

**Second Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature**  
**of the**  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
**and**  
**PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report**  
**(Hansard)**

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

**Vol. LX No. 13A – 10 a.m., Thursday, December 6, 2007**

ISSN 0542-5492

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Ninth Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
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BOROTSIK, Rick	Brandon West	P.C.
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DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
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GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
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GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
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JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
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LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
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TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, December 6, 2007**

**The House met at 10 a.m.**

*PRAYER*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**

**Mr. Speaker:** Bill 202, The Health Services Amendment and Health Services Insurance Amendment Act.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure if you were to canvass the House that there might be leave to go to Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act, and we'll start the day off with that.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave of the House for us to deal with Bill 217 first? *[Agreed]*

**Bill 217—The Ukrainian Famine and  
Genocide Memorial Day Act**

**Mr. Speaker:** Leave has been granted, so I am calling Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act.

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** I move, seconded by the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), that Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mr. Derkach:** I certainly want to today acknowledge the good work of the government in terms of allowing this bill to come forward today, and, also, I want to give credit to the Liberal Party and their caucus, Mr. Speaker, for allowing this bill to come forward today to be dealt with and, hopefully, passed through this second reading at this stage and then on to a committee, whenever that committee may be called.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to acknowledge that this is a bill that speaks to humanity. It speaks to the fact that we as citizens of this province recognize that an atrocity occurred in 1932 and '33 in Europe and specifically in Ukraine which was inflicted by a Communist leader who decided that people should

die, not because of anything they had done wrong but simply because of who they were.

*Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is wrong. It is time that we in this Legislature stood up and spoke out about atrocities like this, even though they happened a long time ago, 75 years ago. This is the 75th anniversary of this atrocity and people across Canada, across the world, for that matter, have paused this year to reflect upon this atrocity and how it impacted the lives of so, so many people.

In Manitoba we have a significant population of Ukrainian people who have silently endured the memory of this horrific event and have been reluctant to speak out about it because of fear. When we saw the survivors of this genocide in the Legislature when we introduced this bill, we saw the emotion in their faces, Madam Deputy Speaker, and the fact that finally after 75 years they were able to tell their story.

That story was caught on a video that has been produced by the sponsorship of Canad Inns and Leo Ledohowski, and for that I am grateful to them for at least doing their part in making sure that the world understands what really went on in those times, because these are the words of people who are still living today who experienced that atrocity.

So when I introduced this bill, I did want the support of members of this Legislature because I did not want to make it a partisan bill. I wanted this bill to be the words of this Legislature. I wanted this bill to be the understanding of this Legislature that we together from all sides of this House will oppose this kind of genocide, this kind of atrocity no matter where it happens in the world. So, for that reason, Madam Deputy Speaker, this as an event in history must be remembered not as something that we want to hold up a banner but, more importantly, that we want to speak out against so that it never, ever happens again in that part of the world or in any other part of the world.

Today we know that there are things of this nature happening in other parts of the world, and I think if we as legislatures throughout this country,

throughout other parts of the world can speak up in unison about the fact that we will not tolerate this kind of inhumane treatment of people no matter where they are—and, yes, Madam Deputy Speaker, there are other disasters that occur in the world, whether it's an earthquake, whether it's hunger. All of those things need to be paid attention to, but when people are simply killed because of who they are, that is simply wrong.

I want, in the same moment, to pay tribute to the Aspers who have spearheaded the whole issue of developing the museum for humanity along with our governments, of course, but that's our responsibility. But we have a family who has, because of their position, been able to do something for the recognition that this is the type of event in history that needs to be remembered. One should also mention the fact that the Aspers have done their job in ensuring that these kinds of things are not only earmarked but, indeed, are made visible to the world in terms of making the world aware that we stand against that kind of treatment of people.

\* (10:10)

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, I will stop here and simply thank members of this Legislature for the support that they have given to this bill. Also I want to make mention of the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), who brought forward a resolution a couple of years ago in which he actually identified that the last Saturday in November would be the day that would be earmarked for this kind of commemoration. I want to thank him for taking that initiative. I also want to thank all members of this Legislature for the support that they have given to this bill. It is my hope that we can move this bill on to committee stage and then on to passage in the future at whatever point in time during the sitting of this session that government and we, as legislators, see fit to be able to pass this legislation on. Thank you.

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** I am pleased to add a few words on Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act. I was pleased to second this private member's bill and perhaps that was only fitting because, in 2004, when I introduced a private member's resolution on the same topic, the Member for Russell seconded my resolution.

In comparing the resolution and the bill, as far as I can see, there's only one minor difference and that is that I think my original resolution suggested the last Saturday in November would be the day for

remembering the Ukrainian famine and genocide, but the member's bill we're debating today says the fourth Saturday in November, which is a very small minor difference. So we are pleased on this side of the House to support this private member's bill.

This really began in 2003 with a proclamation by the Minister of Labour and Immigration that the last Saturday in November be the day to commemorate the Ukrainian famine and genocide. That proclamation was presented at St. Mary The Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral. It was the following year that I introduced my resolution which passed with all-party support. Every year since I've been able to present a copy of the proclamation to groups in the community, including the Golden Gates seniors club, the Prosvita seniors club and St. Mary The Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral.

I want to congratulate Father Buciora and the Ilarion Centre for sponsoring seminars on important topics including the famine and genocide, and on trafficking. They were the sponsors of the events along with Canad Inns and Mr. Leo Ledohowski on a recent weekend, where, as the Member for Russell pointed out, the DVD was premiered. I had a chance to see it, actually twice, on that weekend.

I would like pay tribute to the individuals, survivors of the famine holocaust who spoke about their experiences. Their experiences were horrific and it took a great deal of courage, and I pay tribute to them for their courage in very publicly speaking about their experiences in Ukraine at that time. I was told that there are other individuals in Winnipeg who were also survivors, but have never spoken about their experience and who declined the opportunity to be part of this DVD because their experience was so devastating to them personally that they can't bring themselves to talk about it, which is quite understandable.

I'm going to be very brief in order to give other people a chance to participate in this debate. I think our views are already on the record. Our government is on the record as wanting to continue annually to commemorate, now the fourth Saturday of November, as the day of Ukrainian famine and genocide in 1932-33.

I would also add to what the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) said about the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. I know that I am being lobbied, and probably other individuals are being lobbied by the

Ukrainian community because they are very concerned that their history and the abuse of their human rights be commemorated and highlighted in the new Canadian Museum for Human Rights. We have to, I guess, trust that the board of directors and the people making the decisions on the displays will make the right decisions, but it probably doesn't hurt to lobby and to ensure in advance the human rights abuses, which the Ukrainian community is concerned about, are a part the display.

In fact, one of the specific concerns that was raised with me was that there might be a display and then the next year it's replaced by another display. They're saying no, that's not good enough. We want a permanent display. So I'm sure that the Ukrainian Canadian Congress will be taking up this cause. In fact, I met with the new president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress when he was visiting the Legislative Building last week, Mr. Paul Grod, and I raised this issue with him. He said, yes, he was aware of it, and he will be taking this up with the board of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

So, we look forward to the new museum being opened. In fact, members of the Legislature are invited to an announcement, I believe, on Monday next week. I won't be able to attend myself, but I think there's an announcement about their new fundraising level. So it sounds like a good-news announcement. They're getting closer to their goal, and we commend, as did the Member for Russell, the Asper family and everyone who's involved in the fundraising for the new museum of human rights.

As I said before, I think it's important that this is happening in Canada and in Winnipeg because, currently, many students are going to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., and they could be staying in Canada. They could be coming to Winnipeg to visit a very important museum to learn about the Jewish Holocaust and other important events, including, and particularly, the one we're debating today, the Ukrainian famine and genocide, right here in Winnipeg and educate not just students but all Canadians to things that happened many years ago but have received very little publicity. One of the reasons for that was that there was no information, almost no information that got out during the Soviet era, and it was really only after the collapse of the Soviet Union and independence of Ukraine in 1991 that information was much more available and people could talk much more freely about what had actually happened.

One of the guest speakers that I, unfortunately, didn't get to hear has written a book about the only journalist that got into Ukraine during the famine and who wrote about it, the only Western journalist and the only one whose information was accurate and valid. There were other journalists whose views denied the famine genocide, and those contradictory views were out there, but only one of them was accurate. So, we're grateful to people who've been doing research on this important issue and for those who are currently publicizing it, including by speaking out, including the survivors and, in the future, by putting an important display about the Ukrainian famine and genocide in the new Canadian Museum for Human Rights. Thank you.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act. I would like to commend the MLA for Russell (Mr. Derkach) and the MLA for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) for bringing this bill forward. When I saw this bill, even though our private member's bill would have had precedent today, I approached the MLA for Russell and said we'd like to give you the opportunity. I'm glad that that has been taken, and we're able to have this debate on this important measure today.

