



Second Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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authority of
The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupert'sland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 6, 1996

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Guaranteed Annual Income

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Will Seymour, Jim Silver, Muriel Smith and others requesting that the Legislative Assembly urge the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) to consider withdrawing Bill 36 and replacing it with improved legislation which provides for a guaranteed annual income that allows people to have adequate food, clothing, housing, child care and health care, that this annual income increases as prices increase and that this new legislation also provides for the creation of real jobs with a goal of creating full employment so that individuals on social assistance can find safe, meaningful work of their own choosing that allows them to meet their needs and the needs of their families.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

* (1340)

Manitoba Telephone System

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of D. Gillies, B. Hammond, Durwyn Davies and others requesting that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Joseph Laubmann, Fred Johnson, Henry Laubmann and others requesting that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Selkirk and District General Hospital

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Bessie Irvine, Louise

Tataryn, Sharon Smith and others praying that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier to halt the proposed nursing deletions at the Selkirk and District General Hospital.

Manitoba Telephone System

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Walter F. Latter, Julia Latter, Therese Wood and others requesting that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Ray Temmerman, Joyce Potter and Celso Arevalo requesting the Premier withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Manitoba Telephone System

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT the Manitoba Telephone System has served this province well for over 80 years providing province-wide service, some of the lowest local rates in North America, thousands of jobs and keeping profits in Manitoba; and

THAT MTS contributes \$450 million annually to the Manitoba economy and is a major sponsor of community events throughout the province; and

THAT MTS, with nearly 4,000 employees, including more than 1,000 in rural and northern Manitoba, is one

of Manitoba's largest firms, headquartered in Manitoba and is committed to Manitoba; and

THAT the provincial government has no mandate to sell MTS and said before and during the 1995 election that MTS was not for sale.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk) and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Dispense.

THAT the Manitoba Telephone System has served this province well for over 80 years providing province-wide service, some of the lowest local rates in North America and thousands of jobs and keeping profits in Manitoba; and

THAT MTS contributes \$450 million annually to the Manitoba economy and is a major sponsor of community events throughout the province; and

THAT MTS, with nearly 4,000 employees including more than 1,000 in rural and northern Manitoba, is one of Manitoba's largest firms, headquartered in Manitoba and is committed to Manitoba; and

THAT the provincial government has no mandate to sell MTS and said before and during the 1995 election that MTS was not for sale.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? Dispense.

THAT the Manitoba Telephone System has served this province well for over 80 years providing province-wide service, some of the lowest local rates in North America and thousands of jobs and keeping profits in Manitoba; and

THAT MTS contributes \$450 million annually to the Manitoba economy and is a major sponsor of community events throughout the province; and

THAT MTS, with nearly 4,000 employees, including more than 1,000 in rural and northern Manitoba, is one of Manitoba's largest firms, headquartered in Manitoba and is committed to Manitoba; and

THAT the provincial government has no mandate to sell MTS and said before and during the 1995 election that MTS was not for sale.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? Dispense.

THAT the Manitoba Telephone System has served this province well for over 80 years providing province-wide service, some of the lowest local rates in North America and thousands of jobs and keeping profits in Manitoba; and

AT MTS contributes \$450 million annually to the Manitoba economy and is a major sponsor of community events throughout the province; and

THAT MTS, with nearly 4,000 employees, including more than 1,000 in rural and northern Manitoba, is one of Manitoba's largest firms, headquartered in Manitoba and is committed to Manitoba; and

THAT the provincial government has no mandate to sell MTS and said before and during the 1995 election that MTS was not for sale.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? Dispense.

THAT the Manitoba Telephone System has served this province well for over 80 years providing province-wide service, some of the lowest local rates in North America and thousands of jobs and keeping profits in Manitoba; and

THAT MTS contributes \$450 million annually to the Manitoba economy and is a major sponsor of community events throughout the province; and

THAT MTS, with nearly 4,000 employees, including more than 1,000 in rural and northern Manitoba, is one of Manitoba's largest firms, headquartered in Manitoba and is committed to Manitoba; and

THAT the provincial government has no mandate to sell MTS and said before and during the 1995 election that MTS was not for sale.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and withdraw Bill 67 and not sell the Manitoba Telephone System to private interests.

Selkirk and District General Hospital

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election the Premier promised not to cut Health Care Services; and

THAT in the first issue of Health News the Minister of Health stated that they must continue to meet the needs

of Manitobans and their families today, tomorrow and in the coming century; and

THAT the residents of the communities surrounding the Selkirk and District General Hospital vitally depend on the services at this hospital; and

THAT further nursing cutbacks to the Selkirk and District General Hospital will jeopardize the quality patient care and safety we are now receiving; and

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier to halt the proposed nursing deletions at the Selkirk and District General Hospital.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections Third Report

Mr. Mike Radcliffe (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the Third Report of the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections presents the following as its Third Report.

Your committee met on Thursday, October 24, 1996, at 10 a.m. and on Tuesday, November 5, 1996, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Assembly to consider the Report and Recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee.

At the November 5, 1996, meeting, your committee elected Mr. Radcliffe as its Chairperson.

At the October 24, 1996, meeting, your committee heard representation on the Report and Recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee from Judge Robert Kopstein and Associate Chief Judge Murray Sinclair, representing the Manitoba Provincial Judges Association.

At the October 24, 1996, meeting, your committee agreed to defer consideration of the Report and

Recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee until a future meeting of the committee.

At the November 5, 1996, meeting, your committee adopted the following motion:

THAT the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections adopt the proposal in Schedule A and recommend the same to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

SCHEDULE A

RECOMMENDATIONS ON JUDICIAL COMPENSATION

- 1. That effective April 1, 1995, salaries for Provincial Court Judges be increased by 2.3% to \$96,173.*
- 2. That the additional remuneration for the Chief Judge and Associate Chief Judges remain \$7,000 and \$2,000 respectively.*
- 3. That all other compensation including the Supplementary Judicial Pension Plan be continued in the same manner as currently exists.*

Your committee reports that it has considered the Report and Recommendations of the Judicial Compensation Committee.

Mr. Radcliffe: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Morris (Mr. Pitura), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* (1345)

Standing Committee on Industrial Relations First Report

Mr. Mike Radcliffe (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to present the First Report of the Committee on Industrial Relations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there leave for the honourable member for River Heights to report the First Report of the Committee on Industrial Relations? [agreed]

Dispense.

Your Standing Committee on Industrial Relations presents the following as its First Report.

Your committee met on Monday, November 4, 1996, at 6:30 p.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Assembly and on Tuesday, November 5, 1996, at 3 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Assembly to consider bills referred.

At the November 5, 1996, meeting your committee elected Mr. McAlpine as its Vice-Chairperson.

Your committee heard representation on bills as follows:

Bill 73—The Construction Industry Wages Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les salaires dans l'industrie de la construction

Ken Emberley - Private Citizen

Dave Tesarski - Canadian Federation of Labour

Jack Cumming - Construction Association of Rural Manitoba, Inc.

