

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

Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Eighth Legislature

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 28, 2006

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 211—The Truth About Crocus Act

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if there is an opportunity to pass the hat, but now would be a good time.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 211, The Truth About Crocus Act; Loi concernant la vérité sur le Fonds de placement Crocus, now be read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this legislation. I think the importance of what has happened with the Crocus scandal is that Manitobans, the media, all of the public, I believe, need to find out what took place. This bill will enable a public inquiry to take place so that the public, the important public, will understand what took place, what went on with this Crocus scandal. I think it is a very important bill and I hope it gets unanimous consent from the House. Thank you very much.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

* (10:05)

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Murray: I found that being in opposition that sometimes you just say nay, Mr. Speaker.

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

Formal Vote

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Official Opposition House Leader): Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we better have a recorded vote on this one.

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

* (10:10)

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is to adopt the motion of the first reading of Bill 211.

Division

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

Yeas

Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Brick, Chomiak, Cullen, Cummings, Derkach, Dewar, Doer, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurchou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Hawranik, Irvin-Ross, Jha, Lamoureux, Lemieux, Maguire, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Mitchelson, Murray, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Penner, Reid, Reimer, Rocan, Rondeau, Rowat, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Schuler, Selinger, Stefanson, Struthers, Swan, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 45, Nays 0.

Mr. Speaker: The motion has been carried.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a point of order or a matter of privilege.

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like the record to show that this bill was accepted in this House unanimously.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Deputy Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the record should also show, and I point to *Beauchesne* Citation 646: It is every member's right to bring in a bill.

It is standard practice for this House and all parliaments to approve first reading of bills, and I

think we just did that. We could have done that without a recorded vote, but if the member wants on the record that there was unanimity and the ability of this member or any member to bring a bill before the Legislature, yes, there is unanimity. I hope, however, we will be getting into some debate of those bills fairly soon as well.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Is there a will of the House for the record to show that there was a unanimous vote? [Agreed]

The record itself will show that it was unanimous because there was not one member that rose to oppose it, so it would normally be shown as unanimous anyway.

*(10:15)

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on the point of order or matter of privilege?

Mr. Derkach: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, Citation 18, on page 7, *Beauchesne's*, 6th Edition, says that at any time the House may agree to set aside any order of business and proceed with whatever business the House wants to do.

I just heard the Acting House Leader indicate that he hopes that we can get on with debate of some bills. I would, with respect, Mr. Speaker, move that we interrupt proceedings to debate second reading of Bill 36, which was introduced in the House yesterday. With unanimous consent, I am sure that we can do anything in this House, as Citation 18 says. I know this bill, which is a detox bill, is an important one, and so, therefore, we are prepared to interrupt the proceedings now, have second reading on the bill and then come back to Routine Proceedings after that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. First of all, a motion cannot be moved, I heard the member propose to move a motion, until we get to Orders of the Day.

A motion cannot be moved on a point of order. So I have to rule that the honourable member does not have a point of order because our rules are clear that no motion can be moved on a point of order.

Point of Order

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

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Speaker, then I would, under Citation 18, in *Beauchesne*, seek leave of the House to deal with Bill 36, with unanimous consent of the House, because I think that is the procedure that is followed, if I understand it correctly.

Mr. Ashton: I think there was quite extensive discussion of this yesterday, and you pointed out, Mr. Speaker, that House leaders should be engaged in any discussions related to House business. I point out that the appropriate way to debate any and all bills starts with getting into Orders of the Day. I think if you would care to check the records, thanks to numerous points of order and matters of privilege that have resulted in bell ringing, with the exception of the comments of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) on the budget on one day, the opposition has stalled this House from getting to Orders of the Day since that time.

So whatever they are saying today about this bill or any other bill rings hollow. All they have to do is agree to follow the agenda of this House, get into Orders of the Day. We can consider the budget. We can consider bills. We can take care of the business of the Province. They are the ones that are blocking that, and they know that.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The normal process in the House is that Routine Proceedings do not normally debate bills under Routine Proceedings. They are normally debated under Orders of the Day. That is our normal function of the House, but the honourable member has asked leave to debate bills under Routine Proceedings.

So I put the question to the House. Is there a unanimous consent?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, it has been denied.

So we will move on to Routine Proceedings.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

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

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, on a new point of order.

I want the record of this Assembly to show that leave has been denied to debate a government bill by the government.

* (10:20)

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member is concerned about the record, he might want to put on the record that the opposition has refused to go to Orders of the Day. There is every ability to deal with the budget, to deal with legislation. They have chosen that. I realize since yesterday they are concerned about the impacts of their acts, but no one else other than the opposition has decided on that tactic.

If the members opposite want it unanimously, perhaps they should ask for leave to go to Orders of the Day, because we would be quite prepared to debate the budget today. But that discussion should take place after Question Period. We have a ministerial statement on the day of mourning. We have Question Period. I would suggest, having been opposition leader for a number of years, that maybe the member opposite may wish to speak to the Government House Leader, which I understand was your direction yesterday, rather than grandstand in this House, Mr. Speaker.

They are blocking this Assembly. The public of Manitoba knows that, Mr. Speaker. Nothing more than grandstanding.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised, the honourable member does not have a point of order. For the information of the House, when leave is denied it is recorded as being denied. It never singles out the member that has denied it. To tell you the truth, I just listen. I do not even watch. It is neither here nor there to me. If I hear "no," then it is a "no." So the honourable member does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: We will now move on to Routine Proceedings. We were at Introduction of Bills.

PETITIONS**Funding for New Cancer Drugs**

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition to the House. It reads as follows and these are the reasons for this petition:

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death of Manitobans.

Families are often forced to watch their loved ones suffer the devastating consequences of this disease for long periods of time.

New drugs such as Erbitux, Avastin, Zevalin, Rituxan, Herceptin and Eloxatin have been found to work well and offer new hope to those suffering from various forms of cancer.

Unfortunately, these innovative new treatments are often costly and remain unfunded under Manitoba's provincial health care system.

Consequently, patients and their families are often forced to make the difficult choice between paying for the treatment themselves or going without.

CancerCare Manitoba has asked for an additional \$12 million for its budget to help provide these leading-edge treatments and drugs for Manitobans.

Several other provinces have already approved these drugs and are providing them to their residents at present time.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Premier (Mr. Doer) of Manitoba and the Minister of Health (Mr. Sale) to consider providing CancerCare Manitoba with the appropriate funding necessary so that they may provide leading-edge care for patients in the same manner as other provinces.

To request the Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Health to consider accelerating the process by which new cancer treatment drugs are approved so that more Manitobans are able to be treated in the most effective manner possible.

This is signed by Lisa J. Adam, Dan O'Brien and Gerhard Huff and many, many others.

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

Crocus Investment Fund

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition, and these are the reasons for this petition:

The Auditor General's *Examination of the Crocus Investment Fund* indicated that as early as 2001, the government was made aware of the red flags at the Crocus Investment Fund.

In 2001, Industry, Economic Development and Mines officials stated long-term plans at the Crocus Investment Fund requiring policy changes by the government were cleared by someone in "higher authority," indicating political interference at the highest level.

In 2002, an official from the Department of Finance suggested that Crocus Investment Fund's continuing requests for legislative amendments may be a sign of management issues and that an independent review of Crocus Investment Fund's operations may be in order.

Industry, Economic Development and Mines officials indicated that several requests had been made for a copy of Crocus Investment Fund's business plan, but that Crocus Investment Fund never complied with the requests.

Manitoba's Auditor General stated, "We believe the department was aware of red flags at Crocus and failed to follow up to those in a timely way."

As a direct result of the government ignoring the red flags, more than 33,000 Crocus investors have lost more than \$60 million.