I have attended a number of the events related to the Holodomor, the Ukrainian famine, and, including for part of the time, I was in attendance with the discussion of the story of Gareth Jones, who was the reporter who was in the Ukraine and played an important role in bringing this story to light, that it was a famine but that it was not just an ordinary famine, that it was one that was intentionally induced, that the crops had actually been bountiful that year but that the measures that were taken by the Soviet authorities were such as to intentionally produce a famine and cause tremendous deaths and devastation in the Ukraine.

\*(10:20)

I remember a number of years ago being at a ceremony in Dauphin at the festival site where former Lieutenant-Governor Peter Liba unveiled a plaque to remember the Ukrainian famine, the Holodomor of 1932, '33, and then as now spoke of the millions of people who had died as a result of this intentionally induced famine and genocide.

That number of seven million to 10 million is a huge number of people, and indeed it is probably the largest such intentional genocide attempt that has ever been seen on our planet. It is time that it was

appropriately recognized that we have a day to remember this and a day to think about how and what we can do every day today to prevent subsequent events, to pay attention, for example, right now to what is going on in Darfur and to prevent the tragedy that is still unfolding in the Sudan in the Darfur region.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

I remember many conversations with a good friend of mine, Marvin Krawec or Kravetsky [*phonetic*], as he sometimes refers to himself, or Marvellous Marvin as he sometimes says. As we have travelled around Manitoba together, he has told me stories of his growing up in Rorketon and of the stories that he heard in those days when he was growing up, of the word coming gradually from Ukraine to Manitoba, to Ukrainians living in Manitoba, because it wasn't initially apparent what had happened, and people were very reluctant to speak because they were afraid for their own lives.

Gareth Jones had spoken up and he lost his life, and for everything we know he lost his life specifically because he had spoken out about what was happening in the Ukraine. He is a martyr—I think there's no question of that—and somebody who needs to be recognized for what he did, as we remember the importance of having people in the media who are ready to speak out and recognize what is happening and tell those stories to others elsewhere in the world.

It is very important that today we recognize in this bill that the Holodomor was a genocide. It is sometimes a hard word to say or to admit to but the accumulating evidence is very clear, that this was not a random famine, that this was an intentional attempt to wipe out, eliminate, dramatically reduce the Ukrainian people. That was an extraordinary tragedy. At the same time, the strength of Ukraine and the strength of the people who have come from the Ukraine to places like Manitoba and elsewhere in Canada speaks to the tremendous resiliency, the tremendous fortitude, the tremendous potential of people from the Ukraine. Certainly there can be no question that Ukrainians and Ukrainian Canadians, people who are Canadians who have ancestors who lived and worked in the Ukraine, have made tremendous contributions to Manitoba and to Canada.

We passed jointly a resolution not long ago to recognize the internment of Ukrainians, the tragic, sad and inappropriate internment of Ukrainians in

Canada between 1914 and 1920. So it would be appropriate if we can work together as all MLAs representing all three parties to see what we can do before the holiday season to pass this measure, to bring it to committee and to see if we can't get it passed today. I know that's a bit of a challenge and we will all see what we can do and certainly we in the Liberal Party will do our part.

So I would like to just say a word in closing related to what is happening with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. I am sure that the Canadian Museum for Human Rights not only will be built but it will tell this story as a very important part of the many stories that are told in the Canadian Museum for Human Rights because in the annals of the development of human rights, of our understanding of human rights and our annals of the stories of people who have stood up for the rights of individual people, that this story is one which has to be told because there were many who stood up in a very brave fashion under very desperate, very hard and very awful circumstances.

To hear some of those awful circumstances and to see a video, as I did at one of the recent ceremonies recognizing the Holodomor, and to even better appreciate how awful it was is to recognize how important it is to remember this event, to communicate it in our education system and in other ways to all Manitobans and to ensure that such events never happen again.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Springfield. [*interjection*]

Oh, I'm sorry. I usually go back and forth. The honourable Minister for Conservation and then the honourable Member for Springfield.

**Hon. Stan Struthers (Minister of Conservation):** Mr. Speaker, I'm really pleased to stand today and just put a few words on the record regarding this bill.

First and foremost, I want to say that there are times in the Legislature when I wish that every single Manitoban could be in the public gallery. Usually I think of it in terms of to see the difference between our side of the House and the other side of the House.

Today's not one of those days, Mr. Speaker. This is one of these mornings where I think every 1.2 million Manitobans should be here to see us working together, co-operating to, I think, deal with some really big, really historic, really fundamental human rights issues that we as legislators have a

responsibility and I think a willingness to deal with. So I'm very proud of this Legislature here this morning.

I really want to give a lot of credit to the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) and the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale). They're showing the kind of leadership, I think, that's necessary to shine the light on a very longstanding, very historic wrong that was committed but I'm also concerned about the series of wrongs that followed the 1932-1933 famine.

I was reminded by the Liberal Leader here this morning of an event that took place in Dauphin several years ago. As everybody in the Legislature knows, we host Canada's national Ukrainian Festival every year which I wholeheartedly invite every single member of this Legislature to for a lot of different reasons. We have a lot of fun but, you know, what I would suggest, if you do come to Dauphin for that festival, that after you watch the dancing and you've partaken in the food and all the rest of that, and the parade, that you walk up the hill and go to Memorial Park.

In Memorial Park you will see a number of monuments. There's one there of Taras Shevchenko, a Ukrainian poet. There's one there commemorating the tomb of the unknown Ukrainian soldier. There are some very important issues that are taken on by the people who worked so hard to build the monuments that make this Memorial Park. The one that I bet will grab you the most is the one that commemorates the famine that we speak of here today.

\* (10:30)

It was absolutely riveting that day when we unveiled that particular monument at Memorial Park and my constituents and many from our Parkland area were there to talk about their experiences. Mr. Speaker, there were some stories that my constituents told that were absolutely spine-chilling. The things that they went through, both in the Ukraine and in Canada when they came here, that we need to shed light on, that we as legislators have a responsibility, along with many of our constituents, to tell those stories.

No. 1, I think we owe it to the people, Ukrainian people who suffered through the famine and came to Canada. I also think we owe it to the next generations, the next generations who will be decision makers in bodies such as this and others.

We owe it to that next generation to make sure that the stories are told and the lessons are learned. That's why I was proud of my constituents, people like Peter Bilash from Dauphin, who's gone now, but played such a pivotal role in the establishment of Memorial Park, such a pivotal role in the establishment of this particular monument in Memorial Park, but suggest, Mr. Speaker, more importantly, such a pivotal role in educating the next generations of Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians who need to know what happened in 1932-1933. They need to know why it happened. They need to know the suffering that it caused, the results that it caused.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it was at that particular ceremony where one of my constituents talked to me and I didn't even realize that she was Ukrainian. I didn't realize she was Ukrainian. She had changed her name, or the name had been changed by her father when she came to Canada. She'd Anglo-Saxonized her name, her father did, because he couldn't get work in Canada. When he changed his name, all of a sudden he became employable.

The famine was terrible enough but, Mr. Speaker, I believe that just as terrible and what we need to be continuing to deal with is the ongoing, the day-to-day, ongoing, longer-lasting attitudes that remain. I think we, as legislators, with this bill are taking a big step forward. I think we're taking a big step forward in dealing with, not just the famine but that lingering attitude, decade after decade, generation to generation that puts people down, that treats people in a secondary way, that tells people that there's one class of people up here and there's another class of people down there. In this case, very clearly, I believe, that's what happened.

Mr. Speaker, I think one of the bigger reasons we need to continue to deal with these bills in this sort of a co-operative fashion is that there are continuing today to be these kind of attitudes that are prevalent, attitudes from one person to another, one person thinking they're better than another all over this planet. We won't deal in a positive way with that kind of an approach unless we remain committed here in this Legislature to do just the kind of things we're doing this morning, shining a light on those kinds of decisions that are made, those kinds of policies, those kinds of programs that are put in place by dictators, by people who think they're better than others.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of what we're doing here today. I know, as a person who represents in my

constituency and our Parkland area a large population of Ukrainian people, a constituency of communities that have worked very hard to push aside those attitudes of superiority, celebrated the contributions of Ukrainian people, the Cross of Freedom, the Trembowla Cross of Freedom, north and west of the community of Dauphin, who've played a huge role in also displaying the contributions and the successes of the Ukrainian community and the hardships that they've been through in our part of the world.

So, Mr. Speaker, just in conclusion, I want to say to the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) and the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), congratulations for bringing this forward in a co-operative manner. I'm very proud today to be able to say that I support this bill.

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield):** My grandparents Albert Schuler and Natalie Arndt [*phonetic*] got married in East Prussia in Königsberg and decided that they were going to seek their fortune and move to Volinia, which is now the northwest part of Ukraine. The reason why they moved there was because Ukraine was viewed as the breadbasket of Europe. It was viewed as a land of opportunity. The fields were equal to something that we would see here in Manitoba, the kind of rich, fertile ground. It was an opportunity to do farming. They bought a lot of land in Volinia. They ended up selling that and they opened up a mill where they were very active in grinding grains and then bought back into more land. Ukraine at that time was prosperous. It was fertile. It was a great place to raise a family. In fact, that's where my father was born.