Dave Martin - Manitoba Building and Construction Trades Council

Rob Hilliard - Manitoba Federation of Labour

Lance Norman - Manitoba Chamber of Commerce

Mike Evans - Private Citizen

Fred Wright - Private Citizen

Ed Gallos - Private Citizen

Peter Wightman - Construction Labour Relations Association of Manitoba

David Harrison and Ted Cook - Winnipeg Construction Association

Chris Lorenc - Manitoba Heavy Construction Association

Joe Bova - Private Citizen

Terry Dauphinais - Elevator Constructors

Patrick Martin - Carpenters' Union

Your committee has considered:

Bill 41—The Fisheries Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche

and has agreed to report the same, without amendment

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 73—The Construction Industry Wages Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les salaires dans l'industrie de la construction

and has agreed to report the same, with the following amendments:

MOTION:

THAT clause 2(c) of the Bill be amended by adding "and" at the end of the proposed clause (c) of the definition "heavy construction employees" and by adding the following after the proposed clause (c):

(d) employees who perform construction and maintenance work on hydro-electric transmission lines;

MOTION:

THAT the proposed definition "heavy construction sector", as set out in clause 2(f) of the Bill, be amended by adding the following after clause (c):

(c.1) the removal of snow from and blading of highways, roads, railroads, runways or parking lots,

MOTION:

THAT clause 2(f) of the Bill be amended by striking out "sub-clauses (a) to (k) hereof" and substituting "clauses (a) to (k), (n) and (o)" in clause (l) of the proposed definition "heavy construction sector".

MOTION:

THAT clause 2(f) of the English version of the Bill be amended by striking out "demolition," in clause (a) of the proposed definition "industrial, commercial and institutional sector".

MOTION:

THAT clause 11(b) of the English version of the Bill be amended by striking out "clause (b)" and substituting "clause (1)(b)".

MOTION:

THAT the following be added after section 14 of the Bill:

14.1 Subsection 17(1) is amended

(a) by striking out "\$100." and substituting "\$250.";

(b) by striking out "\$1000." and substituting "\$2500.";

(c) by striking out "\$500." and substituting "\$1250." and

(d) by striking out "\$10,000." and substituting "\$25,000.".

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 20(1), as set out in subsection 16(1) of the Bill, be amended

(a) by striking out clause (b) and substituting the following:

(b) defining a word or expression used and not defined in this Act, which may include "Winnipeg";

(b) by striking out clause (c) and substituting the following:

(c) specifying and defining classes of employees in the construction industry, which may include helpers, journeypersons, general construction labourers, unskilled labourers and students, and specifying the ratio of the different classes permitted to be employed in construction projects in the province or parts of the province;

(c) by striking out clause (d) and renumbering clause (e) as clause (d);

(d) by adding the following as clause (e):

(e) respecting any matter the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary or advisable to carry out the intent and purpose of this Act.

(e) by striking out clause (f).

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 20(2), as set out in subsection 16(2) of the Bill, be amended by striking out clause (f).

MOTION:

THAT Legislative Counsel be authorized to change all section numbers and internal references necessary to carry out the amendments adopted by this committee.

Mr. Radcliffe: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Morris (Mr. Pitura), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to table the Waste Reduction and Prevention Strategy Report.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Manitoba Municipal Employees Benefits Board and also the Annual Report for the Manitoba Surface Rights Board.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Manitoba Telephone System
Privatization—Information Request**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Of course, the Conservative Party and the Filmon team, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) promised during the last election campaign that if elected they would not sell our publicly owned telephone system. Regrettably, the Premier has broken this promise and has repeatedly refused to provide information to the people of Manitoba and to this Chamber. In fact, we found out yesterday that on June 10, 1996, the telephone system secretly applied to the CRTC for a special rate factor dealing with the new change in status of taxes, capital and other factors.

I would like to ask the Premier why this government kept this information secret from the people of Manitoba. Is it in contradiction of his promise that there is no difference between a publicly owned corporation and a private corporation? Would the Premier today table on behalf of all Manitobans the analysis to deal with future rate impact, future job impact, future investment impacts so that all Manitobans can know what the material is, not just the select few in the Tory cabinet?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Firstly, this was hardly a secret application since it was made by the Stentor group of companies that represent all of the telephone companies in Canada. So there was no effort on anybody's part in any way to prevent that information since the CRTC is a public organization and that information was well available to the public.

There was no application for any special increase with respect to any rate changes because it was said very clearly in the application that there is no evidence to support any rate changes. The fact of the matter is, they left open the possibility that they could come back to deal with any changes that might occur, whether those changes be increases or decreases to the rates, as a result of the outflow from privatization

With respect to the continued suggestions—and I reject all of the preamble that is put on the record by the member opposite. When he raised that issue several weeks ago in this House, a number of so-called experts in the field were asked to comment on the allegations that he made in this House on October 2

I quote from an article in the Winnipeg Free Press of Thursday, October 3, and since it was in the Free Press I assume that it is accurate. In response to the suggestion that he made at that time about rates increasing, it says here: "But telecommunications experts say the NDP argument is 'nonsense'—local rates will continue to climb throughout Canada regardless of ownership."

* (1350)

Quote: "It's got nothing to do with public or private," said Iain Grant of the Yankee Group, a telecommunications consulting company in Ottawa."

Then further it says: "Eamon Hoey of consultants Hoey and Associates in Toronto, doesn't buy what the NDP is saying.

"That's nonsense," Hoey said. 'It's difficult to comprehend how the NDP could say that.'

"Hoey said the CRTC applies the same criteria to both public and private telephone companies when deciding on rate increases."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have gone through this issue over and over and over again, and there is certainly plenty

of expert advice that contradicts everything that is being said by members opposite.

Mr. Doer: I asked the Premier to table all the impact studies that they have available to them for rates, for investment, for jobs, and the Premier continues to stonewall this House and the people of Manitoba in his headlong approach to breaking his election promise to the people of Manitoba.

Privatization—Impact on Rates

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the CRTC document that is filed from the Manitoba Telephone System said that the MTS company is unable to assess or estimate with certainty the financial or cost impacts. The Premier is saying that they have cost impacts and there will be no change from the public nonprofit corporation to a private corporation. I would simply challenge the Premier today to commit to Manitobans, there will be no rate increase on the basis of moving from a public nonprofit corporation to a private corporation, and if there are rate increases and this Premier has broken his promise, he should commit himself today to resign as Premier of the province of Manitoba for again breaking his word.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Deputy Speaker, as has been indicated, financial impacts could include revenue increases that would assist the telephone system in keeping down its rates or even reducing its rates. There is a whole series of variables that will be taken into account, and we believe as we have said before that the net result will not result in an increase in rates.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I note the Premier did not give his commitment on the issue of rate increases based on a private corporation.

Privatization—Plebiscite

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the prospectus is leaking out across the newspapers and province. I suppose it is kind of ironic when the rate applications are not made public and the investors' interests are made public with quite a splash in terms of the priorities of this government. Time and time again, people are asking about the impacts.

I would like to ask the Premier two questions: Is there any information on rate increases moving from a public corporation to a private corporation in the prospectus, including the secret rate application withheld from the people by this Premier, and will this Premier agree today to give the people who have been coming to the hearings day in and day out a commitment to have a plebiscite to make the final decision on the sale of Manitoba Telephone System? You broke your election promise; the people feel that they have a right to have a democratic decision on their telephone system. Will the Premier today agree to a plebiscite to deal with the need of people to have democracy for their Crown corporations?

* (1355)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker—oh, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sorry. [interjection] No, they do not look alike.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the best evidence that we have about impacts of rates between publicly and privately owned telephone utilities in Canada is to examine the same rate category for the same size of community and service area among the provinces of Canada today, comparing those that are publicly owned and those that are privately owned.