The relationship between some union leaders, the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the NDP seems to be the primary reason as for why the government ignored the red flags.

The people of Manitoba want to know what occurred within the NDP government regarding Crocus, who is responsible and what needs to be done so this does not happen again.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To strongly urge the Premier to consider calling an independent public inquiry into the Crocus Investment Fund scandal.

This petition is signed by Gordon McDiarmid, Roland Van Deynze, Estelle Van Deynze and many, many others.

*(10:25)

Morris-Macdonald School Division

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

The RCMP investigation of allegations of criminal activity in the former Morris-Macdonald School Division has been completed and has found no evidence to substantiate criminal charges.

In the wake of the Auditor General's 2001 report, the provincial government fired the board of trustees of the former Morris-Macdonald School Division. As a result, residents were without an elected board for nearly a year.

The RCMP investigation and the firing of the board have irreparably tarnished the reputations of many citizens in the former Morris-Macdonald School Division.

While the provincial government insisted that the school division reimburse the Province for the overpayment of funds, the government-appointed trustee of the school division increased local ratepayers' school taxes by 28 percent to be implemented each year for four consecutive years.

This action imposed a significant burden on farmers and other faultless citizens in the former Morris-Macdonald School Division. To date, \$1.4 million has been paid out of the citizens' pockets for actions as the RCMP have recently acknowledged were not criminal in nature.

Residents of the former Morris-Macdonald School Division are angered and frustrated by the provincial government's lack of acknowledgement of this mistake, refusal to apologize to those involved and failure to reimburse the additional tax dollars that blameless citizens have been forced to pay.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To strongly urge the provincial government to consider apologizing to citizens of the former Morris-Macdonald School Division for firing the school board, launching a criminal investigation and tarnishing their reputation.

To request that the provincial government consider reimbursing blameless Morris-Macdonald

citizens who have paid the Province \$1.4 million in additional school taxes over the last three years.

This is signed by Kelly Kliever, Arnold Kliever, Sylvia Hache and many, many others.

Removal of Agriculture Positions from Minnedosa

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

Removal of these positions will severely impact the local economy.

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

This petition signed by Tim Nicholson, B. Hodgson, Glennis Hopkins and many, many others.

Crocus Investment Fund

Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

These are the reasons for this petition:

The Auditor General's *Examination of the Crocus Investment Fund* indicated that as early as 2001, the government was made aware of red flags at the Crocus Investment Fund.

In 2001, Industry, Economic Development and Mines officials stated long-term plans at the Crocus Investment Fund requiring policy changes by the government were cleared by someone in "higher authority," indicating political interference at the highest level.

In 2002, an official from the Department of Finance suggested that Crocus Investment Fund's continuing requests for legislative amendments may

be a sign of management issues and that an independent review of Crocus Investment Fund's operations may be in order.

Industry, Economic Development and Mines officials indicated that several requests had been made for a copy of Crocus Investment Fund's business plan, but that Crocus Investment Fund never complied with the requests.

Manitoba's Auditor General stated, "We believe the department was aware of red flags at Crocus and failed to follow up on those in a timely way."

As a direct result of the government ignoring the red flags, more than 33,000 Crocus investors have lost more than \$60 million.

The relationship between some union leaders, the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the NDP seems to be the primary reason as for why the government ignored the red flags.

The people of Manitoba want to know what occurred within the NDP government regarding Crocus, who is responsible and what needs to be done so this does not happen again.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To strongly urge the Premier to consider calling an independent public inquiry into the Crocus Investment Fund scandal.

Signed by N.M. Tilley, Andy Rutherford and Destiny Watt.

* (10:30)

Civil Service Employees—Neepawa

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The reasons for this petition are:

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the provincial government to consider stopping the removal of these positions from our community, and to consider utilizing current technology, as an example, Land Management Services existing satellite sub-office in Dauphin, in order to maintain these positions in their existing location.

This is signed by Irene Wenham, Lottie Gibbons, Winnie Cheetham and many, many more concerned citizens.

Crocus Investment Fund

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 government was made aware of serious problems involving the Crocus Fund back in 2001.

Manitoba's provincial auditor stated "We believe the department was aware of red flags at Crocus and failed to follow up on those in a timely way."

As a direct result of the government not acting on what it knew, over 33,000 Crocus investors have lost tens of millions of dollars.

The relationship between some union leaders, the Premier (Mr. Doer) and the NDP seems to be the primary reason as for why the government ignored the red flags.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba to consider the need to seek clarification on why the government did not act on fixing the Crocus Fund back in 2001.

To urge the Premier and his government to cooperate in making public what really happened and call a public inquiry.

Signed by R. Watts, V. Thompson, R. Dyck and many, many more Manitobans.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

National Day of Mourning

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Labour and Immigration): I have a ministerial statement for the House.

Today, April 28, is the National Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. Manitoba member of Parliament, Rod Murphy, introduced the legislation that prompted the Parliament of Canada to officially recognize April 28 as the National Day of Mourning in 1991.

Today we pause to reflect on the serious nature of work and remember the men and women who have died as a result of work-related injuries or illnesses over the past year. The day of mourning is also an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to preventing occupational injury and illnesses, and to building a stronger workplace safety and health culture here in Manitoba.

When a worker dies, everyone suffers. The unnecessary pain felt by workers, their families, friends and communities must prompt each of us to reaffirm our commitment and actions toward preventing occupational injuries, illnesses and deaths.

Over the last few years, we have strengthened our partnerships with the workers and employers to develop joint initiatives aimed at reducing injuries, illnesses and deaths on the job. It has been our government's priority to improve protection of workers in a number of areas: updated safety and health legislation, strengthened requirements for workers working with electricity, legislation to protect against needle-stick injuries and amendments to the WCB act, which include a mandate for injury prevention, improved benefits for injured workers and strengthened coverage for our firefighters.

We remain committed to protecting all workers in the province, and we look forward to continued participation from employers, workers, union, educators and prevention organizations. Our prevention efforts will continue because every Manitoban has the right to safe and healthy workplaces.

After my colleagues have had the opportunity to reply, I would ask that all members of the House stand for a moment of silence to honour the memory of workers who have died as a result of work-related injury or illness during the last year.

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my comments to the minister and thank the Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler) for allowing me to make comments.

It is with sadness and reflection that I rise today to commemorate the National Day of Mourning for

persons killed or injured in the workplace. April 28 has been marked as a day of remembrance for workers who have been injured, killed or suffered illness as a result of occupational accidents and hazards. Our flags at the Manitoba Legislature are flying at half-mast in honour of this today.

Tragically, Mr. Speaker, 2006 has already seen workplace-related deaths in our province. In January, James Nicholson, 54, succumbed to injuries caused by an industrial accident. In February, Abe Giesbrecht, 47, succumbed to injuries from a workplace accident, and sadly, the life of Edwin Yue, 19, was cut short after he was fatally shot by a robber while working at a Winnipeg convenience store. I would like to extend my sincere sympathies on behalf of all members of the Legislature to these and all other families whose loved ones have lost their lives in the workplace.

Today also marks a day for renewed commitment by both employers and employees to health and safety in the workplace. I know employers and employees are working at this each and every day, but there is always much more work that can be done.

I would like to add, Mr. Speaker, that our caucus is pleased that presumptive coverage for certain illnesses has now been extended to volunteer and part-time firefighters. These brave men and women risk their lives for our safety and protection, and as the minister said, and I would like to add my words to the minister to say that all Manitobans, regardless of what their career or their occupation, they deserve to be in a safe environment and that at the end of every day, when they walk through the house to get a hug from their loved one, it is because they have been able to put in a solid day's work safely. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I ask for leave to speak to the minister's statement.