What we have to be careful about throughout this whole debate is there is this counter-spin or those who want to try to make the argument that somehow this was a famine that was created by bad crops. That is further from the truth because I know from my aunts and uncles and from what I heard that this was a country of unbelievable agricultural wealth. This was a genocide, not bad crops, not a series of bad weather where the crops were doing poorly. This was a genocide.

I want to just relate for the House a story that was given to us by Professor Davis Daycock. He was a professor at the University of Manitoba. He told us this story that he had heard first-hand. There was a town in Ukraine. When the officials came from the Communist Party and wanted to confiscate all the

food, all the grains, there was such an uprising that the Ukrainians of that town with pitchforks, shovels and hoes took on the officials and backed them down. When Moscow heard about this, and evidently it was a directive from Stalin himself, they sent in the Red Army and they wiped out every man, woman, child. Nothing was left of the town. They placed their guns on the outside of town and completely annihilated everything. That was to send a message that when officials came to confiscate what you had, there was no resisting allowed.

This was not a famine. This was a genocide, that people with nothing would stand up against armed officials with pitchforks, with shovels and hoes because they realized that they either took a last stand or it was the end of them. This was not a famine but a genocide.

I would like to say to my two colleagues who brought forward Bill 217, the Member for Russell and the Member for Burrows, as we move on in time we should never forget this incident. This is of unbelievable proportions. In fact, history doesn't even know how many people were forcibly starved to death on their own land in their own homes. For any of us who have children, can you imagine what it was like watching your own children starve to death in front of your eyes and you had nothing, nothing to give them.

This was not a famine. This was a genocide. I would like to thank the two members and I'd like to thank this House for bringing this forward. Let us never forget what took place during that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

\*(10:40)

**Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto):** Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to put a few words on the record about this bill, and I do commend the Member for Russell and the Member for Burrows for bringing this forward.

I'm not going to speak with the same eloquence as many of the speakers before me. What I would like to do though, is to first of all, highlight the significance of this Legislature in Manitoba, being what I believe would be the first Legislature in Canada, perhaps the first Legislature or governing body in the world perhaps, to have an act of this type. That's very important because the deep connections that Manitoba has with Ukraine and with Ukrainian people.

I have my own roots, my great-grandparents actually came from the Ukraine sometime early this century. My great-grandmother, baba, actually lived to well over the age of 90 and never learned to speak English, and that was certainly interesting as a six or seven-year-old to meet this elderly relative who couldn't even speak English, despite being in this country for 70 years. My great-grandfather was killed in a train accident back in the '20s, so I can't even imagine what my great-grandmother went through raising five children on city welfare, as it was at the time. So, certainly, I've got my own Ukrainian roots. I don't know about any ancestors or any relatives that I would have in Ukraine that would had to have lived through the conditions that the Ukrainian people did in the early 1930s.

Certainly, the Ukraine is a country with a long history and it really is an unhappy history. I'm of Ukrainian blood and also Scottish blood which maybe shares a history of being subjugated by other peoples. I mean, for the Ukrainian people, it was a long and unhappy history living under the Russian czar, living under the Hapsburg Empire of Austria-Hungary and, of course, under Stalin, when the communists in Moscow controlled what happened. Certainly, it's a country which has known many dark days and perhaps, certainly none darker than those experienced early in the 1930s. We now know what did happen in those times.

I think it's important as a Legislature not only to come to recognize the famine, but to do two things, as I think the Member for Russell put forward quite strongly. No. 1 is to recognize that this Legislature has the opportunity and has the duty to stand up and recognize human rights violations of this type, of this magnitude; which have happened in the Ukraine; which happened to the Jewish people; which have happened to, unfortunately, other peoples in the world. I think the Member for Russell, very eloquently, summed that up; that it's our duty to stand as legislators, as representatives of the people of Manitoba and speak out when we should.

I also want to commend the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) and the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), who perhaps were too humble to mention it, but their own efforts to further democracy in the Ukraine. I know both of them were observers in the elections which happened in the Ukraine. Elections watched very closely by the western world, when the Orange Revolution truly allowed the Ukrainian people, the individual people, to rise up in a very peaceful and a very positive way to tell the

world that they want to take their place on the stage to be a democratic nation. I commend both of our members, and I think everybody in this House can be very proud that they have come forward. There was the two of them. There were also other individuals in Manitoba. One of my constituents, Marion Peiluck, who lives on Sherburn Street, was one of the observers and has told me some incredible stories about her time in the Ukraine.

So for those reasons, because we can stand as a Legislature and take a step and take a stance to support human rights, and because as a Legislature in a province where Ukrainian people have given so much and have so enriched our culture, our heritage in this province, and where we now know that we can have a close relationship with Ukraine, which is going to develop, which is going to move forward and become, I'm sure, a wealthier country and one with which we can trade. We can use our advantages as Manitobans and steps such as this to strengthen those bonds. So I do commend this Legislature for the co-operative way in which we've done this, and again, I think today as Manitobans we can be just that little bit prouder of the things we've been able to achieve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, I am very proud and privileged to be able put some words on the record regarding Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act. I am very proud of the efforts put forward by the Member for Russell and the support shown by the Member for Burrows on such an important piece of legislation. I believe that, with my background and heritage being Ukrainian, I can say that my family is very pleased to hear that we're paying homage to something that was absolutely unspeakable and obviously violated the human rights of so many Ukrainians during a period of time.

This bill proclaims the fourth Saturday of November as Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day in Manitoba, and I think that this legislation, as has been stated earlier, is significant because it is a first. I believe that we as legislators have a responsibility to ensure that human rights violations such as the horrors that Ukrainians faced in 1932 and '33 are not forgotten, and I believe that this, being the 75th anniversary of the Ukrainian famine and genocide, is an excellent opportunity to put on record, from all sides of this House, our intolerance and our support for intolerance for these types of actions. Earlier it was mentioned that these atrocities have just recently come to light based on

Soviet authorities destroying information, denying it and concealing it. What it did, Mr. Speaker, in a lot of ways, was silence so many, so many Ukrainians who had to live quietly and painfully with the realization that family members, friends, communities, complete communities were destroyed based on hatred.

When I was a young child, I was trying to do some research and determining my past, where my grandparents, great-grandparents came from. I found it rather interesting that when I was talking to my grandmother and others, a lot of this information is lost. I just thought it was based on communication or language, just not being able to read and write. But, you know, I've learned over the years that it wasn't, that wasn't the only reason. Part of the reason was also that there were horrors that my family couldn't share. There are times when we'd be talking about situations of the old country and great-grandpa Kawka or great-grandpa Semochko would cry. You just thought, oh, they miss their family because, you know, they left the old country or the Ukraine when they were 17, 18 years old or 16 years old or 15 years old. You assumed it was based on missing family. That's a piece. But, I think what we've learned from this and from the research that is now coming forward is it was worse than that. There were things that they just didn't want to talk about, that they didn't want to remember.

So I think this legislation is important, not only for the Ukrainian population, but I think for humankind. I guess I'm honoured in a lot of ways to be able to say I'm the critic for Multiculturalism because I think you learn about other cultures and you learn the significance of respecting and appreciating people's history and your culture and be proud of that. I think that situations like the genocide just reinforce the strength that people had in choosing a life outside of that country and having the strength to get past the atrocities that they faced. I believe that we are so fortunate to live in a country like Canada and especially the province of Manitoba where we can speak freely and debate freely our ideals and our beliefs.

\* (10:50)

Recently, my mother and father travelled to the Ukraine and they met family. I've listened to the stories and seen the pictures and was very pleased. I also have a brother who works in the Department of Agriculture and has had the opportunity to go back to the Ukraine. In listening today to the debates, what

he has done over the last I guess eight or nine years, he has gone back to the Ukraine and worked with the Ukrainians to help them learn how to grow better crops, to learn how to work together to develop a stronger agriculture industry.

I think that this has gone full circle in some way because now my brother is helping our ancestors and our families to get back on track, to understand the importance of feeding your family. The Ukraine, as the member had said earlier, is the breadbasket of Europe, and I think that we need to be looking at ways, as Jeff [*phonetic*] is doing through his work, to help countries that need the support, need the assistance to become self-sustaining and to provide food for their own, Mr. Speaker.

