to make sure that there was a positive relationship that needed to be nurtured between the Jewish community and

the Christian community and many lives that he touched there.

It seems to me that this individual met with a lot of people and talked with a lot of people, but when I first heard of his passing it was actually in the newspaper. I had picked up the newspaper in October of last year. It was kind of like one of those double-takes. You just kind of pause, you see this picture. I think that I saw it as most Manitobans would have seen it, that here is this Manitoba icon, if I can put it that way, who has now left us here, the physical presence. It saddened I believe most if not all Manitobans who knew of the name of Izzy Asper, because he contributed so much to Winnipeg, one would gesture, but I think went beyond that.

* (16:50)

In one of the quotes, and I think it was Sheila Copps, I had asked my wife to clip and photocopy the article, then I put it in my history file downstairs, because I suspect it is the type of information that I will want to remember and to pass on. It was a huge loss. I believe this was Sheila Copps who stated this: "It was a huge loss. He was Mr. Winnipeg first and foremost. His legacy will be the kick-starting of the human rights museum and all that will come from bringing people together so that they can learn and understand each other."

That particular comment touched me. It touched me because what Manitobans needed was individuals like your husband, Babs, your father, Gail, to lift the morale of our province when we needed to be lifted. We had someone. You turn on the tube, you see CKND, this is a Winnipegger, a Manitoban. It made us feel good, even though when you named the people that he knew, he was a world figure. It was not just here in Manitoba, but I think what made us feel so good was the fact that he was so well known; he was so well accepted throughout Canada and the world. That is why I think it touched so many people in Manitoba. That is why so many people, whether they knew him first-hand or not, were touched by his passing and knew that we were going to miss him.

I heard a number of speakers talk about when he was the Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party. In 1975, when he had stepped down as being the leader, I suspect that had he stuck around he probably would have become the Premier of Manitoba at some point in time. I truly believe that, because he was a

visionary, and he had the work ethic. Apparently, he was building up the media communications that really could have made a positive difference, I must say.

With hindsight, one has 20-20. I think that it is probably a good thing he stepped down as the Leader of the Manitoba Liberal Party when he did, because by doing that, whenever you take a change in life you take a bit of a chance, but by doing that he was able to go out into the business world and make such a huge impact that goes far beyond the borders of Manitoba.

The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Murray) made reference to the Meech Lake crisis that was in the province and the discussions I know that he had with Sharon Carstairs at the time. I do know that he was involved significantly in that.

I think, at times of this nature, a lot has been said. I do not want to go on, one could go on virtually indefinitely, but just to offer my condolences to the Asper family. The Asper family has become a name in this province. If you want to get an organization and give it instant credibility, nowadays you can attach the Asper name to it.

At one point I heard the name of Gail Asper possibly for mayor. There were a lot of people that quickly tuned in, "Oh, yes, would that not be wonderful." Leonard Asper spoke and gave a vision just a few years ago challenging Liberals to be radically moderate. Try to get a good understanding of that, but that was with Leonard.

I think that the Asper family, who have given us so much as a province, we are very proud of the fact that they are based here in the province. We believe that this is going to be their home indefinitely, have so much more to be able to contribute. The late Izzy Asper, just with his efforts from the past, will be long remembered. With those few remarks, I will leave it at that. Thank you.

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to also put a few words on record in tribute to Israel Asper. I never knew Izzy personally, but I certainly did know of him. Who did not? However, I have gotten to know one of his children, Gail, enough to get a sense of what he was like or who he was. This is based on the belief that the apple does not fall far from the

tree. I think he would appreciate this old adage. As a daughter who has also lost a father not that terribly long ago, I think I have come to realize this more as a truism than I ever thought I would.

The traits I have observed are admirable and most cannot be learned. They are inherent, others assimilated through modeling and family influence. Unpretentious, humility, energetic, drive, passion, generosity, respectful, strong family values are but a few descriptions that come to mind. Many of my colleagues have already reiterated and confirmed this.

These were all reinforced when I had the privilege to join Babs, Gail and her children at a tree planting in honour of Izzy at Assiniboine Park on Arbour Day in the Mayor's Grove. They all lovingly participated in the shovelling or throwing of dirt and they all seemed equally comfortable with holding a shovel of dirt as holding a hand or a heart. Izzy, I am sure, was smiling down approvingly saying, "That's my girls."

I read and believe that throughout his life, he elegantly wove together his diverse areas of interest to create a dynamic and impressive tapestry. Music, politics, media, family, Winnipeg and Israel. These were the things that captured his imagination and were the focus of his life. He had a magnificent talent for ensuring that each received his attention and an enviable knack for turning his personal passions into practical and successful realities.

He has passed this on. His legacy lies in the talents and strengths of his children.

It is well-known that his last passionate effort was to have the Canadian human rights museum located in Winnipeg. The museum is to commemorate the victims of abuse and to teach people the importance of standing up for the protection of human rights. Gail has grabbed and carried this torch and I know she will do him proud when it is done.

I would ask the members of the House to join me in expressing condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Mr. Asper and to take this time to remember the great service Mr. Asper provided. He was a champion in all aspects of the word. Thank you.