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

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I join other members of the Legislature in remembering workers who have been injured, who have died in the workplace here in Manitoba over the last number of years. Indeed, this goes back for many years, but we know in Manitoba that the rates of injury are still too high and that there is still considerable work to be done here, and clearly we need to dedicate ourselves to continuing the

effort to prevent and reduce workplace injuries and workplace deaths in our province.

As Liberals, we have recently introduced legislation which would provide for reduction and prevention of bullying in the workplace. We see this as one step in creating a more harmonious workplace and creating a win for employees and a win for workers and an environment where we will have more safety and less likely to have disruptions and injuries.

So let us join together, and we will join the others in a moment of mourning for those who have passed and rededicate ourselves to preventing such deaths in the future.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to rise for a moment of silence? *[Agreed]* Okay, we will rise for a moment of silence.

A moment of silence was observed.

* (10:40)

ORAL QUESTIONS

Manitoba Economy Provincial Growth Decline

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Merci beaucoup. Monsieur le Président, depuis 1999, ce premier ministre n'a pas réussi à fournir une stratégie à long terme pour soutenir l'économie manitobaine. Il n'a pas réussi à faire du Manitoba une province populaire et il n'est pas arrivé à nous convaincre que le Manitoba fournit l'occasion pour créer des emplois dans le domaine privé.

Sous ce premier ministre, les jeunes adultes et familles quittent la province, n'y trouvant aucune raison de rester; il n'y a pas d'opportunités au Manitoba. Les inscriptions dans plusieurs divisions scolaires sont sur le déclin. Comme résultat, les écoles ferment et les habitants de ces communautés sont forcés de payer des sommes plus grandes pour le financement de l'éducation.

Sous ce premier ministre, les Manitobains ont les taxes les plus élevées parmi toutes les provinces.

Monsieur le Président, pourquoi est-ce que ce premier ministre continue à laisser le Manitoba tomber de plus en plus en arrière?

Translation

Thank you. Mr. Speaker, since 1999, this Premier has not succeeded in providing a long-term strategy

to support the Manitoba economy. He has not succeeded in making Manitoba a popular province and he has not succeeded in convincing us that Manitoba offers the opportunity to create jobs in the private sector. Under this Premier, young adults and families are leaving the province because they can find no reason to stay. There are no opportunities in Manitoba. Registrations in several school divisions are on the decline. As a result, schools are closing and residents of these communities are forced to pay higher amounts to finance education. Under this Premier, Manitobans have the highest taxes of all provinces.

Mr. Speaker, why is this Premier continuing to let Manitoba fall further and further behind?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I know there is lots of advantages of working with the former Prime Minister, Prime Minister Mulroney and, certainly, I want to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on his français. I never had the privilege of working for Brian Mulroney and learning French in that positive way. I also want to say to the Leader of the Opposition, we are not sure whether there will be one ballot or two ballots on the weekend. So we are not assuming that we should have the standing ovation today, and we are not assuming that everything will be resolved on the weekend. We see some interesting commentary going on between the different camps. But I just would like to say that in spite of the fact that I disagree with everything the Leader of the Opposition stands for I always found him a person of dignity and class, and I look forward to working with him on helping the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and any other endeavour he might be engaged in.

So, "merci beaucoup pour la question" and "mais non," Mr. Speaker.

Translation

So, thank you very much for the question, and no, Mr. Speaker

Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that I have been convinced or so many people have said I am a nice guy, but this is Question Period after all. So let us get at it.

Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that this Doer government cannot effectively manage its provincial affairs, and it is clear how this government has bungled this Crocus Investment Fund.

Mr. Speaker, that is today why I introduced Bill 211, The Truth About Crocus Act, because this bill, and I am delighted that there was unanimous support for this bill, but this bill allows and requires that this Premier ask the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to appoint a commission under The Manitoba Evidence Act to require and report on the events surrounding the operation and unfortunate demise of the Crocus Investment Fund.

Mr. Speaker, this commission would allow any individual with knowledge regarding the Crocus Investment Fund to come forward without fear or repercussion and testify under oath to the truth about the Crocus Investment scandal. This independent commission would allow people within this NDP government to be called upon to testify under oath, people including: MaryAnn Mihychuk, the former minister; the current Minister of Industry (Mr. Rondeau); the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger); the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith); and the Premier, people who have intimate knowledge of what led to the downfall of this Crocus Investment Fund.

Mr. Speaker, will this Premier today finally have the courage and ensure that this Crocus scandal gets uncovered and that we all get to the bottom of the truth? As I have always said, and I am taking advice from this First Minister that gave advice to the other First Minister, if you have nothing to hide, call the inquiry.

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Well, Mr. Speaker, I have not read the details of the act. We, of course, support any member's right to present a bill, a private members' bill, on first reading.

We, also, Mr. Speaker, support the right of individual members to debate the budget, to debate legislation and not be denied by legislative tactics in the ability to represent their constituents. If we truly believe in allowing a debate to take place on the fiscal situation, on Crocus, on any other item, it is the right of every member who has been sent by their constituents to this Legislature to be able to debate the budget. The fact that members opposite are censoring the right of members to debate the budget I think is a tragedy for democracy in this province.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would point out that in 2001, we amended The Auditor General's Act to allow the Auditor General to follow the money, to follow the money, not only in public entities directly under the Legislature, but any entity in the private sector that was dealing with the government. That allowed the Auditor General to go into all of the investments of Crocus to determine on behalf of the public of Manitoba the veracity of those funds.

This is the legislation that Stephen Harper is now bringing into Ottawa to deal with the Auditor General in Ottawa. We brought that in five years ago because we believed the Auditor General should be able to follow the money. We did not have the restricted powers of the past. That is why we have a 250-page report, because the Auditor General was given the power and the authority and the responsibility to follow the money, something I am glad Ottawa is going to implement in 2006.

*(10:50)

Mr. Murray: If the Premier has, in fact, read the Auditor General's report he will acknowledge that the Auditor General himself has said that he was unable to get to all of the facts, Mr. Speaker, because of the timing. The Auditor General has said that publicly. Now we have the Premier standing in his place citing what took place in Ottawa, where he is glad that the Prime Minister of the day, Mr. Harper, has brought in legislation. But they had an independent public inquiry and they were able to follow the money.

I say to this Premier, if he has nothing to hide, if he can be honest and truthful with all Manitobans, will he do the right thing and allow the Auditor General to do what he could not quite finish. Call an independent public inquiry, Mr. Premier. Have an independent officer, a commissioner, somebody, look at the fact and follow the money so we can find out what went wrong with this Crocus scandal. If you have nothing to hide, sir, call the independent inquiry today.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, as I recall correctly, the Auditor General said at Public Accounts that we had followed up on every issue that he had raised. He also said at Public Accounts one of the reasons for calling an inquiry that has been used by both the parties opposite has been the issue of the e-mail. He made it clear that the e-mail never went to a Cabinet

minister or a deputy minister. He clarified that on the Public Accounts Committee. The other issues that the members opposite were raising dealing with legislation are fully accessible to the Auditor General.

I suggest the reason why members opposite walked out of the Public Accounts Committee a few weeks ago is because the last time we had a Public Accounts Committee, every straw person that they had established was shot down by the Auditor General in questions that were raised.

We have the ability to follow the money. We have called inquiries in the past when accountability is not present in the system, the Sophonow inquiry. I said we would look at a Driskell inquiry. I said we would look at a Child and Family Services inquiry. But the 11 inquiries that members opposite have called for, Mr. Speaker, not all of them will meet the public test to call a public inquiry.

Crocus Investment Fund Co-Investment Status

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, the public needs to know that what the Premier just said, it has to be in context. We saw the committee as being a place where the minister coached the deputy minister, where the balance of the committee, the majority of which was government, would not allow us to ask questions that they deemed not proper for the deputy. That is not an inquiry.