A member from the other side of the House, I think it was the Member for Dauphin, spoke about changing your name. I do have family, also, that had done that. I remember the woman talking to my grandmother about it. Her name was Anne Harris [*phonetic*] and she was actually Anne Veruschka [*phonetic*]. It was the same thing. She wanted to change her name and it did increase her opportunities for prosperity in her family. I know that she responded to family as Veruschka [*phonetic*], but to everybody else it was Harris. I believe that when you do something like that because of personal need for economic benefit, I think it was an embarrassment to her that she would have to do that and leave the name behind in a sense.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that this legislation brings back memories. I think it shows that we need to continue to push to ensure that we as legislators show our intolerance. I believe that the museum of humanity, which will be coming to our province, should be recognized as an important symbol and will be an important resource for us to continue to appreciate and understand the importance of remembering and realizing that we should learn from past mistakes and move forward.

So, again, I thank you for this opportunity and I want to congratulate the members for Russell and Burrows for bringing something very important to the Legislature. I will support this bill. Thank you.

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to put on the record why this should matter to Manitobans and why this is such an important statement and why we in the year 2007 would be reflecting on events from the 1930s or any historic period.

Well, obviously, this is important to our Ukrainian community. I know this, Mr. Speaker, from my own community, my own constituency. I've always said I'm very part of our Ukrainian community in Thompson. Along with my wife, we attend the Ukrainian Orthodox church, so I've often felt that I've been adopted by Ukrainians and the Ukrainian community.

There are many of us, I think, who have that strong connection. We know that as long as there are still people living, we have to tell the story. I think it's appropriate that while there are still survivors of what happened in the 1930s, of the genocide, that we tell their stories. I think, today, with this debate and with this fine approach to putting a real focus in on that, we're doing that. We're giving validity to the suffering that the survivors witnessed.

But, you know, there's something else I think we have to put on the record, too, and that is that this is not just of importance because of our Ukrainian connection in this province. We are a province of diversity. You know, Mr. Speaker, we have probably a hundred languages spoken in this province. We have people from all over the world joining with our First Nations and Métis people building this great province.

I think it's very appropriate that we will soon have the Museum for Human Rights right here in Winnipeg, because the key element of building this province has been of developing, not necessarily always having, but developing increasingly a tolerant society in which we not only respect human rights but we are proud of our view in this province of the importance of human rights. And I say that because this is what underlies this.

When we talk about the genocide, what could be more fundamental of violation of human rights than this genocide or any genocide? And I think it's important to put on the record, as we look at this terrible chapter in history, how much we can learn from what happened in the 20th century. The lesson of the genocide that took place in the Ukraine was very clear, and that is the kind of totalitarianism that we saw, whether it be Stalin or later the terrible occupation of Hitler of eastern Europe. That is a period of time in history that's still in the memory of many people, many generations around the world, but it's something we must never forget because, you know, quite frankly, it still amazes me when I think that this has happened in the lifetime of people right here in this province, and there are survivors of the

Ukrainian genocide, the survivors of what happened in Ukraine afterwards.

You know, even if we're talking about a more historic period of time, I think, when we reflect on genocides, it's important to talk about the Holocaust and the very fine recognition we have at the Manitoba Legislature of the Holocaust. That is forever etched in the memory of the Jewish community and the many others that suffered in the Second World War because of the deliberate policies of genocide targeted towards Jews, towards people of different political beliefs, toward gays, toward anyone that did not fit the totalitarian model of the world.

I want to reflect on other genocides that are very much in the news and, in the terms of discussion, particularly Armenian and Pontian genocide. There's been a wave of recognition throughout the world of that, the dying days of the Ottoman empire. That is something that if you talk to anybody from the Armenian community or the Greek community, the Pontian genocide, they will tell you that, until there is clear recognition of what happened in that genocide, why can we assume it will not happen again? When we see all the terrible events, even of recent years, in Rwanda, when we see what's happening in Sudan, when we saw what happened in the former Yugoslavia, I think we have to remind ourselves of one thing. When we pass this legislation, partly it's about recognizing what happened, but it's also about learning the importance of peace and reconciliation.

It's important to recognize that those who will be remembered out of the 20th century will not be the Stalins and the Hitlers, they will be the Gandhis and the Mandelas and the Martin Luther Kings, that there is a better way than the violence that's inherent in any totalitarian system, and that is that vision of non-violence, a vision of human rights for all, and that is the spirit in which I want to wholeheartedly support this. It's not often we get to rise above the partisan debate, not often we get to have all parties coming together. But I think, in doing so, we need to recognize in this province the importance of reconciliation and moving on and building a tolerant society.

That is why I will be wholeheartedly supporting that, and I think this is one of the finest kind of examples of what this Legislature is all about, rising above the partisanship and focussing on this case,

a clear message we recognize the genocide and we support human rights.

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

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question before the House is second reading of Bill 217, The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day Act.

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

The hour being 11 o'clock, we will now move on to resolutions, and we'll deal with the resolution dealing with Spirited Energy.

**Ms. Marilyn Brick (St. Norbert):** Mr. Speaker, could it be shown on the record that this was adopted unanimously?

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll show it on the record that it was unanimous by all members of the House. Is that agreed? *[Agreed]*

\* (11:00)

## RESOLUTION

### Res. 2—Spirited Energy

**Mr. Speaker:** We'll deal with the resolution now, it being 11 o'clock. We'll deal with Spirited Energy.

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa):** I move, seconded by the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach),

WHEREAS this provincial government has already wasted 3 millions of Manitobans' hard-earned tax dollars on the failed Spirited Energy campaign; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade has publicly stated that the government is going to waste at least another \$1 million by quoting, "We'll move forward"; and

WHEREAS this same government used some of that taxpayer money to purchase beer and wine for campaign organizers; and

WHEREAS the government hid from taxpayers untendered, unreported contracts on this campaign adding up to more than \$250,000; and

WHEREAS the government fought tooth and nail to hide focus group data and invoices from Manitobans that were only released when the Ombudsman demanded their release from government; and

WHEREAS when this information was finally released, after a seven-month fight, the focus group data proved that the campaign tested negatively from the start, and the government proceeded to sink millions into it anyway; and

WHEREAS many of the invoices, when released, were still heavily censored, hiding information from taxpayers about how money was spent; and

WHEREAS the fact that opposition MLAs were issued FIPPA responses that showed that no money was being spent on the campaign during the time the Auditor General was investigating the campaign, it was later revealed that they were spending approximately \$20,000 per month on the campaign; and

WHEREAS the government claimed that there was \$1 million in private funding in the campaign, a statement that was later proven false when it was revealed that the government was misrepresenting Crown corporations as private donors; and

WHEREAS despite the \$3 million sunk into the campaign, only about 5 percent of that money has been spent promoting Manitoba to people living outside the province, which should be the goal of any provincial image campaign; and

WHEREAS responses to the campaign by Manitobans have been nearly uniformly negative; and

WHEREAS Manitoba has a tried, tested and true slogan in Friendly Manitoba that it recognized both nationally and internationally.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to immediately stop all funding for the Spirited Energy campaign; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider abandoning this campaign in favour of the tried and tested Friendly Manitoba slogan to promote Manitoba tourism and economic development.

**Mr. Speaker:** I'd like to ask the leader of the House to accept the resolution as printed—not as read, but as printed. Is that agreeable? Okay. It's been agreeable. Okay. It's been agreed to.

*WHEREAS this provincial government has already wasted \$3 million of Manitobans' hard-earned tax dollars on the failed Spirited Energy campaign; and*

*WHEREAS the Minister of Competitiveness, Training and Trade has publicly stated that the government is going to waste at least another \$1 million by quoting, "We'll move forward"; and*

*WHEREAS this same government used some of that taxpayer money to purchase beer and wine for campaign organizers; and*

*WHEREAS the government hid from taxpayers untendered, unreported contracts on this campaign adding up to more than \$250,000; and*

*WHEREAS the government fought tooth and nail to hide focus group data, and invoices, from Manitobans that were only released when the Ombudsman demanded their release from government; and*

*WHEREAS when this information was finally released after a seven-month fight, the focus group data proved that the campaign tested negatively from the start, and the government proceeded to sink millions into it anyway; and*

*WHEREAS many of the invoices, when released, were still heavily censored, hiding information from taxpayers about how money was spent; and*

*WHEREAS despite the fact that opposition MLAs were issued FIPPA responses that showed that no money was being spent on the campaign during the time the Auditor General was investigating the campaign, it was later revealed that they were spending approximately \$20,000 per month on the campaign; and*

*WHEREAS the government claimed that there was \$1 million in private funding in the campaign, a statement that was later proven false when it was revealed that the government was misrepresenting Crown corporations as private donors; and*

*WHEREAS despite the \$3 million sunk into the campaign, only about 5 percent of that money has been spent promoting Manitoba to people living outside the province, which should be the goal of any provincial image campaign; and*

*WHEREAS responses to the campaign by Manitobans have been nearly uniformly negative; and*

*WHEREAS Manitoba had a tried, tested and true slogan in Friendly Manitoba that is recognized both nationally and internationally.*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the*

*provincial government to immediately stop all funding for the Spirited Energy campaign; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider abandoning this campaign in favour of the tried and tested Friendly Manitoba slogan to promote Manitoba tourism and economic development.*

It's been moved by the honourable Member for Minnedosa, seconded by the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach),

WHEREAS—dispense? Dispense.