Of course, we have only two examples today of publicly owned utilities, one of which happens to be the Manitoba Telephone System, but if you take those both medium and small exchanges, for instance, Rate Group 2, which are medium-sized exchanges, and look at the same size of community calling area across all of the provinces, you find some interesting comparisons. You find, for instance, for Rate Group 2, that the residential service rates for an individual line in Manitoba are \$13.90 per month, and you compare it to the same category in the provinces right across Canada and you find that in that category the rates are cheaper in British Columbia under private ownership, that the rates are cheaper in New Brunswick under private ownership, that the rates are cheaper in Quebec under private ownership, that the rates are cheaper in Ontario under private ownership.

Then if you go to Rate Group 1, which are even smaller communities, and you take the same size community calling area in all of these provinces in Canada, you find

for that group the residential individual line service rate in Manitoba is \$12.75 and you find that the rates are cheaper in Newfoundland under private ownership, in British Columbia under private ownership, in Quebec under private ownership and in Ontario under private ownership. So under those circumstances—and I might say that under public ownership in both cases, in Saskatchewan the rates are higher. So the fact of the matter is, as I have said before—

An Honourable Member: Are you saying lower rates? Is that what you are saying?

Mr. Filmon: No. They are lower under private ownership right across Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am saying to you that in half the provinces under private ownership they are lower and in half the provinces under public and private ownership they are higher. So, as I have said before, public and private ownership is not the issue when CRTC makes their decision. That is what experts have said time and time again.

* (1400)

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization—Prospectus

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): It is becoming increasingly obvious to anyone in this province that the government's handling of the sale of MTS is nothing short of a fiasco and is in fact probably more aptly described as being scandalous. After saying they would not sell it off, we are now seeing the same investment brokers, who recommended the sale and were paid \$300,000 to do that, now working on a prospectus that has been leaked all over the—why do they not call it a leak when it is all over the front page of the Free Press?

I want to ask the Premier if he has determined who leaked the prospectus and whether he will take action to deal with one of only two sources that there are: either out of this government and this minister or out of the same three investment bankers who are being paid to sell this off. Will he explain how this document was leaked all over the front page of the paper?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Deputy Speaker, first, a number of things that can and should be referred to, and that is that the information contained within an

article again in the Winnipeg Free Press, that information is based on knowledge that has been conveyed apparently to a reporter or reporters and we have no idea how that information would be conveyed.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

I might say, having contacted the Securities Commission this morning because this is something that of course comes under the purview and the regulatory authority of the Securities Commission, the Securities Commission say that they cannot comment at this time as to whether or not a prospectus was leaked and therefore whether there has been a violation. They further confirm that the prospectus that is presumably referred to has not been filed or received by the commission, so the commission therefore cannot make judgments based on the newspaper article. As far as they are concerned, there is no prospectus and the information in the article is not based on fact.

The commission, however, if provided with hard facts regarding any violation, has the ability under Section 22(1) of The Securities Act to order an investigation as deemed expedient. They believe it is premature at this point to undertake an investigation, but they are inquiring with potential sources of information both within the Investment Dealers Association and within the media that have referred to this information.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, this is absolutely incredible. We have an advance copy of the prospectus that is all over the major newspapers and the Premier—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Thompson is, as I understand, on his first supplementary question which requires no preamble.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, I am asking the Premier—and the buck stops with the Premier—whether he can indicate whether he has done any investigation to determine whether the minister and this government leaked the information, whether the brokerage firms leaked the information, in either case which would lead to, first of all, firing the brokerage firms for the confidentiality violation of that and possibly firing the minister as well, who, either through incompetence or

through the deliberate leaking of this information, has short-circuited not only this Legislature and the people of Manitoba but the Securities Commission. When will the Premier take action to deal with this tainted share issue?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I am sure you will appreciate the irony of this particular member who for days on end has been demanding some of this information be made public that was in the prospectus, and I indicated that information contained within a prospectus could not be made public by the government. Now he is complaining that information may have been made public, accepting blindly that there is a prospectus.

The fact of the matter is that to my knowledge there is absolutely no way this information has come from government. This is not something that we would do, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Ashton: As a final supplementary, I want to ask the Premier, will he guarantee to this House and the people of Manitoba that, once it is determined where this leak came from, he will take action and that, as a minimum, he will fire the investment brokers who recommended the sale of MTS, who now are the lead brokers in the sale of it, are producing the prospectus, and if there is any indication of either culpability from the minister in terms of incompetence in having that released or deliberately leaking it, will he also guarantee to this House that he will remove that minister as well, that he will demand that somebody is responsible for once again the kind of tainted scandalous dealings we are seeing with our publicly owned telephone system that should not be sold off?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, as I have indicated, the Manitoba Securities Commission has indicated that no prospectus has been received or filed and that no prospectus to their knowledge exists in final form. So it is appropriate that they handle any inquiries into this matter because it is their legislation and it is their integrity that would be put at risk if such a thing were available, and that is the legislation that governs.

Dorothy Martin Case Justice Department Review

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Madam Speaker, over a month ago, on September 18, I asked the Minister

of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) to review the Dorothy Martin case in The Pas to determine if the proper charges were laid.

I would like to ask the First Minister whether or not he felt or whether or not he can report to this House if the minister did follow that recommendation we made.

Today, over 200 people travelled from Moose Lake and other communities in northern Manitoba to demand justice from this government. What commitment can the Premier make in ensuring that the Justice minister sees that that is found in this matter?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I will take that question as notice on behalf of the minister. I understand that this is a matter that is currently under investigation and charges have been laid. I will leave the remaining details to the Minister of Justice to provide for the member for Rupertsland.

* (1405)

Mr. Robinson: Madam Speaker, I would also like to ask the Premier why his Justice minister did not do anything in the past two months when we first raised the issue, forcing these people to travel hundreds of miles to simply get her attention.

Mr. Filmon: The Justice minister, I know, did indeed through her department ensure that an investigation was undertaken and the RCMP, I am given to understand, are currently in the process of accumulating evidence, much of which is very detailed, and that is a process that is underway. Until that is completed, then we will not have all of the final information, and because some charges have been laid and others may occur as a result of the investigation, I do not think that we can take this any further at the moment until all the information is available.

Mr. Robinson: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the First Minister whether or not the Justice minister and her department officials—if the same treatment would prevail if we were talking about the accused being an Indian person.

Mr. Filmon: Absolutely, Madam Speaker.

**Dorothy Martin Case
Justice Department Review**

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Speaker, my questions are directed to the First Minister, as well. The First Minister is fully aware of the events surrounding the death of Helen Betty Osborne, the amount of time it took for the authorities to bring the murderers to trial and then to have only one of the four convicted, and the subsequent three-year, \$2-million AJI, whose report was finished five years ago and since then absolutely nothing has been done to implement the recommendations.

I would like to ask the First Minister to advise this House as to how long the Dorothy Martin family will have to wait for justice.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, the member knows full well the answers have been given to him with respect to the considerable number of recommendations from the AJI that have already been acted on and implemented, and there are dozens and dozens of them that have. Having said that, in response to his question, all we want is to ensure that justice is done and justice is seen to be done with respect to the Dorothy Martin case. The department will take whatever time is necessary to ensure that that happens. The last thing that any of us want is for proceedings to take place without proper evidence, without proper investigation, proceedings that would fail to establish and carry out justice.

Mr. Lathlin: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask this Premier if he will listen, once and for all, to the concerns of aboriginal people like the Dorothy Martin family and do something to ensure that justice is done.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I can assure the member opposite that the Justice department will ensure that everything possible is done to bring justice to this case and to carry it out to the fullest extent, and that is the process that is currently underway.