We need an inquiry because there are people in government who manipulated what happened. They know that there were people in this government, people in authority who could have stopped Crocus before it became as big a disaster as it did.

Mr. Speaker, this Minister of Finance will not even acknowledge that he has ever talked or met with the head of the Crocus Fund. Will he, again, confirm or deny, or dodge as he regularly does? Did he meet with Sherman Kreiner?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if the member, again, would just take the time to read the Auditor General's report, he will see all the relevant meetings with respect to the Crocus matter and who was in attendance at those meetings. Those issues are a matter of public record right now. All he has to do is take the time to read the report.

But at the Public Accounts meeting the Auditor stated: "I would be hard-pressed to think of what more could have been done in the last few months

than has been done to respond to what was a very complex and difficult situation." The Auditor General recognized the extraordinary work that was done by the implementation committee that followed up on the Auditor General's report. Legislation was brought forward last spring. The legislation is available now if the members would just debate it, once again, correcting this issue.

Mr. Cummings: The Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, has again demonstrated that they will do anything, go to any end to refuse to answer the most simple of questions. A "no" would have been a sufficient answer if that is the truth. But apparently it is not the truth.

Mr. Speaker, I would now ask this Minister of Finance, I inquired with him if he ever discussed the file with the principals of Protos or with Eugene Kostyra. He will not answer that question twice. The third time, I will again ask him: Did he discuss the Maple Leaf file with the principals of Protos or with Eugene Kostyra?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, as it happens, I have not discussed it with him. But the point I would like to make is the member would like to suggest by his question that even if I had discussed it with him there would be something the matter with that. This is really what is going on here. This is a McCarthyite-like search for innuendo and guilt by association.

The member opposite is like the rest of his colleagues. He is not really trying to advance the work of the Legislature and debate the legislation we have in front of him on the Crocus file. He wants to use the Legislature for his recreational pursuit of going fishing.

Mr. Cummings: Well, Mr. Speaker, you do not need to go fishing to see who was on the Manitoba action strategy for economic growth. The first member listed is one of the principals of Maple Leaf Distillers, so you would assume that he might have had an opportunity to discuss the file with, probably, the Premier (Mr. Doer), and probably with the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, I, through you, to the Minister of Finance and to the people in the general public out there, there was a lot of work done by the Auditor General which left more questions. There will now be inquiries by a number of groups but none of whom will inquire who dropped the ball in that front bench over there, who in government knew there were problems with Crocus and did not act. Did this

Minister of Finance ever receive any financial briefing on the status of Crocus in 2001?

Mr. Selinger: Once again, Mr. Speaker, the member likes to proceed by innuendo. I answered his question in the last question he asked me, and then he says, I just assumed you had that conversation. If he already has made the assumption, why ask the question?

Now, what did the Auditor General say about the follow-up? What did he say about the follow-up to his report? This is what he said: My staff and I were quite impressed with the diligence that the people brought to that work and believe that they took the recommendations in our report very seriously and have come up with what appear to us to be practical and realistic approaches to dealing with them.

Our people have come up with practical and realistic approaches; members opposite want to go on a fishing derby.

Crocus Investment Fund Public Accounts Committee

Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, Public Accounts Committee is not a substitute for a public inquiry. Public Accounts Committee is only permitted to call any minister or deputy minister as witness. In order to get to the bottom of the Crocus scandal, we need the Premier (Mr. Doer), we need Eugene Kostyra and the ministers who were involved in the scandal like MaryAnn Mihychuk and the Member for Brandon West (Mr. Smith). We want them to testify, but under the rules we cannot compel them to testify.

I ask the Minister of Finance: Will he permit Public Accounts to call the Premier, Eugene Kostyra, MaryAnn Mihychuk, the Member for Brandon West, or will he continue to hide behind the rules of Public Accounts to protect this NDP from the Crocus scandal?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the critic for Finance and the Member for Lac du Bonnet thinks that I have the power to do that. I wish I did. I do not. Those are decisions made by the two House leaders. All they have to do is get together and have a discussion about it, but I note at the last Public Accounts meeting, witnesses that the members wish to call were sitting there waiting to ask questions. The members refused to ask questions; they walked out. They do not even take advantage of the opportunities

that are made available to them. The member is a joke.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. All members, when referring to other members, are honourable members and they all should be treated as such. When making a reference to other members, it is by their constituency or ministers by their title. I ask the honourable minister to withdraw that last comment.

Mr. Selinger: Yes, I do. I withdraw it unconditionally, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the honourable minister for that.

Mr. Hawranik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Public Accounts Committee does not allow witnesses to testify under oath. Public Accounts Committee cannot compel witnesses to put their hand on the Bible. As a result, witnesses are not compelled to tell the truth, and they are not even compelled to give answers to questions. Those who have the answers cannot be forced to testify, and they cannot be forced to tell the truth. That is why we need a public inquiry.

I ask the Minister of Finance, if he has nothing to hide, demand that the Premier call a public inquiry today.

* (11:00)

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should get his act together on his side of the House about what they are really trying to pursue. If they really want a solution which will be to the advantage of shareholders of Crocus, they would follow up on the recommendations made by the Auditor and follow through on, in terms of implementation strategies by the implementation committee.

We actually have legislation in the House today introduced by the Minister of Industry (Mr. Rondeau), which will further strengthen the capacity for labour-sponsored venture capital to be accountable following up on the legislation last spring. If the members want to move forward, they should actually follow the rules of the House and engage in the proper debate on legislation as is before them right now.

Mr. Hawranik: Mr. Speaker, the NDP government's fingerprints are all over this Crocus scandal. This NDP government knows this, and as a result has refused to call a public inquiry. The NDP are afraid

those who are responsible will be forced to testify, people like the Premier (Mr. Doer), Eugene Kostyra, MaryAnn Mihychuk, the Member for Brandon West. I ask the Minister of Finance: Do the right thing, ask the Premier to call a public inquiry.

Mr. Selinger: I am actually surprised because the member's list is so short. There is a whole host of individuals who have been interviewed already by the Auditor General about the events that occurred inside the Crocus Fund. Those interviews are reported on in the Auditor General's report. Members opposite have had an opportunity at Public Accounts to discuss the report. When they have had that opportunity, they have turned it down. They have abused their own privileges as members of this Legislature by not following the recourse available to them through the Public Accounts Committee, and now they wish to use another avenue to pursue things which will cost the taxpayers millions of dollars. How sensible is that, Mr. Speaker?

Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): It is clear, it has become clear over the last number of months that this government does not understand what the purpose of a public inquiry is. They hide behind the Auditor General's report, they hide behind RCMP investigations. I want to quote from Supreme Court Justice Cory who talked about inquiries in the Westray mine tragedy. The Supreme Court Justice said that one of the primary functions of a public inquiry is fact-finding. They are often convened in the wake of public shock or scepticism in order to uncover the truth. Unlike the judiciary, inquiries are often needed for wide-ranging investigative powers. That was a Supreme Court Justice in the highest court in this land. This government does not understand it.

Can the Minister of Justice please today stand up and say he supports the Supreme Court and call for the inquiry, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, it is a quaint notion that on this side of the House we support the legislative process of Manitoba.

Mr. Goertzen: I will assume from the minister that he does not support the Supreme Court, that he does not support what the Supreme Court in this land says.

I will give him another citation: The Supreme Court said in the Patty Starr case, public inquiries are designed to restore confidence in the integrity and institutions of government or to review the regime governing the conduct of public officials.