**Mrs. Rowat:** Today, the last day of this session or this sitting, I thought it was appropriate that we should have a debate on the Spirited Energy campaign, especially this festive season, Mr. Speaker, because this has been a gift that for many months just kept on giving. But now we're realizing, as we get further, further into this situation or this campaign, that it's a gift that keeps on taking.

*Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair*

Taxpayers have been funnelling money into this black hole now for several months. The dollars keep rising, and we're into the \$3-million mark. So I think that this debate today we'll talk a little bit about the challenges that this campaign has faced and look at the reasons why we should be going back to the tested and true Friendly Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we've always maintained that this campaign was originally designed to make the NDP look good, more than it was about making this province a place to want to come to, to live, and I believe that this was exemplified when we learned that the NDP executive director signed off on many of the campaign expenses for the Spirited Energy campaign.

So I believe that we should be throwing the towel in on the Spirited Energy campaign and direct the monies that were earmarked for this campaign to more worthwhile causes. We should be looking at supporting families and victims of child exploitation, looking at ways that we can support families, Child and Family Service case workers with caseloads that are just too difficult to handle. There are front-line health-care workers, personal care homes that are looking for staff.

We're looking for ways to support so many challenges in our province, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I believe that we need to be looking at ways that we can make this province stronger, and I believe that putting \$3 million into a failed campaign is just not on. Three million dollars and this minister, during Estimates, knew very little about the workings of that campaign. He continually deferred questions to staff. He did not respond. He indicated he'd get back to me on issues that we raised and he failed to do that. So I think that this speaks volumes to his inability to understand how these \$3 million were spent, and I think that we need to be looking at better ways of promoting our province.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I do believe that—discussions with a constituent of mine sums it up clearly. He's a young man that lives in my constituency and we were talking one day about the Spirited Energy campaign. He had been reading the blogs, had been looking at Facebook and, seeing how Spirited Energy has destroyed your life, that's the quote of the Facebook series, and spoke about how this promotion, this campaign really made him angry because he's been looking for a job for a number of months, and I believe that he's failing to see what advantage there is in Manitoba. These ads and these promotions have done nothing to assist young Manitobans in wanting to stay in Manitoba, so I believe that it has failed on many accounts.

I believe that Alberta has it right. They put out, you know, a *Job Opportunities and More*, promoting Calgary and other areas. This would be what Spirited Energy should have been about. It's a great publication that was put in the *Winnipeg Sun* a while back, and it talks about what we offer: Sears Canada, Transportational Logistics, great chance to move up, housing markets, talking about financial services. You know, it's an excellent, excellent publication.

And you know what, Madam Deputy Speaker? It was funded by the private sector which gets me to this point. When the government spoke about private investment that they believed was contributing to this campaign, the private investment we found out was the cost that the companies were doing in putting up the banners. So I think that when we started to ask more questions about how these dollars were being spent, the government started to clam up.

They didn't want to respond to the questions. And so I think the former Member for Brandon West indicated, well, speak to the Ombudsman. So we did, and the Ombudsman's office was very frustrated with this government's inability to provide information that was required. They faced the same frustrations

and the same challenges we faced in trying to get information.

It was great to see that the Auditor General did do an audit, and I believe that by doing that it provided us with more information, Madam Deputy Speaker. It spoke about the focus groups. It talked about the negative feedback that was being shared by people that saw the focus group information.

So that should have been a red flag, and there are so many red flags to government on so many issues that I can't believe the government missed them. But I believe that they are colour blind to the colour red because the focus groups indicated that it was a thumbs down, that they didn't believe that this was going to do anything to help promote Manitoba outside of, as I said earlier, to promote the NDP and their government.

\*(11:10)

So I believe that when we were talking about wasted dollars and finding out where these dollars were going, we recently uncovered that all the monies that had been made in the sale of Spirited Energy merchandise had gone into general revenue. That's an issue in a number of ways, Madam Deputy Speaker, in the sense that often you can't even get the merchandise that you order on-line. Five thousand dollars a month to maintain a Web site that doesn't work should be a concern. I'm quite concerned that I probably was the only one that has ever placed an order, actually, on the Spirited Energy Web site. But, you know, they lost my order. I went down and picked up my pen and it works, but that's about the best news I can say has occurred from this issue.

The government actually had a partnership with MPI on the Spirited Energy campaign and put \$90,000 into the Spirited Energy campaign. We recently were told that we're going to get a rebate and that's wonderful. That's great, but do you realize this is just one area where there would have been at least \$90,000 additionally given back to ratepayers? Instead, MPI was directed to give the money to the Spirited Energy campaign, and, again, that was squandered.

So I believe the arrogance of the government to use MPI premiums to subsidize Spirited Energy at a time when they say no more money is going into the campaign is symbolic of their arrogance. I believe that the debate today will show that again this government continues to mismanage and continues to be secretive on so many important issues, and

I believe that Friendly Manitoba is where we need to be and be at. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Hon. Jim Rondeau (Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines):** I'm pleased to follow the Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat) to put some actual correct information on the record and actually correct the member's statements.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

First, I question, Mr. Speaker, the comment about arrogance. Arrogance is when you take the opinion that you know much, much more than the business community, than Bob Silver, than the Chambers of Commerce of Manitoba and Winnipeg, than all the business leaders, than Gail Asper, than all these people who have been in the business world who have said that they would lead this campaign and take their own time, talent and efforts to lead a campaign.

Also, it's arrogance to say that you know better and that they should throw it all away, especially when the Leader of the Conservative Party goes and tells other people that he supports the campaign. The Member for Minnedosa says that it's a wart and unsightly and throws aspersions on these people who have dedicated time, effort and talents. I believe that what we have got is we worked hard to develop a partnership.

I feel sad that the member opposite from Minnedosa and many members over there haven't read the audit. If they've read the audit, they will understand that what she said was totally inaccurate, incorrect and inappropriate. I would hope that she would start to read it, get past page 5. I know she has difficulty doing that but get past page 5, read the report, and you'll realize that what we have said was accurate all the way through. No. 2, it was a unique private-public partnership and the business community led it. It was not politically led.

Then the other thing you have to realize is that she said, where were the private investors. I would hope that she starts to look at the banners. I would hope that she looks at the business leaders of Manitoba and the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce which have used this material in their advertising. I would hope that she opens the *Winnipeg Free Press* on Monday, December 3, where it says, "Christian schools look outside province." Again, they're using a Spirited Education brand which is working off the Spirited Energy brand.

It's not something directed by government. It's something that was meant to have government work in partnership with multiple partners to brand, to come up with a consistent brand that people could use. It wasn't led by the NDP party. It was led by the business community and I would hope that the member—and I'll go through the audit piece by piece.

On page 2, and if the Member for Minnedosa would bother to open the Auditor General's report, on page 2, third paragraph, it says, "The process was a public-private collaboration to develop and launch a place brand."

The bottom of the page, it says, "The Image Campaign to date has involved the development of the place brand, an initial launch of the brand in Manitoba, advertising using the place brand image primarily in Manitoba." Then it goes on to say then that will move out, but to make sure that people understand it.

Page 3 and page 4—If you turn to page 4—I would please hope that the members from the opposition would open the Auditor General's book on page 4. It says: We verified the total amount of spending by the government departments on the image campaign between April 1, 2004, and March 31, 2007, was \$2,871,000. In addition, the government departments incurred expenses, et cetera.

It says that these, basically, were what was stated in public. So the amount that was spent was stated in public.

Mr. Speaker, if one notes, I provided to the member opposite's caucus—I know she may not talk to other people in her caucus, but I hope she does because we provided a copy of all the invoices that it was deemed by an officer of the Legislature appropriate to send out. We sent out what was appropriate. We kept commercial confidential as defined by an officer of the Legislature out of the invoices. Everything else was provided. There were lots of copies provided, and I'm pleased about that.

It also says whether this was politically driven. "All research work paid for by public money gathered information relating only to the Image Campaign. Our review indicated that the research findings and results were utilized to inform successive aspects of the Image Campaign." That's written on page 5, Mr. Speaker. So, if the member had gotten to page 5, she would have noticed that most of the premises, almost all the premises in this resolution were incorrect. All the aspersions that the

member opposite throws on a regular basis to the business community, to others, were proven incorrect if she had taken the time and effort to read to page 5 in the Auditor General's report.

Then, I would also take the time to note that when she says spending money is inappropriate. She said, spending money in the province is something that shouldn't happen. Well, I'd like to inform the member opposite—I know she wasn't in prior to 1999—but for example, in 1998-99, the Tory government spent \$4.2 million in one year of what \$2.1 million was directly on promotions and advertising.

So, if you look at the annual spending on this campaign versus what was spent by the Conservative government in the year leading up to the election, they spent \$4.2 million in one single year on promotions and advertising. So I would say that it would be passing strange how they can say that this is inappropriate when it's been following past practices.