**Minister of Justice
Replacement Request**

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Speaker, my final question is again to the First Minister. Since the current Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) has shown a

total lack of interest in aboriginal justice issues as demonstrated in this case and many others, will the Premier act now to replace her with someone who will finally care about justice throughout Manitoba and not just care about photo ops?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I reject that rather partisan and disrespectful approach to this House and to the minister and the justice system, but I will say to the member opposite that dozens of the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry have in fact been implemented and the Minister of Justice is committed where it is feasible and reasonable to do so to carry out the various recommendations contained in that inquiry.

* (1410)

**Manitoba Telephone System
Privatization—Manitoba Ownership**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): My question is for the Premier. Today all Manitobans own the Manitoba Telephone System, and once we see Bill 67 passed, the privatization of MTS, we are going to see a select few ultimately owning the Manitoba Telephone System. The government no doubt will see individuals that have the internal wealth to be able to purchase the shares. There are some Manitobans that are going to be provided, from what we understand, interest-free loans to purchase some shares.

My question to the Premier is: What is the Premier doing to ensure that all Manitobans are going to be treated equally and fairly to ensure that they all have the opportunity to buy into Manitoba Telephone System?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, as I have indicated, there will be many different thoughts about investment in the Manitoba Telephone System, but certainly our intention is, and the intention of the process is, to allow as broad as possible an ownership within the Manitoba Telephone System, including ways in which there will be incentives for Manitobans to be able to invest in it and a preference given to Manitobans who wish to invest in it. In both those cases we believe that they will be significantly attractive that people will certainly give serious consideration.

Having said all of that, I just remind him that part and parcel of anything like this is not only ownership but risk taking, and at the current time, the Manitoba Telephone System has never paid a dividend to any taxpayer or ratepayer in Manitoba and they owe \$800 million of debt which they have guaranteed.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Inkster, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, the Premier should be aware that low rates are a form of dividend. The question to the Premier: Individuals that are on fixed incomes, whether it is pension or unemployed or other individuals that would like to have some opportunity possibly to buy into MTS, when we have some Manitobans being provided an opportunity more so than other Manitobans, is that not a sense that maybe something needs to happen to ensure that there is some equity in the sale of MTS, that maybe it should not just be the select few that have the opportunity? Does the Premier acknowledge that there are many inequities that do need to be ironed out before he sells MTS?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I appreciate very much the point that is made by the member for Inkster and that is why, as I pointed out earlier, in Rate Group 2—and I can talk about every one of the rate groups of the Manitoba Telephone System—but in the comparison between those communities of a similar size in Rate Group 2 in our province, for instance, there are people in four other provinces in which that telephone company is privately owned who are receiving precisely that dividend of lower rates than they would pay in the same rate group in the same size community in Manitoba, both in Rate Group 2 and in Rate Group 1. So he is making the point and that is that with private ownership there could necessarily or possibly be even lower rates.

The difference is not based on whether or not it is publicly or privately owned because, in some cases, privately owned companies charge higher rates; in other cases, they charge lower rates. So whether it is publicly or privately owned does not guarantee that people are going to get the dividend at low rates.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I am not going to cherry-pick like the Premier has chosen to do but rather

to put the question quite simply to the Premier, how is he ensuring that Manitobans are being treated in an equal fashion, that all Manitobans are being provided the same opportunities in order to be able to purchase into MTS? How are they going to be allowed to buy back on what they already own today?

Mr. Filmon: What they own today is \$800 million of debt in a company that has never paid them a dividend in all of its years of public ownership. What they own today is a company that is in the highest risk area of any field in the economy because it is the most rapidly changing field of technology in the entire world and so the risks are very substantial. Those risks have led many, many people in many different countries of the world—within the last year alone places like Indonesia and Netherlands have privatized their telephone system after close to a century of public ownership because of precisely these reasons, the tremendous risk and the requirement for immense input of capital to try and keep up with a very rapidly changing field of technology.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization—Memorandum of Offering

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, the Premier knows that under the Manitoba Securities Commission act there are two ways to offer securities. One is through a prospectus of full disclosure document which this Premier has said does not yet exist and has not been filed. The other way to offer securities is through an initial memorandum of offering.

Will the Premier clarify for the House whether in fact the Manitoba Securities Commission has approved and issued an initial memorandum of offering, a lower level of disclosure that in fact is required as a prospectus and that is the document that has been shown to the press and leaked and is causing confusion?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I note from reading the article that it does not refer to a document that was obtained by the newspaper, so I am not sure what he is referring to. In regard to the rest of the substance of his question, I will take that as notice.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, this is incredible. Stock-brokers are calling people—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Crescentwood, to pose a supplementary question.

Mr. Sale: Will the Premier confirm that it is illegal and a serious offence, Madam Speaker, to market securities in this province without either a prospectus issued by, approved by the Manitoba Securities Commission or an initial offering memorandum issued by and approved by the same body?

Will he at least confirm that the law is the law in Manitoba?

Mr. Filmon: I am happy to confirm that, Madam Speaker.

* (1420)

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, dissembling seems to know no bounds.

Will the Premier confirm that stockbrokers in Manitoba who are offering their clients stocks by phone in the Manitoba Telephone System's new company are doing so on the basis of an approved memorandum, initial memorandum of offering? Will he confirm that so the public at least knows they are not being flimflammed?

Mr. Filmon: I will have to investigate the preamble of the member's question, and so I will take it as notice.

Wildlife Investigation Ministerial Interference

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Mr. John Reimer, a neighbour to the minister, has been part of an intensive federal-provincial investigation into the sale of illegal animal parts. Despite extensions from the Crown based on growing evidence of a ring of illegal trade in animal parts, investigation was stopped in March of this year.

On March 25, Chief Enforcement Officer Dave Purvis resigned his position citing ministerial interference in the case against John Reimer.

Why did this minister interfere with the Crown's directions not to lay charges until this investigation—

which is potentially one of the largest wildlife investigations in Canadian history. Why did he do that before it was complete?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, as usual, the member's facts are totally wrong. Mr. Purvis is working for the Department of Natural Resources. Charges have been laid in the John Reimer case, and the case is before the courts right now.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Dauphin, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Struthers: What did the minister say to prompt his chief enforcement officer to write to this minister stating: I find your request, in my opinion, to be interference with the investigation and the process to justice. I cannot perform my duties and follow conflicting directions, and I therefore, under duress, submit my resignation?

Madam Speaker, I will table the letter for the House's perusal.

Mr. Driedger: Madam Speaker, I would like to have a copy of that letter, but I want to re-emphasize what I said before. Mr. Purvis is working in the same capacity as he was working and has always continued to work in that capacity.

Related to the case, charges have been laid and it is before the courts right now.