This government, we believe, is guilty on the Crocus file, and they need to have a public inquiry to get to the truth. The Premier (Mr. Doer) runs from the truth, the Premier hides from the truth, because the Premier is afraid of the truth. If he has nothing to hide, he will call the inquiry today and this Minister of Justice should tell him to do it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, yes, we hear that members want yet another outside review of this Crocus matter. In our view—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Mackintosh: And I forgot, Mr. Speaker, they also want an outside review, commission of inquiry. I think that is, what? Eleven other matters. So that is their record.

Mr. Speaker, yes, yet another outside review would cost millions. It would be an expense of taxpayers. What we are interested in is getting legislation passed to strengthen labour-sponsored venture capital funds and all the processes of the Legislature, whether it is Public Accounts, whether it is Question Period, whether it is Estimates, are available to members opposite. That is what the rules ensure, is their right to get accountability. They cannot do their job.

Mr. Goertzen: Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe that a Minister of Justice here in the province could show such disregard for the Supreme Court of Canada. The Supreme Court of Canada has said that the cost of an inquiry should not necessarily be the bar to an inquiry because there are certain things that public inquiries can do that RCMP investigations cannot and other investigations cannot. That is what the Supreme Court of Canada has said. They said that it is valuable to restore confidence in government.

I know that the Minister of Water Stewardship (Mr. Ashton) feels that it is an insult to talk about the Supreme Court. I stand with Manitobans. I stand with 33,000 investors who were fleeced. I stand with members of this opposition, and I say you should stand with the Supreme Court. Do the right thing; stop running; stop hiding; do not be afraid of the truth, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite likes to use a quote from the Supreme Court of Canada to justify having an inquiry here. I have not actually read that judgment but I do not think the judgment—
[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Selinger: I would be very surprised if the judgment said that every time somebody calls for an inquiry one should be held.

I think what the Supreme Court is suggesting is that there are certain conditions under which a public inquiry should be called. What we have done, Mr. Speaker, never done before in the history of the province of Manitoba, is we brought forward in 2001 new legislation for the Auditor General to follow the dollars wherever they go, including a special provision in that legislation to inquire into labour-sponsored venture capital if the need arose.

The need arose. The inquiry was done. The implementation report was filed, and we have the legislation in front of this House which you do not want to debate.

Bill 34 Introduction

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, as far as I know in this House, and granted I have only been here for five-and-a-half years, but legislation actually has to be introduced before we can debate it. We look at Bill 34, The Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act, and it has not even been introduced yet. How can we possibly debate it if it has not been introduced?

Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Doer) has said himself that, and I quote: There are many whistle-blowers in government. Well, we know there are many whistle-blowers in government but they are afraid to come forward because of this government's track record in firing those people who have the courage to come forward.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Finance: Why is he holding off introducing this legislation? What is he hiding?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it seems now that the members are actually interested in debating a bill. This is progress. This is progress, and as I stated before the bill is actively being prepared and it is being prepared very carefully. It is very important legislation.

The bill with respect to Crocus is already on the Order Paper. If the member wants to talk about Crocus, there is a bill available to them which they could use to debate the matters. They do not really want to debate the matters. They just want to cherry-pick what happens in the Legislature.

Mrs. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, what we know from this Minister of Finance and what we know from this government is that obviously they are afraid to introduce this legislation for some reason. I would say that we know what happens to whistle-blowers in this province if they decide, if they have the courage to come forward. One only needs to look at Pat Jacobsen and what happened to her. This government has a track record of firing those people who have the courage to come forward and say something against what this government is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this Minister of Finance again: Why is he not introducing this legislation? What is he afraid of? Is he afraid, in fact, that his staff will come forward and implicate him in the Crocus scandal?

* (11:10)

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, it was on April 8, 2004, that the Leader of the Official Opposition, supported by the Finance critic, the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik), made a solemn commitment in public that they would bring forward whistle-blower legislation.

We have not seen it yet. If you are so interested in whistle-blower legislation, perhaps you could talk to your leader and find out why you did not introduce your own bill. What is the reason that you did not follow through on your own commitment to the citizens of Manitoba?

Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Mr. Speaker, there is a bill on the Order Paper right now. It has been on here for quite some time, and yet the Minister of Finance and members opposite like to talk about the fact that we do not want to debate bills. Well, how can we debate bills that are not introduced?

Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Doer) likes to say that the RCMP, the Securities Commission, the Auditor General, Public Accounts, those are all vehicles that will bring out the Crocus scandal, but none of those vehicles has the ability to find out what

role government officials played in this scandal. That is why we need a public inquiry.

Will the Premier agree to call a public inquiry today?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, members opposite have put forward their proposal to bring forward whistle-blower legislation two years ago and some weeks now. We have never seen that bill introduced into the Legislature, and I know members are working on it. I know the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Hawranik) is working on it because he is a guy that follows through on everything he says. I know the Leader of the Official Opposition is working on it. I know the Member for Tuxedo is probably participating in that because she has a real interest in this legislation. We would be very happy to see it in front of the House.

But I can tell you one thing: our legislation will be introduced in a matter of days. We are still waiting for a couple of years for them to do theirs. We will be there first. We will see, on Monday, who has their legislation ready.

Crocus Investment Fund Public Inquiry

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have just heard from this Minister of Finance about the importance of debating legislation. This Minister of Finance, as always, because of the incompetency of this government, has to look back because this side of the House has been doing things. In fact, today, I introduced Bill 211 which they supported, and I would ask them, let us debate that legislation today.

Mr. Speaker, those members on that side of the House, they love to talk about rolling up their sleeves and getting to work. That is the difference between that side of the House and this side of the House because we do not talk about it, we do roll up our sleeves, we get to work. That is why . . .

Mr. Speaker, I know that this Premier (Mr. Doer) likes to stand in front of this House and in front of Manitobans and say, well, Mr. Speaker, there have been numerous investigations: the Manitoba Securities Commission, the RCMP, the Auditor General's Report, Public Accounts. Well, let us be very clear—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Murray: Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you and I appreciate the respect from members opposite.

Manitoba Securities Commission, Mr. Speaker, is investigating the Crocus board of directors, but it is in no way investigating the involvement of this Doer government. The RCMP investigation, they clearly are going to investigate to see if there was any criminal activity that took place. I am not suggesting or we on this side are not suggesting in this House that this government is guilty of any criminal activity, but all we are saying is that these are two examples of why these completed investigations will not get to the bottom of the truth.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if members opposite want to get to the bottom of the truth, and I believe they do, then the simple way to do it is to stand before all Manitobans and say, we have nothing to hide, we want to get on with doing business in Manitoba, we want to make sure venture capital is rescued in this province, we want to get rid of the black eye that venture capital has, and we are going to call for an independent public inquiry into the Crocus scandal.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, this may be the last day the Leader of the Official Opposition puts questions to us in the House from the current position that he is in. I do want to thank him for the way he has conducted himself through a transition that is going on in his party.

But he has said today that he has introduced Bill 11, and we have unanimously in this House supported the introduction of that bill. But, Mr. Speaker, it is the practice of this House for the bill to be distributed immediately after it has been introduced in the House. That bill has not been introduced. Right now, it is a phantom bill. So, if he wants to debate it, he actually has to bring physical product to the House. The bill has to really be in front of us. It does not exist. It is a phantom bill. It is as much of a phantom bill as the whistle-blower legislation promised April 8, 2004. If that is what he calls substantial progress, we have a real problem here.

Mr. Murray: Well, with all of the inaction that we have seen from this Doer government, for all of the announcements that we have seen from this Doer government, what is very clear to all Manitobans is that we actually have a phantom government, Mr. Speaker. That is the problem we have in Manitoba.

I want to be very, very clear why opposition has united to ensure that we call for an independent public inquiry. Mr. Speaker, the potential class-action lawsuit is not sufficient. The government is not listed as a defendant. The vast majority of

lawsuits are settled well before trial, and with non-disclosure agreements, again, the NDP would like this, the truth would get buried once more.