When you start talking about what's happened, we followed the advice of the Premier's Economic Advisory Council on promoting the province. If you look on page 6, it says, with regard to why the Province got into this unique partnership to promote the province and follow the Spirited Energy campaign, it says, "With regards to Image, PEAC members noted that 'Manitoba's "lack of" or "negative" image does not reflect the reality of Manitoba's economic opportunity . . . and that this negatively affects the province's ability to attract investment dollars and attract and retain current and future employees, therefore affecting economic growth.' As a result, PEAC recommended to the Premier that the Province work to develop 'a comprehensive provincial image re-branding strategy, incorporating the needs of all economic stakeholders and which would then be used as an umbrella strategy each partner would work within.' "

So, if the Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat) would read to page 6, she would understand that this is an economic strategy that the business community suggested to the Premier that we work in unique partnership to promote and grow the province.

\* (11:20)

What have been the results, Mr. Speaker? Well, under the Tories, people left. There was a net out-migration; the province was decreasing in population. I'm pleased to let all members in this

House know that we're going to have 1.2 million people sometime in 2008. That means the province is growing; it's grown by about 65,000 people since 1999, which has reversed what has happened in the province under the Conservatives.

If you look at capital investment, it's interesting to note that under capital investment, under investments by businesses in the '90s—the Member for Minnedosa should try to pay attention to this—investment is very low under the Conservative government; less capital investment; people were leaving the province, et cetera. Under our government the capital investments, the investment businesses make in this province, are at highest record; GDP, at the highest record; productivity gain, very, very good, leading the country.

So when you're looking at people moving back to Manitoba, that's what's happening under this government. What's happening is young people are staying; there are far, far more young people staying. Under your government, thousands of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 left. Under our government people are staying.

Under your government—very, very few new industries. Under our government you have new media; you have the film industry; you have the gaming industry; you have mining just doing wonderfully. You have a lot of new business immigration that are creating new businesses. So when you're talking about, does advertising work? Well, we followed the advice of the business community. They don't; they haven't followed the advice of the business community. They didn't drop taxes; they didn't drop small-business taxes. But they did market the year before the election; they did market and promote the year before the election. They spent a lot more in one single year than the entire Spirited Energy campaign.

When you talk about the Auditor General's report, and I hope that the Member for Minnedosa actually cracks—

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

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** Mr. Speaker, it's kind of hard to get in the groove when we've just dealt with a bill where we all agreed on and then to try to switch gears to a situation where we're now on opposite sides of the fence. It's a little difficult to do but I think I can adjust.

Mr. Speaker, I've just listened to the minister of—the minister who rambled and I have to say to him that self-gratification by patting yourself on the back doesn't do anything for this province or the economy of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the minister talked about us not listening to the business community. The minister has failed to listen to Manitobans. Manitobans have told this minister that the Spirited Energy campaign is a dud. They have told this government that the Spirited Energy campaign is not one that is embraced by Manitobans. As a matter of fact, in travelling to some of the other jurisdictions across this country, other jurisdictions who, when you mention the Spirited Energy campaign, they kind of put their hands over their mouths and snicker about it. Well, that's not the way this side of the House wants to promote our province.

We are proud of our province. We are a side of the House that endorsed Friendly Manitoba because no matter where you travel in this world, if you come from Manitoba, people will know you as a friendly person, a person who is friendly to people, a person who welcomes the world into our province. The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, scoffs at that idea. Mr. Speaker, let him not scoff at it because that is what is embraced by most Manitobans today.

Now the government wants to view itself as being modern and attaching itself to a modern slogan. Well, Mr. Speaker, how can you ever put your arms around Spirited Energy? Has anybody ever thought about that? Can you visualize Spirited Energy? Has anybody been able to do that? They can't even visualize it in their banners. All you see is a great big banner that was hanging on the north side of the Great-West building, a great big banner with the letters Spirited Energy and you wondered, what does that mean? If anybody came to Manitoba and saw that banner he'd say, now what does that mean?

Mr. Speaker, the government can't even illustrate to Manitobans and to the world what Spirited Energy is. How can we now endorse that as the new, sort of, template of our province: This province is moving ahead with something called Spirited Energy. We really can't put it in a picture. We really can't visualize it. We really can't put our arms around it, but it's some kind of a concept out there that's supposed to drive this province ahead. Well, the government has really missed the mark.

And, Mr. Speaker, there's just a little hint of arrogance in the way that they did this, just a little hint of arrogance, because no matter what Manitobans told them about it, no matter what Manitobans said about them after they came out with this, they continued on the path of spending millions of dollars, millions of dollars that were spent on this campaign, money thrown down a rat hole. The minister, if he had been proud of this, he would have said, you're darn right I'm spending money on this because it is something Manitobans want. Instead he hid the numbers. He wouldn't come forward with those numbers.

So we spend \$3 million on a Spirited Energy campaign. If that's something Manitobans want, if it's something they endorse, if it's something that they support, then we will all go together in that direction. But, Mr. Speaker, we heard the exact opposite. Manitobans said, stop spending money on that foolishness. It isn't doing anything for our province. It isn't telling the world that our province is a great and wonderful place to be in. Stop that foolishness right now and put your money where it should be better spent.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask the question about our new licence plate, whenever it comes out. Now our little licence plate says Friendly Manitoba. Anybody who drives behind a Manitoba vehicle that says Friendly Manitoba on that licence plate, it kind of means something. You can associate with it. You can visualize it. You can embrace it.

Now we're going to have something called Spirited Energy on the licence plate, and I think anybody who sees that will wonder, well, what in the H is that? What is that supposed to mean? How am I going to embrace that little Spirited Energy slogan?

Well, Mr. Speaker, once again, when I say the government displays a hint of arrogance in this, I mean that they have not listened to Manitobans. They know better. It's just like the routing of the bipole 3. It doesn't matter what Manitobans say. It doesn't matter what experts say. It doesn't matter what the academics say. It doesn't matter what Manitoba Hydro says. The government says, we know better. We know better. Sure, it's going to cost more money, but we don't care because we're right; we're in government. We're the government. *[interjection]* Well, yeah, the Premier (Mr. Doer) pretty well said it. He said, I don't care. Well, I don't care. That is arrogance and Manitobans don't like arrogance.

**An Honourable Member:** How about forward, not back.

**Mr. Derkach:** Well, what about forward, not back. *[interjection]* That's good, thank you. That's what we're trying to encourage the government to do, is move forward, not backward, because the government is moving backward in all of this.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are pushing back. They're saying, stop this foolishness. Stop spending all this money on Spirited Energy.

If the government were proud of what it was doing, why didn't the Freedom of Information requests that were put forward by my colleague the Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat), why were those not responded to quickly if, in fact, this government was proud of what it was doing? Why was all that hidden?

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is typical of this government. Just last night in committee, we found that the government was once again hiding things. Now, we saw—and I've mentioned it in this House before—the settlement with the Lockport developers who were paid hush money by this government, on the Premier's behalf, not to disclose what that settlement was all about. We learned last night in committee that as it relates to the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission who were sued by the private wine stores and settled out of court for some \$8 million, the newspaper's report—we asked that question yesterday about how much money was that settlement for and what was it for, and what answer did we get? Well, because of the confidentiality clause of the agreement, we can't disclose this.

\* (11:30)

Now, here's a government that wants to talk about openness, integrity, accountability, yet, when questions are asked about its accountability on matters like the Spirited Energy campaign, on matters like the Law Courts settlement, on matters like the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission settlement with the private wine stores, this government hides things. And then they talk about pride, they talk about accountability, they talk about openness, they talk about transparency. All of that is hypocritical, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Spirited Energy campaign is just another one of those issues that the government has moved on arrogantly. It has refused to disclose information. It has put money down a rat hole. And now it has been left with something that

Manitobans are starting to tear down themselves, because we saw the Manitoba Hydro building no longer displays that big banner of nothing. *[interjection]*

Oh. They're going to move it. Well, I'll wait and see if this great big banner is going to be placed on the new Hydro building that really says nothing except Spirited Energy and then some snowflakes or something on it, and that's about all you can see on it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess those who produced the banner made some money on it. We have spent millions of dollars on this failed campaign, and I don't know whether we're going to continue to sit on this and hope that somehow it's going to catch fire down the road, or whether the government will somehow regroup, see the light, and really ask Manitobans what our slogan should be in this province, because Manitobans will tell you. Manitobans will tell you.

Mr. Speaker, you know, they consulted with Manitobans on the Louis Riel Day. They went to the schools and said, you tell us what the holiday should be. Why didn't they do the same thing on a slogan for Manitoba? They might have gotten a different answer. Manitobans may have told them that Friendly Manitoba is not too bad, or they may have told them something else, but they sure weren't going to tell them that we are a province that endorses Spirited Energy. *[interjection]*

Well, even the focus groups didn't endorse it. Mr. Speaker, that just shows you the arrogance of a government that has been there too long, that has started to get out of touch with Manitobans, and in their last gasp, their last four years in government, they are going to do things because they are the government. They are the government who has the power, and I regret that.