Minister of Natural Resources Replacement Request

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): A new question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon): Given that this minister has halted a major federal-provincial investigation involving up to 300 charges under federal and provincial wildlife acts, given that this minister's neighbour's charges have been reduced to only eight of these offences, given that the chief enforcement on this case has been replaced by a former special assistant to this government, given that this whole process of justice has been circumvented in this case, will the Premier fire the Minister of Natural Resources and bring some credibility to this department?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, I have absolutely nothing to hide in this particular case. I am prepared to bring documentation forward where my professional people who lay the charges, together with the Attorney General's department, looked at all the issues that were involved and condensed it to charges that they felt were applicable and that they could make stick, instead of having charges like having a spare in the deepfreeze, which was an exaggeration, but that is exactly what happened between the AG's department, my enforcement people and the investigative team, including the federal people, combined this thing and went forward with what they thought was the best approach in terms of getting convictions out of it, and that case is before the courts right now.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization-Withdrawal

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Brandon East, with one very short question.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Not long ago, I placed a one-time ad in the Brandon Sun asking a straightforward question with no commentary, whether the readers were in favour of selling the Manitoba Telephone System, and the response was significant. I received nearly 400 replies, with 99 percent indicating that they did not want to sell MTS. In fact, some wrote on the form that they vote Conservative, they are not NDP. They wrote that on the form and they do not want to sell it. So in view of—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Leonard Evans: This is from Westman. This is the Westman area, not Brandon.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Brandon East, to pose his question now.

Mr. Leonard Evans: The respondents were from the Westman area. In view of this and other information showing that the majority of Manitobans are opposed to this sale, will the Premier now withdraw Bill 67 and go to the people to find out for himself just where Manitobans stand on this issue?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I am sure that Ross Martin and Errol Black have writer's cramp, but I will say this—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister, to complete his response.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, given that there are 200,000 people who live in Westman and given all the misinformation the member for Brandon East has put on the record about the privatization of Manitoba Telephone System, I am surprised that only 400 people believed him.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, on a point of order. The Premier of all people talks about misinformation. He is the one that said they would not sell off the Manitoba Telephone System. I would ask you to ask him to withdraw that and apologize to the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) who is doing one thing this government has never done, that is ask the people of Westman how they feel about the sale of MTS.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Thompson does not have a point of order.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Employment Creation

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Madam Speaker, I would like to expand on the Canadian Federation of Independent Business survey discussed by one of my government colleagues not long ago. We announced that hiring activity among small firms in Manitoba is expected to lead the nation, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business jobs study.

As we stated last week, the CFIB conducted a comprehensive study on job creation. The results were drawn from 18,000 survey responses and gave greater insight into youth employment, wages and the sector which is the major employment generator.

With respect to Manitoba, the study found that more firms in Manitoba have either hired in the past 12 months or plan to do so in the next year than in any other province in Canada. Specifically, over 78 percent of small business and medium-sized firms in Manitoba have either hired or plan to hire. Also, over one-third of hiring in Manitoba is due to business growth, the highest percentage in Canada; 11.1 percent of firms hired or plan to hire professional employees, again the highest percentage in Canada. Almost two-thirds, that is 64.9 percent of Manitoba's small firms employ youths between the ages of 15 to 24 years, second only to Quebec.

This province is leading the way in job creation in the private sector. Our economy is also on track for 2 percent growth this year, slightly better than the national average.

* (1430)

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am experiencing great difficulty hearing the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mr. McAlpine: We expect activity to accelerate to 2.8 percent in 1997. This proves that Manitoba is a great place to live, work, invest and raise a family. Madam Speaker, thank you.

Manitoba Telephone System

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): I want to use my opportunity here to once again urge the government to withdraw Bill 67 and to hold hearings throughout rural Manitoba. This government is breaking a solemn promise that this government made and their candidates made across this province during the last provincial election, before, during and after the election, that MTS was not for sale.

What the government has done since then is they have put out this \$400,000 massive advertising campaign. That campaign is designed to try to counter the issues

that were raised by small coalition throughout this province. The coalition in Selkirk, for example, raised \$157 at a public meeting. Not one cent of public money was spent on that campaign in Selkirk. And what did this government do to try to counter that campaign and campaigns like that throughout the province? They spent \$400,000 of taxpayers' money. That campaign should not have been paid for by the taxpayers. That campaign should have been paid for by the Manitoba Progressive Conservative Party, not the taxpayers and not MTS.

They sent out this campaign trying to convince Manitobans that privatization is good for us, Madam Speaker, a campaign that has failed miserably. We urge that the government cancel those ads, take that money, use that money to hold hearings, public hearings on this issue throughout rural and northern Manitoba. I have participated in several of the hearings that have been held in this building and the government feels that they have the public support. Well, I challenge them to go out there into rural and northern Manitoba and ask them. I was in Gimli last night. I was in Teulon last night. There is no support for this privatization. If this government feels that this is the right course to take, find the courage, leave this building, go out to rural and northern Manitoba and ask Manitobans what they feel on this issue. Thank you very much.

Take a Child to Work Day

Mr. David Newman (Riel): Today is Take a Child to Work Day, and I have the pleasure of sharing my workplace with three Grade 9 students, Courtney Zaster and Walter Eisbrenner from Victor Mager School and Angela Dahl from Hastings School. Take a Child to Work is an extremely valuable program which allows students to experience a specific job. The benefits for the students include the potential to be inspired to set career goals, the ability to select appropriate courses and the opportunity to fully realize the importance of applying oneself to school work.

Young people know that the world of work is all around them and that some day they will become a part of it, but they seldom think about what exactly it is that their parents do at work all day. Often, they do not understand fully the link between education and work and how important successful work is to their futures. With an opportunity to view the work that adults do, students gain

understanding and appreciation for the challenges people face daily and the accomplishments they achieve. They begin to think about the choices they will have to make and the path they must follow to meet their career goals.

The students who are with me today have spent time in class preparing for this day and will be discussing and evaluating their experiences afterward. I am proud to have these students with me today, and I hope they learn a great deal about the workings of government and the legislative process, as well as the many jobs present in this Legislative Building.

I would also like to take a moment to thank all the conscientious youths and adults from the St. Vital area who participated in a safe neighbourhood workshop yesterday afternoon and evening at Hastings School. I thank Chief Cassels and the community constables, Mr. Wyman Sangster of the Justice department, the St. Vital School Division, Neighbourhood Watch and the various community clubs that participated. Thank you to Linda Cherenkoff and Ray Houssin, the principal and vice-principal of Hastings School, the student facilitators from Glenlawn Collegiate and all student and adult workshop participants who worked together to make the workshop such a big success. Thank you.

Manitoba Telephone System

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Madam Speaker, Manitobans from all walks of life are angry and frustrated about the sale of MTS to private interests because it constitutes a betrayal of public trust and responsible stewardship of the resources of this province. This 92-year-old tradition of a public utility Crown corporation had served Manitoba quite well for almost nine decades. It had kept up with technology and advances in recent communication and, in fact, it had shown profit in the last fiscal year. It has afforded Manitobans a reasonable, efficient and accessible public service telephone communication system and yet this government, which promised one thing during the election, did the opposite after the election. They had no mandate to sell the Crown corporation, which was established by the Tory government themselves.

This Crown corporation, if sold to private interests, would mean that there will be a loss of affordable rates of the users of the services, particularly the seniors of this province. A recent study from Ontario showed that

privatization will cause and result in no less than 9.75 percent increase in the rates of telephone services and MTS itself had shown that by the year 1998 there will be at least 80 percent increase in some rural communities as to the rest of the services. The sale of MTS will also result in a loss of accessibility to telephone facilities in most rural and northern areas of this province because the private corporations, if taking over these services, will no longer be able to be willing to sustain the expenses involved in maintaining the rural lines because of expenses. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Manitoba Telephone System

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Leave for a member's statement?

An Honourable Member: You do not need leave.

Ms. Cerilli: I do not need leave.

I want to talk today about the sale of the Manitoba Telephone System. I think when history is written, this will go down as one of the largest scandals and affronts to democracy in the history of Manitoba.