* (17:00)

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to rise today and pay tribute to the memory of Mr. Israel Asper known as Izzy to many. It is one of the liabilities of being a younger member of this Chamber, as I did not ever have the opportunity to know Mr. Asper or members of his family, but certainly growing up in Winnipeg it is very difficult to not see the many impacts and legacies that he and his family have left behind. It is particularly a pleasure for me to rise today because he represented Wolseley when he was an MLA of this Chamber and that is now the banner that I carry into this House and I am sure he was as proud then to represent that very diverse and dynamic part of our province as I am today.

In terms of some of the impacts that Mr. Asper left behind that I have seen, and which I am sure will continue to see, and which our children will continue to see, in my previous life, running the recycling programs at the University of Manitoba, of course it would be very difficult to not see the presence of Izzy Asper in the Faculty of Management Building, which bears his name, and of course his contributions to the Faculty of Law where he received a law degree are also very well known.

Quite recently, my wife and I went to St. Boniface to the health centre there, which also bears his name, as we are getting ready to start our family with our first child, and of course there was another Asper legacy.

My favourite sport is ultimate Frisbee and one of the fields that we play on is at the Asper Centre in River Heights not far from Assiniboine Park. Of course, if you want to go see a baseball game in our town, a sport which ruined my left shoulder after a few years of playing ball in United States, well it is CanWest Global, another very prominent feature of our skyline now.

Of course, as the member from St. James just so properly noted, perhaps the last legacy and, maybe, in some ways the most important one, in terms of lessons for future generations to take with us, is the human rights museum, which he played such a fundamental role in starting, and which, I am sure, all of us will be very proud of in the years to come. We all look forward to hearing those stories and learning those lessons which history does have to teach us if we just take the time to learn about oppression and the different perspectives of a

conflict that may, from one quick glance, seem very straightforward and of course is never so. There are always those hidden stories. There are always the untold tragedies. This museum will be able to tell those stories for many years to come, for people my age and younger to learn from in the days ahead. So even though when Mr. Asper's political career began with his leadership of the Manitoba Liberal Party in 1970, it was a year when I was still in diapers. When he stepped down from that role to pursue his now very famous pursuits of full-time in business, I do not think I had started grade school yet.

It would be very difficult for someone growing up in this town to not see the many accomplishments that he achieved personally and that his family has achieved, many lessons for all of us to learn from if we so choose in the days ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I would also like to express condolences to the Asper family on behalf of my family and on behalf of all the constituents on the Steinbach constituency. The Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) mentioned that there were many people who did not know Mr. Asper first-hand, but whose lives were touched in some way by the contributions that he made to Manitobans. I am myself a graduate of the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba and a graduate of what is now the Asper School of Business. Having gone through both faculties, I know that at many times there was made mention of the contributions that the Asper family, and Mr. Asper in particular, made to those two institutions.

We were often reminded that the contributions that the Asper family made to both the Faculty of Law and, of course, the Asper School of Business, was a great reason why we had the quality of education that we did, why we had the quality of facilities that we did, particularly in the Asper School of Business. On behalf of all the alumni and the fellow graduates of the Asper School of Business and Robson Hall at the University of Manitoba, we want to thank the Asper family for the legacy that they have given to those two particular faculties.

Mr. Asper's contribution to those two particular institutions will live on in the graduates who come from the Asper School of Business and Robson Hall and their success will be partially attributed to the contributions that were made by the Asper family. Thank you very much.

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

Would the honourable members please rise and remain standing to indicate their support for this motion.

A moment of silence was observed.

Is it the will of the House to call it 5:30 p.m.? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, May 27, 2004

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Petitions		Wildlife	
		Lamoureux; Struthers	2712
		Lamoureux; Mackintosh	2713
Alzheimer's Disease			
Driedger	2701	Farm Income Statistics	
		Aglugub; Wowchuk	2713
Minimum Sitting Days for Legislative			
Assembly		Graffiti	
Lamoureux	2701	Reimer; Mackintosh	2713
Proposed PLA–Floodway		Members' Statements	
Goertzen	2702	United Nations Peacekeepers	
Murray	2702	Korzeniowski	2714
Committee Reports			
Standing Committee on Social and Economic		Convergys	
Development		Rocan	2714
Third Report			
Brick	2703	Flin Flon Area Businesses	
		Jennissen	2715
Standing Committee on Legislative Affairs			
Fourth Report		Farm Income	
Irvin-Ross	2704	Penner	2716
Tabling of Reports		Sisler High School Refugee Camp	
A Review of Legal Aid Manitoba		Martindale	2716
Mackintosh	2705		
Introduction of Bills		ORDERS OF THE DAY	
		GOVERNMENT BUSINESS	
Bill 47–The Legal Aid Services Society of		Motions of Condolence	
Manitoba Amendment Act		Israel Asper	
Mackintosh	2706	Doer	2717
Oral Questions		Gerrard	2721
Red River Floodway Expansion		Murray	2726
Murray; Doer	2706, 2708	Sale	2728
Goertzen; Doer	2707	Loewen	2729
Goertzen; Ashton	2707	Jha	2733
		Stefanson	2735
Health Care System		Selinger	2735
Driedger; Chomiak	2710	Driedger	2736
		Santos	2737
Vulnerable Persons		Lamoureux	2738
Hawranik; Mackintosh	2711	Korzeniowski	2739
Rowat; Mackintosh	2711	Altemeyer	2740
		Goertzen	2741