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** This is such a great debate because it really shows you two, I'll say, distinct visions, but actually it really is one vision and one complete lack of vision. And I think if you want to see where the Tories are at in this province right now and probably why they are in opposition, you can just read the *Hansard* of the last couple of speeches because, in an increasingly global world, when we're competing and doing quite well internationally around the world, where every part of this province, where it's my part of the province, northern Manitoba, where we are selling nickel to China, or rural Manitoba where agricultural products are being shipped around the

world, or capital city which has markets in every corner of the world, we have the opposition getting up, and they not only argue against the branding of Manitoba, they argue against the branding process itself.

Well, let's start with one ever-present reality in the global world. You've got to brand whether you're a company, quite frankly, politically you brand yourself too, and you have to brand yourself as a province. If you're not going to brand yourself as a province, you're going to be road kill on the way to global development.

Now, let's talk about branding for a moment. Who would you think would have a better sense of branding than anyone else in this province? Just maybe it would be the business community. Well, who led the branding process that led to Spirited Energy. It was the business community. I hate to say it. Not the Member for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat), not the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), not the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). You know, it was the business community. And we're talking about businesses that are competing each and every day. They know the value of branding.

Now, there is the alternate argument coming from the Member for Russell. He seems to sort of understand you need a brand, but what he wants to do is he wants to go back to the same old brand that we've had for many years. Now, I've got news for the Member for Russell. When you brand, you identify what is unique about what you are saying, what you're doing.

Now, you know what? Manitoba is friendly, but Mr. Speaker, I've travelled. About the only place in the world I ever found where people wouldn't say they're friendly is probably New York City. I love New York City but they don't pride themselves on being friendly, believe you me.

You know, which province, which state, which country would see only us as being the friendly part of the world? When I travel—actually, you know what they know internationally? They know Churchill. They know our polar bears, believe you me. You know what? Throughout North America if you go you'll find a lot of people increasingly saying our diversity, our ethno-cultural diversity in this province, our tremendous ecosystems. We go from desert to the tundra. People understand that. You know, you put together a branding strategy. You sit down with people who know what to do, the business community, and then you come up with a

brand. Not everybody in every focus group agrees with it.

Now I want to give you a couple of examples, by the way, of how branding works and why the Tories don't really understand the concept. What was the Tory branding in the last election? The only thing I can remember is, bring back the Jets. I mean, again, back to the future, right?

**An Honourable Member:** The ad in the parking lot.

**Mr. Ashton:** The ad in the parking lot. Yeah, but what was their branding? What did they stand for other than sort of a nostalgic rethink of the '90s? Well, let's forget about what happened in '99. I let everything in there. You know, leave it at the same divisive, one part of the province against the other, but what was their brand? You ask Manitobans what the NDP message was, what the NDP brand was, forward not back.

How about the previous election? Can anybody remember what the Tories ran on? Can you remember? Ours was, much accomplished, more to do. It said a lot about where we were at as a government, where we were at as a political party. It's called branding. It's called messaging and in the world of 2007, when we have not just the traditional sort of media that we've been used to but where we now have the Internet, we can access information from around the world. If we're going to stand out as a province, we have to brand.

I realize that the Member for Minnedosa would rather see no brand at all and the Member for Russell would like to see the same old brand that's out there. You know what? This is not the Manitoba of the 1990s. I wonder sometimes, by the way, if they want us to go back to the Manitoba of the 1890s but you know you cannot compete in the global economy unless you brand the province.

By the way, having the brand you had 10 and 20 and 30 years ago isn't going to cut it. You name me a corporation out there that has succeeded internationally that isn't constantly working on its message, on its product and the rest. Now, you know what? I'm proud of this province. We have a lot to sell and I've got to tell you, by the way, I bet you people who do like the Spirited Energy label. *[interjection]*

Well, I'll tell you. Many Aboriginal people I have talked to have said, it's about time we had the concept of spirit. Spirited. They see that as connecting to the fact that this is the province, by the

way, it's the highest Aboriginal population in the country. It's going to be critical to our future success. In terms of energy—[interjection]

Well, I can understand why the Tories don't want to talk about energy because, you know, they can sit at Hydro and they can talk about bipoles all they want. They won't talk about dams because the only thing Tories do when they get into government, they shut down dams. We are the builders of that. We've been that way since 1969.

Energy, clean energy, yes, now with wind energy, with biodiesel, with ethanol. You know, the Member for Minnedosa I thought would have at least understood that this is an energy province with what's happening right in her area of the province. What I love, by the way, is not even the sense of admitting that this government has made a real effort and done a lot of work in working with the local committee because, by the way, that's another thing we believe in, is partnership. Partnerships, something they don't realize but they don't get it because you know what I've heard, by the way? I haven't heard any suggestion from them other than what we had 10 years ago, and 20 years ago. And you know what? This is a province you either look forward or you look back.

\* (11:40)

So I want to finish on branding. You can call it what you want. You have a blank slate there for what the Conservatives really stand for other than, I think we know, it's backward, but we in the election said forward, not back. That is what the Spirited Energy is about, a forward-looking approach for this province understanding that not only do we have to brand and compete internationally. You know what? We're pretty darn good at it and I would say, Mr. Speaker, maybe I did give the members opposite a little bit too much advice here but we are an entrepreneurial province or a diverse province or succeeding internationally and I don't care, quite frankly, what the members opposite want to throw in the way of petty criticisms about our business community and Spirited Energy. Because you know what? I'll take the word of our business partners in this province on the importance of branding and the concept they came up with. I'll take their word any day over a party that's stuck in the past, Mr. Speaker. It's either the future under this government or it's the past under the Tories. That's branding forward not back. Thank you.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I was surprised that the Member for Thompson would be an individual that would stand up and attempt to defend the Spirited Energy campaign.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Thompson and the government, when they talk about rebranding, they make it sound as if this is something that had to happen. I hate to think in terms of what the board of directors of Nike and McDonald's and all these other world Crown corporations would be doing, world entities when they would have opinions such as theirs in terms of the need to change. You know, a brand is something which you don't have to change if it seems to be working.

I look at the government in terms of what has it actually done. In reality, how has it changed the branding? What's the total package here? The first thing that they changed just prior to bringing in or as a part of that whole Spirited Energy campaign was the new Doer government buffalo, Mr. Speaker. From individuals that are familiar with the issue you will know that we used to have a buffalo representing us in terms of our letterheads and promos and so forth. It even looked like a buffalo.

Today the Doer government brought in the bull and it brings in a lot of bull, Mr. Speaker, into this Chamber. We are seeing a lot of bull on a lot of documents coming from this government. If you take a look at that new logo, it looks like a bull, a bull on steroids is how someone explained it to me.

Well, the government says, call an election, call an election on the issue. We had an election and Manitobans endorsed and embraced Spirited Energy. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you Spirited Energy and this new-found bull from the government is something which I brought to the doors, I included it in my brochures. The government should be advised that the percentage of my vote went up; it went up significantly.

So, if we want to base it on how much did the government campaign on Spirited Energy versus a local campaign in Inkster, I can tell you that the voters did speak. The voters spoke in Inkster and said that the Spirited Energy campaign is in fact a dud, Mr. Speaker. The reconfiguration of Manitoba's bull or bison just doesn't fly.

Mr. Speaker, as you know and members know, I table a lot of petitions. Virtually every day I'm up on petitions. Well, I did a petition on the Spirited Energy campaign. This is the only petition in which I

had to tell people I don't need any more; I don't want any more petitions. I literally had to tell people that I don't require any more petitions on the issue. In fact, I'll table some of the leftovers that I have on it. I started to pile them together. There are so many people that this particular issue offended, so many people that it offended that they don't want anything to do with it. Think about it. If the government really believed that the Spirited Energy campaign was working and doing the job it should have done, one of the most logical extensions would have been to put it on licence plates because there are 500,000 little billboards around our province, to brand it on the licence plate.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that someone within the government was able to persuade that that would be a bad thing to do. I'll tell you something. If in fact the government did move in that direction you will have hundreds of Manitobans at the Legislature criticizing this government for doing such a stupid thing. People can identify, better identify with Friendly Manitoba than Spirited Energy. The government tends to do things, and if it doesn't work, what they do is they try to blame someone else, like issues that come before the Legislature and they think that it's a negative thing, blame Ottawa. Blame Ottawa for anything that's bad. Anything good, take credit. Anything bad, blame Ottawa.