Not only did this government mislead Manitobans during the last election when they said they had no plans to sell MTS and said that there would be public consultation before they made the sale, when they were lying, or they have changed their minds after the election, with no internal studies done and after only two days of review of a proposal that was released, which was riddled with conflict of interest by the people who will be selling the shares for the Manitoba Telephone System. It is important to know that these studies were conducted after the election.

* (1440)

The other thing that is scandalous is that they are trying to tell us that there is no difference between a publicly owned company or having Manitobans buy shares in the privatization of MTS when we know that only one out of 10 Manitobans will be able to purchase these shares. It is scandalous that they have shut down the public hearings and public debate on this process. They broke their word again when they told Manitobans that all people listed for the public hearings on this bill would be heard, but they closed down this morning the public

presentations. I want to read into the record the message from the Clerk's Office of November 5 to presenters on Bill 67. The message that was left for people who had registered to speak said: Good evening, this is the Clerk's Office. I am calling to let you know that, in addition to the meetings being held at 6:30 tonight, another meeting will be called for November 6 at 9 a.m. in Room 254 at the Legislative Building, if necessary. Thank you.

We know that there were people there this morning. They were not able to make their presentation because this government turned them down and turned them away. I want to ask if the members opposite, the Premier and the minister will state in this House that, if the rates on MTS phone service go up greater than the rates that have occurred in the last number of years, they will resign. If they are so convinced there will not be any increase in rates—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call report stage on Bills 48, 63 and 72.

REPORT STAGE

Bill 48—The University of Manitoba Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that on behalf of the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh), that Bill 48, The University of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Université du Manitoba, reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 63—The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1996

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Mr.

Stefanson), seconded by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), that Bill 63, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1996 (Loi de 1996 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité), as amended and reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 72—The Public Schools Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, on behalf of the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh), seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 72, The Public Schools Amendment Act (2) (Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I would like to advise the House the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet this date, November 6, 1996, at 6:30 p.m. to give clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 67.

Madam Speaker: The Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet this evening, November 6, 6:30 p.m. to give clause-by-clause consideration to Bill 67.

Mr. Ernst: If required, the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will sit again at 9 a.m. tomorrow, November 7, to continue clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 67.

Madam Speaker: If necessary, the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will sit Thursday, 9 a.m., November 7 to continue to consider the clause-by-clause of Bill 67 if necessary.

Mr. Ernst: Would you, Madam Speaker, call for third readings. There are a number, so I will try to read them slowly. Bills 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23,

24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 37, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 51, 52, 53, 60, 70, 71 and 77.

THIRD READINGS

Bill 5—The Horticultural Society Repeal Act

Madam Speaker: Third reading Bill 5. On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), the Horticultural Society Repeal Act (Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les associations horticoles).

Is there leave to recognize the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) with committee changes prior to recognizing the member? [agreed]

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I move, (seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek), that I would like to rescind the changes of the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources. These are the changes that I made yesterday for this morning when the committee did not sit: the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister); the member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan) for the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings).

And, I move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Wednesday, November 6 at 6:30 p.m. be amended as follows: the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson) for the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings); the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister); the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed) for the member for Morris (Mr. Pitura).

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Wednesday, November 6, 9 a.m., be rescinded. Agreed? [agreed]

It has been moved by the honourable member for Gimli, seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon

Creek, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Wednesday, November 6, at 6:30 p.m., be amended as follows: the honourable member for Kirkfield Park for the honourable member for Ste. Rose; the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet for the honourable member for Portage la Prairie; and the honourable member for Turtle Mountain for the honourable member for Morris. Agreed? [agreed]

THIRD READINGS

Bill 5—The Horticultural Society Repeal Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 5, The Horticultural Society Repeal Act (Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les associations horticoles), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

* (1450)

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, I want to put some comments on the record with regard to Bill 5, The Horticultural Society Repeal Act, and specifically talk a little bit about the good work that the horticultural societies have done in the constituency that I represent. Since being elected, I have had the opportunity to co-operate with them on a number of different projects and issues, and I found that the work that they have done has been truly an asset to the community and helpful in a number of different ways.

When I talked with the members of the Transcona Horticultural Society, they explained to me that this bill is following up the government's reduction of funds to the horticultural societies in Manitoba a few years ago, and now the government is following up by actually repealing the act which governs the horticultural societies. I think that it is a sign that this government perhaps does not recognize the good work that these organizations are doing not only in rural Manitoba but in a number of urban areas as well. The horticultural societies are still active, and they have to rely on their membership and fundraising in order to finance the activities that they run, but they are continuing to be very active, even though they do not have the kind of security and commitment

from funding from the government that they enjoyed earlier.

Some of the activities that the horticultural societies in the area that I represent have been involved with are working to preserve the tall grass prairie on Bradley Street and Regent, and they were crucial in co-ordinating community sponsorships to have signs erected and to co-ordinate community groups in cleaning up the site and securing the funds to ensure that it was going to be protected. They annually work with businesses in Transcona to plant flowers and other plants in the community which beautify and add to our neighbourhood. They are involved in each year a huge contest where there are hundreds of entries for horticultural exhibits, for vegetables, for flowers, and they display these in the mall. They add again to not only young people but seniors having activities that add to their appreciation and understanding of the environment and agriculture and horticulture.

I want to mention specifically the advantages to having a group like the Horticultural Society active in the community. Even though it is not the purpose that they develop the community and add to community development, this is what happens, and there are a number of seniors that spend time, good quality time, with young people in the community helping them with their gardening and developing their exhibits for the contests and fairs.

I know that there have been members of the Horticultural Society in Transcona that help sponsor a community garden at Bernie Wolfe Community School in the constituency of Radisson, and this has been a tremendous learning experience for a number of students in the area, and again it was a good chance for seniors and others in the community to get involved in the school and help with a project that add to the learning experience of students, where they got first-hand knowledge of how to plant and tend and grow sunflower seeds and flowers and vegetables right on the school grounds.

I know that in my work as an MLA in trying to develop some summer recreation programs for areas in the constituency, the Horticultural Society has also been involved in running similar kinds of projects with youth in the summer, where they will come out and do

workshops and again add to the learning and enjoyment of young people in the community. One of the other projects that they have tried out in Transcona is garden tours, where members of the Horticultural Society, walking tours through the neighbourhood and they go and they observe and discuss and learn from the horticultural talents of the different members of the society.

Again, I just want to encourage the government to, as they repeal this act, not ignore all of these very worthwhile endeavours that horticultural societies are contributing throughout the province, and recognize that these small initiatives add to communities where horticultural societies are active. I just want to say that I hope to continue working with the societies in the areas that I represent and would hope the government would recognize the good work that they are doing.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading, Bill 5, The Horticultural Society Repeal Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 6—The Veterinary Science Scholarship Fund Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 6, The Veterinary Science Scholarship Fund Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Fonds des bourses d'études vétérinaires), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): I would like to put a few comments on the record that this is a good bill. With this bill, the government makes some substantial changes to the Veterinary Scholarship Fund. Specifically by repealing Section 7, the minister can now increase the amount of money paid to veterinary students who study at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon. The previous limit was \$3,000. Its intent is to attract more students to the study of veterinary medicine. A \$3,000 limit is very low. The only thing we

might comment on is that while we are losing doctors in rural Manitoba they need to worry about that as well as veterinarians, but we thoroughly support this bill. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is third reading of Bill 6, The Veterinary Science Scholarship Fund Amendment Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 8—The Chiropractors Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 8, The Chiropractors Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les chiropractistes), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 9—The Public Health Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 9, The Public Health Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 11—The Court of Queen's Bench Surrogate Practice Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 11, The Court of Queen's Bench Surrogate Practice Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pratique relative aux successions devant la Cour du Banc de la Reine), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

* (1500)

Bill 13—The Highway Traffic Amendment (Lighting on Agricultural Equipment) Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 13, The Highway Traffic Amendment (Lighting on Agricultural Equipment) Act (Loi modifiant le Code de la route (éclairage de l'équipement agricole)), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, I would like to take a few moments to put some comments on the record with regard to this bill. I want to say that I welcome this bill, I think it is very good and long overdue. We make our living in the farming community, and I know that many members on the opposite side too are involved in farming. We are all probably guilty of getting caught up in the rush of spring seeding or fall harvesting and under the pressures of weather, attempt to move equipment down the roads and in unsafe conditions, and that has resulted in some terrible accidents.