The Auditor-General's report raised many unanswered questions, and it was not the role of the Auditor-General clearly to investigate the part that this Doer government had with this scandal. Finally, Mr. Speaker, Public Accounts, testimony in Public Accounts, members opposite know, it is not under oath. Witnesses are not compellable, and the only witnesses permitted under the rules are people who cannot provide the answers to this NDP government's involvement in the scandal. This NDP government is stonewalling.

We have heard them say many, many times that the opposition parties are ringing the bells. I remind members opposite, there is an old story *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Unless you call an independent public inquiry, the bell tolls for thee.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, Hemingway's book *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is an excellent book. There is no question that the member opposite is being poetic in his last potential day here as official Leader of the Opposition.

However, he has introduced a bill today, but the bill turned out to be a phantom. On April 8, 2004, they said there would be whistle-blower legislation. That just turned out to be a phantom as well. We have in front of the House 24 bills; 24 substantial bills sit before this House as we speak. We have a budget before this House as we speak. If you want to compare phantom legislation to substantive legislation, we compare very favourably.

Let us get on with the business of the House. Debate the budget. Debate the bills, including a bill on Crocus Fund. Let us see where it takes us in improving the way Manitoba functions.

1999 Election Campaign Promises

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it has been over five years since I took my place in this Legislature, and I would like to quote from the very first question that I raised in the Legislature. I talked about the honour to serve the House and represent those constituents in Kirkfield Park.

Well, my first question was to the First Minister (Mr. Doer). I said, during the election campaign this Premier promised Manitobans that by spending \$15

million he was going to end hallway medicine and fix health care in six months. In the world of health care, that is not only a lot of money, but he made it sound simple. He said it would be achievable and realistic. He guaranteed Manitobans that he had a plan to accomplish it.

Mr. Speaker, I went on to say in my second question, I appreciate that this is a very sensitive issue for the Premier because he was elected on a mandate, frankly, to end hallway medicine and fix health care. He has failed to do that. I remind that these were his commitments. These were his words, to end hallway medicine in six months, and that is what he promised the people of Manitoba to do.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand in this Legislature for perhaps my last question, I would simply ask what I asked in December of 2000. Will the Premier now admit that he misled Manitobans during the election campaign of 1999? Will he now apologize to them for making such irresponsible promises with respect to health care?

* (11:20)

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition for honouring me with one of his last questions here. I am pleased to tell him that in 1998-99, there were 26, 28, 35 people in the waiting rooms, and they were not there just for part of a night until the next morning. There were numbers on the hallway walls saying these were bedrooms. Thirty-eight people was not an uncommon number in 1998-99.

Last year, the average over the year was 4.7 in six different hospitals, Mr. Speaker. That is less than one person per hospital over the year. They were not there for days. They were usually out by noon of the next day.

We have accomplished a great deal. We will continue to work on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

Child Welfare System Judicial Investigation

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, on three separate days I have asked the government to table the terms of reference for the external review of Child and Family Services. Yesterday the minister of child and family services tabled a press release.

For some time now individuals have been coming forward to me asking what the terms of reference of this inquiry are, including how they can

make a presentation, how they will be protected and other details that are normal elements of the terms of reference for a review—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The issue that the honourable member is raising is the same issue that I have taken under advisement. Until I come back with a ruling, I would—*[interjection]* Order.

When a matter is under advisement, it should not be raised in this House until the Speaker has dealt with it. This exact issue is one that is under advisement at the moment, so I will give the honourable Member for River Heights an opportunity to rephrase his question.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, 31 children have died. That is more children who have died, been killed in care or shortly after leaving care in Manitoba than all the soldiers who have died in Afghanistan.

This needs to be taken seriously. I would ask the Premier (Mr. Doer) when he will call a proper judicial investigation to make sure that this matter is taken very seriously.

Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Family Services and Housing): Mr. Speaker, the Member for River Heights has shown once again that he is very interested in politicizing this event. I think the comparison he just made is completely inappropriate. Canadians are very concerned about soldiers in Afghanistan. Manitobans are very concerned about children in care in Manitoba.

The member opposite, all members opposite have tried to undermine the reviews that were announced. They have tried to denigrate the professionals by calling them minions. We have seen games such as candles on tables in this House, Mr. Speaker.

It is time for members opposite to support the professionals who are doing the hard work to find out how we can better protect and take care of the children of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place today to thank the honourable members in this Chamber for their comments today.

I rise also, Mr. Speaker, to thank those people from Kirkfield Park who took confidence in me,

voted for me and allowed me to serve in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I was asked today by a reporter about how you get good people into politics. I said, well, I think that is where you are mistaken because there are good people in politics. There are people in politics who are passionate about issues. That I think is the difference. Perhaps you have to sit, maybe, in one of these chairs on either side of the House to understand that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I look across the way, and I look at our colleagues on this side of the House. There are good people in politics. There will continue to be good people in politics, and although I will not be one of those people who will sit in this Legislature after the next election campaign, I know full well that men and women in Manitoba who are passionate about issues, whether it is education, child and family services, whether it is about business, whether it is about the environment, those are the kinds of men and women who will stand and be prepared to put their public face in front of the public, have their families understand that they are going to be away from dinner, basketball, hockey games because they are committed to serving the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have a monopoly on passion for this province. Fifty-seven members in this Legislature share that passion equally, and so I was blessed to serve a constituency, to be the leader of a political party. I was blessed with great staff. I was blessed with great colleagues that work hard. I will say to anybody that ever asks me, should I get involved in public life, my answer will be emphatically yes, you should because making a difference in one person's life, one person's life, makes it all worthwhile.

I know that when I go home and I get a hug from my wife, Ashleigh, and my two daughters, Sarah and Hayley, they always look at me and say, Dad, did you have a good day? Some of you read the newspapers, and some of them were not so great. But at the end of it, Mr. Speaker, I looked at them and I said, you know what, I had a great day, and tomorrow is going to be just as great. Anybody who has the opportunity to serve, as members in this Chamber do, understands the importance of it. I was blessed to do it, and as I said in my article, it was an honour to serve. I mean that and I thank all members.

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to

respond briefly on behalf of all my colleagues and the Province of Manitoba to indicate the comments of the Member for Kirkfield Park speak to the credibility of the individual. I think that those words indicate the quality of individual that he is and reflect, I think, on all members of this House and what we aspire to be. I think that we all owe a good deal to the member and his commitment. I think that reflected in his comments, and I think it would be advantageous for all of us to reflect upon not only what he said about public service but what he said for each and every one of us because in his comments today he showed the measure of the man. He showed also for all of us the goals that we must aspire to. So, I want to thank him and wish him, on behalf of all of us, the very best in the future. Job well done.

Mr. Speaker: I am going to seek the advice of the House here because the honourable member has made a statement and I know we are under Members' Statements, but is there leave of the House to separate this from Members' Statements and then we will deal with Members' Statements? Is there an agreement? *[Agreed]*

Okay. There is an agreement, so we will deal with this matter and then we will deal with Members' Statements.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the Leader of the Opposition, the MLA for Kirkfield Park, and to recognize the effort that he has taken, notwithstanding the vicissitudes of political life. I want to recognize the many, many events that I have seen the Leader of the Opposition attending all over the province. I know that he has worked hard. He has put in a lot of effort. He has asked a lot of good questions in the House, and he has done his best to try and show to others that politics can be an honourable calling. I think the last statement of the Leader of the Opposition says it very clearly. We are all here for slightly different reasons and with different backgrounds, but we are all here because we believe that public service is pretty important if we are going to improve things for people all over Manitoba.

I want to recognize the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Murray) for the effort that he has made over the last several years in providing a substantive opposition and in providing everything that he can to improve things in Manitoba.