Well, what have they done with the Spirited Energy campaign? They're not blaming Ottawa. I'm surprised, Mr. Speaker. Instead they're going to pass the blame on the business community. They bring up Bob Silver's name time and time again. They bring up Gail Asper's name. Wonderful individuals. We don't question the integrity of these individuals, but they try to bring up those names to try to diffuse, to say, oh, we're not responsible; don't blame us for Spirited Energy. The way in which they tried to bring false information to this Legislature about private money that's going toward the propping up of the Spirited Energy campaign, private dollars going towards it, well, these are donations of buildings and using buildings to put up banners that have been purchased by the taxpayer in good part. It's cheque exchanges of sorts, is what we've been able to witness.

Mr. Speaker, what does the government have against Friendly Manitoba? Does Friendly Manitoba go against its justice policies because of the justice problems that we have in the province of Manitoba, whether it's the automobile thefts, gangs, grow ops, prostitution, drug problems and it just goes against

the Friendly Manitoba concept? So does it go against our justice policy? What's wrong with Friendly Manitoba?

First and foremost, the government should have demonstrated the need for a change and they didn't do that. They didn't come to the Legislature or go to a committee of the Legislature and say, well, look, we need to rebrand our province. We need to look at another slogan for our province. They didn't do that. They didn't consult with Manitobans in terms of how to come up with a different name. Even the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) talked about minorities and our diversity. There are many other different ways in which we could have rebranded our province if the need would have been justified.

The logo itself, I believe the logo, which I believe cost somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$500,000, was developed, from what I understand, from the States. It was an American logo that was developed. I can tell you that whether it's Sisler High School, Tec-Voc, Maples, there are high schools throughout the province that could have come up with a better looking buffalo or bison than the Province did, and we wouldn't have had to pay \$500,000 for it.

The slogan itself, well, again, you know, the government chooses to blame, to pass the blame, as opposed to accept responsibility on some of our business leaders, and I find that that is unfortunate. But instead of trying to pass the blame, what they should have done is even before any sort of announcement, at least run it by some average people from Manitoba. I respect the fact that the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) and a couple of his other colleagues I know attempt to in tune with what their constituents have to say. I do believe that if you were to be objective—and some might say that I'm not very objective on this issue and I would concede that point, but I believe that if you were to get a truly independent group of individuals, sit them down and talk about the differences of Spirited Energy versus Friendly Manitoba, that Spirited Energy wouldn't stand a chance.

I really believe that the Friendly Manitoba has proven itself, that there was nothing wrong with our last logo, Mr. Speaker. You don't have to change logos in order to develop a new look if the new look isn't justified. You know, when people see that little swish that Nike incorporates, right away they think of runners. Well, there are many Canadians that see

the bison and they do think of the province of Manitoba.

\* (11:50)

There was no need to make the change, and even if you were going to make the change, then present it to some people. Present it to some people that aren't even familiar with the status quo, the status quo one that we had of the bison, Mr. Speaker. Really and truly, try to gain an independent feeling about what was taking place.

It was virtually within days that I was talking about the Spirited Energy campaign and how poorly it was being received in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. It wasn't something that I generated. It was something in talking with people. During the election, and I confess I had one person during the election that told me that they liked the Spirited Energy campaign. Only one person. The person said that he was still going to vote for me, Mr. Speaker—

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

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to rise today and speak to the opposition resolution before the House dealing with the Spirited Energy campaign. I want to say at the outset that this whole debate really has been nothing more than a tempest in a teapot. We have gone through now a couple of years of dealing with this issue. In that period of time, we've gone—in my case, I've had absolutely not one phone call for or against this issue. I'm sure that if I canvassed my colleagues, I would find a similar—Member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) likewise hasn't had a single call either for the Spirited Energy or against the Spirited Energy campaign.

You know, typically, when there's a big issue in this province, we have people demonstrating on the lawn outside and sometimes also encouraged and inspired by members like the Member for Inkster, right? I've yet to see a single demonstrator alone or in a group sitting outside here with placards demonstrating against this expenditure. It was no issue in the election campaign. We've canvassed this province pretty good over the last few months during the 35 days of the election cycle, and it was not an issue at all during that election. So, what it tells me is that the opposition are short of issues. That's what it tells me. When they have a very little to go on, so they pick apart issues like this to try to gain some

traction and ground. Of course, they haven't got any traction on this issue at all.

Now, what did we do? They came to the Public Accounts Committee and put forward a motion that we were going to refer the matter to the provincial Auditor for a report, and we did that. One would think that when the provincial Auditor's report was made public, that the opposition would accept the findings of the provincial Auditor, right? Don't accept our statements on the matter. Don't accept what we did on the issue. Let the provincial Auditor take a look at it, investigate and come back with a report, and we will live with whatever the provincial Auditor reports. The opposition members should likewise.

The provincial Auditor found absolutely nothing wrong with the program. As a matter of fact, in terms of the actual government funding for the campaign, the provincial Auditor's report, the Auditor found that it was consistent with what was already being stated to the public from the transmittal letter and quote from the report: We verified that the total amount of spending by government departments on the image campaign was \$2.8 million, which was consistent with the publicly available information.

In terms of awarding of contracts to vendors, it was fair and consistent with government policies and procedures. From the transmittal letter, quote, "we found that the vendor selection process was done in a manner consistent with government policies and procedures."

These points were all questioned by the members opposite over and over again in the Legislature. The Auditor's report also indicates that funding provided to the campaign was spent as intended and reported. It's a very important part of page 4 of the report, quote, "All goods and services purchased in relation to the Image Campaign were received."

Research, such as focus groups, used in the development of the campaign, was conducted according to industry standards and used as intended, another finding of the Auditor's report.

From the transmittal letter, quote, "Our review indicated that the research . . . results were utilized to inform successive aspects of the Image Campaign."

In addition, the Auditor's report also shows the whole campaign was initiated and led by the private sector and business volunteers on the Premier's Economic Advisory Committee with government

support. The Manitoba government provided the financing for the image campaign, and the brand development process was led by the task groups and the Premier's Economic Advisory Committee.

This whole campaign was done, conducted by the private sector, unlike other areas or other provincial jurisdictions where a government agency has conducted the campaign. This was done by the private sector. The report speaks to Manitoba's unique approach, I say to the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), Manitoba's unique approach by which the business community is taking the lead in carrying the brand forward into the future. Page 10 of the Auditor's report says, quote, the creation of a non-governmental organization is a unique approach to managing the brand intended to separate the brand from government and be community-driven. In other jurisdictions, a government agency has assumed responsibility for ongoing brand management.

So what the opposition is doing is they are criticizing the private sector. The government had confidence in the private sector. The government allowed the private sector to develop the program, and these great free enterprisers over here are criticizing the private sector. I think they're losing ground rather than gaining ground by going on this witch hunt, nitpicking and picking apart little pieces of the campaign. It's as if they're jealous that they weren't part of the focus groups.

I think if the Member for Inkster had been approached by the focus group company and included in the process, he may have come up with the Spirited Energy slogan himself. Then he would have been hailing it as the greatest idea in this decade. But because someone else came up with it, being a typical opposition member, he's just simply being negative about it. What does he say? He doesn't like the look of the buffalo. He thinks it looks like a bull on Viagra or a bull on steroids. I've hear him say that in the past, all sorts of little comments designed to create confusion in the public.

But the provincial auditor took care of the problem. They took all of their comments that they were making trying to discredit the process, trying to suggest that something was being done wrong with the contracts, and the provincial auditor said, everything is okay with this program. You may not like it but there is nothing wrong with the program.

No money's been stolen. All the contracts have been given out properly.

So what are you complaining about? Go and find an issue that gets some traction in the province. The provincial opposition are no better. They run a campaign, and they want to bring back the Jets. They want to set up a theme park in Point Douglas. Like, how's that going, guys? We should be asking you to provide us some updates on some of your plans, because that's your future of the province. That's what you plan to do when you form the government. I mean, that's not a plan. So, Mr. Speaker, instead of supporting the efforts of the Manitoba business community to re-brand the province, the Conservatives have attacked and belittled this campaign. They're trying to create it into a laughing matter. *[interjection]*

Well, you know, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) is complaining about the use of briefing notes. Well, they've been criticizing me for 22 years for not using briefing notes. So I'm finally getting with the program, using the briefing notes. Now he doesn't like that. Now, what does he want me to do, go back to the old—*[interjection]*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Maloway:** So I just want to reiterate to the members opposite—I have a lot of material here, and I know that I am running short on time, but I do want to point out that this is a private-sector initiative. I can see the members criticizing it if it was a government program. That's their role. But it's a private sector—*[interjection]* Well, now they're chirping from their sides. They're obviously not happy with anything I have to say about this subject.

Now, we could deal with some quotes here. I would suggest that the members talk to some people in the business community. I don't know what they do when they go to the beer and sandwich parties that they go to where the very people that they're criticizing are there. Maybe we should be passing out *Hansard* to these—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable member's time has expired. When this matter is again before the House, the debate will remain open.

The hour being 12 noon, we will recess and reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, December 6, 2007**

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