I am sure we can all remember in our constituencies when some of these accidents happened, but the one that sticks out in my mind is the accident of 1994, where three teenagers were driving a truck down the road at night. They struck the header of the combine, and the results were terrible. These young people were killed.

So I think that, although farmers should take the responsibility of ensuring that the equipment that they are moving is done safely, it is time that we bring in legislation that will ensure that this happens. This legislation will require farm equipment haulers to have not only front and rear warning lights but also lights on the rear and left-hand protrusion of the equipment itself. This is one more step that we can take to ensure the safety of people who are travelling on our highways and our country roads.

I want to say that there is with this legislation—as I said, I think that this is good legislation, but I think that farmers and the people in the farming community have to

take extra precautions. The name escapes me of a farmer who this year received an award for the steps he had taken to ensure his equipment was safe. He had taken extra precautions to use reflector tape on all equipment and have lights that he had that could be moved onto each piece of equipment. We have slow-moving signs that are used right now, but there has to be much more that is done.

We cannot afford to take risks, and with this legislation farmers will be required to slow down a little bit and take the precautions that are necessary to ensure that the equipment that they are moving down the roads is safe. Hopefully, with this legislation, we will have a safer community. It is not the new equipment that we have to be concerned about because new equipment that is built has standard lighting features on it. It is older equipment that has to be upgraded, and farmers have to take the responsibility to ensure that this happens. We have to ensure that there are front lights on all equipment.

I am sure all of us can remember times when we have gone down a farm road, and we have seen a grain truck or other equipment that is not properly equipped. You just want to shake your head to think that anybody would take a chance on moving that equipment and putting themselves at risk or someone else, or children at risk.

So, Madam Speaker, the farming industry, the agriculture industry, is a very important industry to the economy of this province. It is a growing industry, but we are also dealing with bigger equipment, much bigger equipment, than we saw even five or 10 years ago. As farm operations increase in size, farmers get bigger equipment. Farmers tend to be many times under a lot of pressure because of the weather and the shortness of either the growing season or the harvest season, and mistakes are made because equipment is not properly lit, or the extensions of equipment, which are very wide right now, are not properly equipped.

So I think this is good legislation. We welcome it. I think that it is overdue. It should have happened earlier; now that it is here, we welcome it. And I think we have to look at this legislation and review it; and, if it does not cover all aspects of moving farm equipment, and if there are additional changes that have to be made, we should not hesitate to make them because the most important thing is that, along with making a living in the farming

community, we assure that those people who live alongside us, working in the agriculture industry, but also the young people who travel our roads, our seniors who travel and live in the rural community and visitors to the rural area, are not caught in the situation where they would be caught in an accident.

There was a constituent of mine who just this summer was travelling between Dauphin and Roblin at the No. 5 and 10 junction; very fortunately, both people were not very seriously injured. The reason for the accident was that a farmer was turning, but at the back of the equipment there were no turn signals. It was an open highway; the people from Swan River were passing. It was legal for them to pass, but very luckily that the person who was driving was very alert and saw what was happening. There was damage to the car and a little bit of injury, but it could have been fatal.

So those are the kinds of things that we in the farming industry have to be careful of, and I think that this legislation will help all of us to ensure a safer rural Manitoba. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, just a few comments here to say that we will be supporting this bill. It is long overdue and our rural communities need these safeties to help the farmers. Like the member for Swan River mentioned, the farm equipment, it is not the new equipment but it is the older equipment that needs to be updated so we have safety for our people in rural areas and to help our farmers. I am sure we will not have any problem and they will look to this legislation and abide by it. We look forward to this bill passing and help our farmers and support our rural members and our rural people for their safety. Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Madam Speaker, I did not have a chance to put any remarks on the record earlier when this bill was before the House, and I thank you for the opportunity to do so now.

This bill that is before the House for third reading—and I welcome the support of the opposition and I also welcome the support of the Liberal Party on this legislation. The accident that the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) was referring to occurred in

the Morris area, more particularly near Rosenort. I was the Agriculture representative in Morris at the time and as a result of that tragedy, which really affected that community, we went forward with an attempt at an educational program with farmers and farm families in the Morris area with regard to agricultural equipment lighting. One of the things that came to our attention when we took a look at what the present highway traffic legislation had in it was almost an impossible type of feat for farmers to even get done, because they had to have pilot vehicles front and back as well as lighting on their machines, so it just became a very impossible task for most producers to carry out.

I think with this legislation, it allows producers and farmers to be able to light their equipment adequately. I think that within the area of inventions, there are inventions coming forward that will allow a farmer to use the lighting on various pieces of equipment on the farm so it will be less costly and at the same time very effective. I know that with the equipment getting larger, not only in size but in width and with a lot of the equipment being nongeneric, it means that you can put one brand of header onto another brand of combine. Of course, lighting becomes critical then on this header and especially if it is a 35 or 40 foot header moving down the road at night, it should be well lit.

Although the legislation is not going to prevent this from ever happening again in the future, I think it is a step in the right direction and I think that overall, any of us who are working in the rural areas can do our part in terms of trying to educate the farming population on the merits of having adequate lighting on their equipment.

So with those few remarks, Madam Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity.

Madam Speaker: Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed.

* (1510)

Bill 18—The Payment of Wages Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by

the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 18, The Payment of Wages Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le paiement des salaires), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 19—The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 19, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la manutention et le transport des marchandises dangereuses), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, very briefly, under the current act all hazardous waste disposal facilities must undergo public hearings. This is a good law, but it means that even the smallest of autobody shops, for example, which store used oil must be classified as a hazardous waste facility. At an expense of \$5,000 a day for public hearings, this could potentially lead to a fairly expensive process.

This act would also allow the Department of Environment to assess the need for a complete assessment for such a low-risk facility. The act also lengthens the limitation period for commencement of prosecution under the act. It was previously six months; the act now makes it one year. This is actually a good thing from our perspective and we might even suggest that it could even be possibly a longer term.

With those very few words, Madam Speaker, we are prepared to see the bill passed.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity on second reading to put the concerns of our caucus on the record. As the members have stated in the original bill, an application for a licence to operate a

hazardous waste disposal facility would have to undergo public hearings.

The current bill states that the director shall require the applicant to comply—again, this is the original bill—oh, I am sorry this is the amendment—the director may require the applicant to comply with an environmental assessment and review specified by the director. As the members opposite know, the requirement for public hearings has been dropped, and it has been explained by the member for Inkster. He can argue that, and it is a fair enough argument that \$5,000 per day to conduct public hearings to license a garage, for example, that accepts oil from an autobody shop down the road is a high cost. But, as well, do we feel that it is fair for large-scale operations to escape public scrutiny by a public hearing process?