* (11:30)

Mr. Speaker: Before we move on to Members' Statements, I just want to also wish the member all the best in his endeavours and his future, and I have personally enjoyed the time that we were able to spend. I really appreciated the respect that you have shown the Chair and the institution that we are all, like you said, we are all very, very fortunate to be part of. I want to wish you all the best.

An Honourable Member: You did not name me.

Mr. Speaker: No, I am not naming you, no.

MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Wheat City Horse Park

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa): I rise today because this NDP government has vetoed a \$16-million private capital investment that would have yielded economic spinoffs estimated at \$9.6 million annually for the City of Brandon and the surrounding area.

In a region that has been hit hard over the last number of years by agriculture crises and natural disasters, the economic and employment benefits stemming from this project would have created tremendous opportunities for the growth and diversification of Manitoba's economy.

The City of Brandon, Brandon Chamber of Commerce, Brandon First, Brandon Tourism and the hospitality industry in the region each submitted letters of support for the horse park that fell on deaf ears within this NDP government. The result of this NDP government vetoing this tremendous opportunity means the province and the industry will continue to lose people and opportunities to neighbouring provinces which they cannot afford to lose. The NDP government has essentially killed an industry that other provinces have nurtured and expanded.

The Wheat City Horse Park Committee has tried for over two years to arrange a meeting with the MLA for Brandon West (Mr. Smith) who also is the Minister responsible for Lotteries and gaming, but this minister did not think it important enough to meet with this group. The opposition members from Turtle Mountain, Carman, Lakeside and myself have formally requested the Brandon West MLA to meet with the Wheat City Horse Park group, but the member did not take our suggestion to the extreme detriment of his own community.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal is bigger than just a race park. It would have provided countless spinoffs

to the professional agriculture sectors and a development to the support industry such as trainers and horse specialists.

The project never made a request to remove the moratorium on VLT numbers, but its plan spoke to the possibility of reallocating machines throughout the province to the proposed facility.

Mr. Speaker, the Brandon MLA has turned his back on his constituents, rural Manitobans, the Manitoba horse racing industry, the city of Brandon and effectively has destroyed yet another opportunity for Westman to be an opportunity as a destination area.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Brandon West owes an explanation to his constituents who have lost a tremendous opportunity. It is to them he will ultimately be held accountable.

Volunteer Awards

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the winners of this year's Volunteer Awards. Set during Volunteer Week, this year from April 23 to 29, the annual Volunteer Awards have been recognizing outstanding volunteer service in Manitoba for 23 years. Last Wednesday night, April 26, at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, individuals, groups, businesses, labour organizations and media were honoured for their contributions to Manitoba communities.

I would like to recognize in particular, Mr. Speaker, Winnipeg Airport Authority's Goldwing Ambassador Program for winning the Mayor's Volunteer Service Award. The Goldwing Ambassadors provide travellers with directions and guide visitors to the many services available at Winnipeg International Airport. They also assist being the eyes and the ears for airport security. Many volunteers of the Goldwing Ambassador Program speak more than one language and can assist with translation as well. They have been indispensable at many large events including the Pan Am Games and have won numerous awards for excellence in tourism. The program has been running for eight years.

The Goldwings are now expanding their positive influence by mentoring high school students under the recently announced Silverwing Youth Volunteer Program. Having the Winnipeg International Airport in my constituency has given me the privilege of interacting with the Goldwings at many events over the years. They have always done a fantastic job. I

am particularly proud to see them win this award, as they certainly deserve it.

The Winnipeg International Airport is our gateway to the world, entrusted with ensuring that each and every traveller in our airport has a positive experience. The Goldwing Ambassadors ensure that people are welcome to our province in true friendly Manitoba style.

Congratulations to all the winners of this year's volunteer awards. So much of what we accomplish in our communities is due to the hard work and dedication of volunteers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Assiniboine Valley Flooding

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to take a moment to pay tribute to our leader on his last, what may be his last and final day in Question Period in the House, on behalf of the constituents of Arthur-Virden. I am very glad and proud to have been able to call him my leader for the last five and a half years since he came in December of 2000.

On Wednesday night, Mr. Speaker, I and several of my colleagues, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), the critic from disaster financial assistance and EMO, the Member for Carman (Mr. Rocan), the critic for Water Stewardship and the Member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), were pleased to attend a meeting with the Assiniboine Valley flooded farmers in Miniota to hear their concerns regarding how they are negatively impacted by artificial flooding.

Yesterday in Question Period, the Minister of Water Stewardship (Mr. Ashton) said that no artificial flooding will take place this year. Preposterous, Mr. Speaker, given the minister's own flood forecast is stating that flooding will last until at least the end of May, and the farmers know that some of these lands will not be seeded this year. He also said that the flood liaison committee was in control of the operations of the Shellmouth Dam, another preposterous statement, a blatant misuse of the truth. As the minister knows, it is dead wrong. He and his department have the last say. Advisory or liaison committees, while very beneficial if and when listened to, are purely that, and a group to seek advice from, but the government has the final say.

On April 13, the farmers were told that everything was okay in regard to the flooding, that the level had been reduced to 1,391 feet, that that would be adequate for the expected run-in of spring melt, and these farmers were clear that the

department tried to keep them clearly apprised of the information available to the department officials. They respected that for the most part, but they were clear that they believe the government itself is at fault because it has short-changed the number of persons needed to provide proper information regarding snowpack and availability of run-off in that area, and I would say that that is parallel to what happened in the Red River situation.

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

Rural Forum

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff (Interlake): This weekend Brandon will host the 14th annual Rural Forum. This event is put on each year by Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives. It provides community leaders, citizens and young people, both urban and rural, with the opportunity to share ideas on the future of our communities. The theme of the forum this year is "Manitoba Includes . . . You! *Building a Better Manitoba.*"

Mr. Speaker, the forum will feature 24 seminars and workshops dealing with a wide range of topics. Over the last few months I have visited rural communities throughout the province as a member of creating opportunities task force. The task force was created by the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) to consult with Manitobans on building opportunities for more prosperous communities. I am joined on the task force by Susan Proven, Paul Gregory and Gaye Lenderbeck.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that in the last year our province has seen many made-in-Manitoba success stories, and I look forward to sharing the wisdom that the creating opportunities task force has gained from its many consultations at the Rural Forum.

The forum also features over 200 exhibits showcasing Manitoba's wealth of products and services, a craft show and sale, a Manitoba food court featuring the many delicacies our province offers and performances by Manitoba entertainers, including Susan Aglukark. In addition, a separate one-day youth forum will be offered. Above all, the Rural Forum is a celebration of rural and northern Manitoba spirit, resilience and ingenuity.

I would like to thank the many public and private sponsors and partners, including Manitoba Hydro who generously support the forum, and commend my colleague the Minister of Agriculture,

Food and Rural Initiatives (Ms. Wowchuk) for all the work her department does to host this event.

I invite all members to join us in Brandon this weekend at the Rural Forum to celebrate the current and future success of rural and northern Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Charleswood Junior High Milk Program

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Charleswood Junior High School for their tremendous contribution to the health and well-being of its students as demonstrated by having a milk program in their school for 15 consecutive years. They join two other schools in Pembina Trails School Division, Van Walleghem School and Pacific Junction, who also share this distinction.

* (11:40)

The school milk program was established 23 years ago in Manitoba with the objective of giving students the opportunity to have fresh cold milk at lunch at school. Today, over 500 Manitoba schools are running milk programs because parents and educators agree that good nutrition is essential for better learning and milk is an important part of their children's diet as recommended by Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

Milk programs in many schools are run by parent volunteers and school staff, often with the help of senior students. In many cases this means purchasing a fridge, establishing a milk team, ordering and distributing milk every day. This demonstrates a tremendous commitment by Charleswood Junior High to the health of their students.

In light of recent studies which show alarming statistics about childhood obesity it is encouraging to see a school taking steps to provide a healthy and nutritious drink. It has been shown that people who consume dairy products are less likely to have problems with obesity.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Charleswood Junior High for its leadership, hard work and dedication to the well-being of their students. Thank you.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Inkster, on a point of order or matter of privilege?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order. The honourable Member for Inkster, on a point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you look in *Beauchesne's* 6th Edition, Citation 3, and towards the end of Citation 3, on page 4, and I will quote direct: "The whole concept of the parliamentary Question Period depends on the tradition that the Cabinet is willing to submit its conduct of public affairs to the scrutiny of the Opposition on a regular basis."

I think that it is very important that Question Period has been recognized throughout the Commonwealth, Mr. Speaker. All Houses where there has been respect for parliamentary tradition have honoured one of the most important aspects, that being Question Period, which affords the opportunity for the opposition to ask questions of the government when we are sitting in order to hold them to account for the things that are happening or the things which might be happening or the things that have happened in the past. It is about accountability. I think that the government needs to be committed to the parliamentary principle of Question Period and just how important it is.

Mr. Speaker, I was very disturbed earlier today during Question Period when you look at the actual numbers of individual ministers that were here and in particular—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have reminded honourable members many, many times, it is against our rules to mention the presence or absence of any members of the House. When you are up on a point of order, it is to point out to the Speaker a breach of the rule or a departure of our Manitoba practice, not to get into debate. So I ask the honourable member to point out to me the rule and the breach of that rule.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have pointed out the rule in *Beauchesne's* which clearly highlights the importance of Question Period. I believe that there is a responsibility on my part to bring to the attention of the Chair when I believe that that rule has been violated.

I believe that the government has a commitment to present itself and be present, Mr. Speaker, for Question Period. If they are not going to be present for Question Period, I believe that is a direct violation of what is classified as a part of the constitutional act.

Mr. Speaker: Order. On the point of order raised, I just reminded all honourable members about the

mention of members, about members' presence or absence from the House. I will remind members that the questions are put to the government. It is entirely up to the government who answers the questions. You can have one minister answering every question if the government chooses. So it is against our rules to mention the presence or absence, and I have already ruled on that. I hope the honourable member will not go back there.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to reflect, then, on the absence of individuals from this Chamber today. What I am talking about is the principle of Question Period and the important role that it plays in parliamentary tradition, not only in our province but in the Commonwealth. A part of that tradition has dictated that there has to be a respect of Question Period, and part of that respect, as quoted right from *Beauchesne's*: "The whole concept of the parliamentary Question Period depends on the tradition that the Cabinet is willing to submit its conduct of public affairs to the scrutiny of the Opposition on a regular basis."

Mr. Speaker, I would interpret the willingness to submit as being a presence inside the Legislature, and I am talking about the principle of Question Period and how important it is that the government believes and supports that particular rule.

So what I am asking for the government to do is to respect *Beauchesne's* Citation 3, in principle, which talks about submitting the Cabinet, Mr. Speaker, to members of opposition, and the overall attendance, whether it is today, yesterday or tomorrow, has to be a high standard. It is determining what you believe might be a high standard. I believe if 20 percent or less of the Cabinet is not there, I do not believe it meets the standard. I believe that there is a responsibility for the government of the day to submit its conduct to this Chamber, and one of the ways it does that, whether it is in the future, yesterday or today, is by having that physical presence.

So I would suggest to you that the rule, Mr. Speaker, that I am attributing that has been violated, in my opinion, has been violated today. Thank you.

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

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite could only see how foolish his position is, that he was the one saying that this Legislature should sit longer to

enhance government accountability, and when we do that, he walks away. In fact, as the minister next to me just remarked, by the way, not only does he walk away, but 50 percent of his caucus is not here.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Mackintosh: Oh, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have mentioned twice already in the House that mentioning the presence or absence of members is not allowed in our House. I would ask all honourable members to please follow that direction.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, perhaps there is a better way to talk about issues like that. I notice that there was a roll call, a vote in the House, I believe it was yesterday or the day before, that ended up 31 to 10. Perhaps that is a way of saying something in retort.

Mr. Speaker, the member has no point, of course. It is just another wilful obstruction. If he had any interest in accountability of the government, he would be dealing with the bills. He would be dealing with the Estimates. He would be dealing with all of those mechanisms that have been assured to an opposition, a minority, in the Legislature by way of the rules. He has no respect for the rules.

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

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Official Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that what we are witnessing in this Legislature and in this province is the tyranny of the majority of the government.

The Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) today talks about how government is accountable to the people, and in his citation of *Beauchesne* Citation 3, it indicates that government must present itself to the opposition parties in order for opposition parties to be able to hold the government accountable on behalf of the people of the jurisdiction.

* (11:50)

Well, Mr. Speaker, in this Legislature, we have seen the arrogance of this government demonstrated time and time and time and time again. It is no doubt that we have no other vehicle here in this Chamber but to get up on points of order to point out to the people of this province, in fact, the lack of respect that the government has for this institution. But, more importantly, it is also important to point out

that the government has lost respect for the people of Manitoba because it is not even doing what the people of Manitoba are demanding of it, and that is to bring some accountability to the Crocus issue by calling a public inquiry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Citation 3 talks about the importance of Question Period. Question Period to us is the only way in which we can seek information from the government on behalf of the people to ensure that there are principles in place here of accountability. We have seen over the days past how even in Question Period members of the government refuse to answer questions, refuse to put factual information on the record. As a matter of fact, they put false information on the record and then they get away with it by simply saying, well, this is just simply a dispute over the facts. We have even seen cases in this House when a question has been asked, the answer that has been provided is such that there is no relationship to the question that was asked. So there is a great deal of frustration that members of this Legislature are experiencing as a result of this.

So I believe that the Member for Inkster does have a point of order. It is a point of order which I think we should take seriously. We cannot mention the members who are in or out of the House, and that I acknowledge. But, in general terms, let us all look upon what we have in terms of respect for this institution of this Legislature. Indeed, if the government does respect the institution, does respect what we do in this Legislature, then I think it has an obligation to present itself, including the First Minister, on issues when they are being challenged and asked in this Chamber. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Inkster, first of all, I will reiterate that questions are put to the government, and it is entirely up to the government who answers those questions. *[interjection]* Order. I am making a ruling here. If it is one minister who answers all the questions, that is entirely up to the government.

Also, for the information of the House, the quorum number in the House is 10. That is also in our rules. Also, the Speaker ensures that replies adhere to the dictates of decorum and parliamentary language.

So the honourable member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, with respect, I would challenge your ruling.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have support?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, the honourable member has support.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in support of sustaining the ruling of the Chair, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to sustaining the ruling of the Chair, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Formal Vote

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would request Yeas and Nays, please.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have support?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

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

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

Division

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

Yeas

Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Brick, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Irvin-Ross, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Sale, Santos, Schellenberg, Selinger, Struthers, Swan.

Nays

Cullen, Cummings, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurschou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Hawranik, Lamoureux, Maguire, Mitchelson, Murray, Penner, Reimer, Rowat, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 27, Nays 19.

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

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader?

Mr. Mackintosh: On House business.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to deal with House business? For the Speaker not to see the clock? *[Agreed]*

House Business

Mr. Mackintosh: I would like to announce that the subcommittee dealing with the hiring process for the

Auditor General will meet in camera at the adjournment of the House today in Room 255.

Mr. Speaker: It has been announced that the subcommittee dealing with the hiring process for the Auditor General will meet in camera at the adjournment of the House today in Room 255.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The time being past 12:30, this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 28, 2006

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