What we offered on this side of the House, what we offered in committee stage on this particular legislation, is what we feel is a compromise position. We brought forward an amendment calling for public hearings on specific criteria rather than on the direction—the discretion of the director. During that time the minister reviewed our amendment and realized that perhaps—excuse me, Madam Speaker—we approached the Leg. Counsel with our suggestions for an amendment and they reported back to us that we were being a little bit too specific in our request, so they were able to draft an amendment for us. I presented it in committee stage on this particular legislation.

The government minister at the time, the Minister of Environment, looked at our amendment, realized that it was a responsible approach to take, a compromise position, took it back and brought it back in a slightly watered down form, but nevertheless we were able to get an amendment to the act, that the director shall consider all relevant factors, including the proximity of a proposed facility to a residential area, the toxicity of the hazardous waste to be disposed of at the facility and the type of facility and the proposed capacity.

So we were pleased that we were able to get that amendment on this particular piece of legislation. We realize again that we feel it is a compromise between absolutely no scrutiny and perhaps too much scrutiny, so we do appreciate the government minister supporting our amendment. We feel that the amendment will make the

legislation better, so our caucus does support the legislation as amended. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading, Bill 19, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 20—The Highway Traffic Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 20, The Highway Traffic Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Loi modifiant le Code de la route—modifications diverses), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 21—The Oil and Gas Production Tax and Oil and Gas Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 21, The Oil and Gas Production Tax and Oil and Gas Amendment Act (Loi concernant la taxe sur la production de pétrole et de gaz et modifiant la Loi sur le pétrole et le gaz naturel), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, again, fairly briefly, together with Bill 3, The Surface Rights Amendment Act, this bill is intended to streamline and provide better administration of the oil and gas production tax. The minister claims that the amendments will now make it easier to monitor who owns financial interests in the well for taxation purposes. The bill also provides better records, from what we understand, in terms of keeping as well as provision for confidentiality of information which the minister claims important for the industry, given the importance of taxation and the collection thereof. It is a fairly positive piece of

legislation. I do not have any problem with supporting its passage.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is third reading, Bill 21, The Oil and Gas Production Tax and Oil and Gas Amendment Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 22—The Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 22, The Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les caisses populaires et les credit unions), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 23—The GRIP and Related Programs Termination and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), that Bill 23, The GRIP and Related Programs Termination and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi abolissant le régime RARB et des régimes connexes et apportant des modifications corrélatives), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

* (1520)

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, The GRIP and Related Programs Termination and Consequential Amendments Act is an important act that reflects the farming community. This bill not only terminates GRIP, but it also repeals several programs under crop insurance like the forages establishment

program, the tame hay plan, and that is a problem for some producers. Although the tame hay program was not that well participated in, there is another group of farmers that are suffering badly because of native hay losses, and there is no coverage for their program.

There were many recommendations made through a crop insurance review committee that this government chose not to implement that would have been covered under this bill, and one of those areas is the compensation to farmers who have great losses because of wildlife damage. There has been a wildlife compensation committee reviewing the crop insurance program and in my area there are many people, as in the whole Parkland area, who are losing their crops because of big game damage, but this government has refused to address that concern.

The other part of the bill that is a good section of the bill is the section that improves the appeal process and makes it much more user friendly than it was. People were very intimidated coming before the Manitoba Crop Insurance appeal panel when they would be there sitting with all their lawyers and this one person would have to come out and state their case, and it was very intimidating, and this legislation certainly makes it more user friendly.

The part of the bill that I particularly want to speak about is the termination of GRIP and the fact that there are large surpluses left over from GRIP and the concern we have as to what the government is going to do with that money. Several times we have raised this issue with the minister, in fact back in May we raised it, twice in May, May 27 and May 23, and we asked the minister at that time if he would recognize that the farming community has been really hard done by, both by the federal and provincial governments in the cutbacks that they have made to agriculture. We think that the money that is left over from GRIP should flow to research and we have asked that that happen many times. That would mean that there would be some—of the \$63 million that is left over, there would be several million dollars, I believe \$42 million, \$16 million from the provincial government and \$26 million from the federal government.

When you look at what we have had reduced from agriculture research here in Manitoba I think it is vital that the provincial government could put their share in

and they lobby the federal government to ensure that that money stays in Manitoba for agriculture research. We have had huge losses in this province, and now Saskatchewan is becoming the agriculture research centre of western Canada. We cannot afford to have the lack of research to help our producers in this province. We have a government that talks about diversification, of new crops, the value added, but for those things to happen we also have to have research and support, and it would be extremely important that those monies that are now available be put back into research.

I know, Madam Speaker, that there are a few outstanding issues under GRIP that have to be settled, although there is the Risk Area 12 group of people in the Red River Valley who felt their coverage was inadequate. That is still outstanding in courts and some of the money will have to be set aside for that, although the lentil issue that was the issue where the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) changed rules in the middle of the game and changed the coverage of people who were growing lentils and, as a result, they were taken to court. Of course, the government lost and although they have settled with the lentil producers, there is still additional challenge with whether or not the government should be paying these people interest. So, certainly, there is a certain amount of money that has to be set aside for those kind of things.

Overpayment by the producers should go back to the producers and that is some \$21 million that I feel it is owing to the producers. The government should make those payments as quickly as they can, but the balance should go to research. I am quite pleased that the Minister of Agriculture is now saying that this should go to research. When we raised those questions with him last May, he did not give such a positive answer, but I am quite surprised that the minister is saying, well, I would like to give it to you but I am not sure what Treasury Board is going to say. When this was the Minister of Natural Resources, we saw all kind of cutbacks in Natural Resources. Now he is the Minister of Agriculture and he is saying, I am not sure whether this is going to stay in agriculture.

This is money that was budgeted for agriculture. This is money that should stay in agriculture and if this government is as sincere as they say they are—and I believe that many of them as rural members recognize the importance of the agriculture industry to this

province—they will say and they will be supportive of putting the provincial share of the money which is \$16 million. I am hoping that they will lobby the federal government and I am hoping that the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach) will join with me in encouraging the M.P., Marlene Cowling, to stand up and ensure that this money that is supposed to be for agriculture really does come back for research, because we certainly have not heard that member speak up for the people of the Parkland area whether it be on transportation or any of the agriculture issues. Certainly on rail line abandonment, we have not seen her be very supportive of our constituency but as she speaks out as someone who is supportive of the agriculture community I think I would be very happy to hear her. [interjection] I have to agree with the member for Roblin-Russell on that one.

We hear her say things that do not carry off to Ottawa and I would like to hear that member from the Liberal government say that she is prepared to talk to Ralph Goodale and ensure that the money that was designated for agriculture will come back to Manitoba, because certainly under the Liberal government we have not had good fortune in the agriculture community. We have seen the Crow benefit disappear. We have seen agriculture research cut down to nothing, and now we have seen the abandonment of rail lines, all of these things, Madam Speaker, which hit very hard on the agriculture community. So we must have a provincial government that is prepared to stand up for the farmers and put their share of the money, that \$16 million that is controlled by the provincial government, into research and we have to have a provincial government that is going to lobby the federal government and ensure that money that was allocated for agriculture will come here because it is Manitoba that has been hit hardest by the federal cuts, changes to the Crow, the changes to the transportation system, all of those things have hurt us very badly.

An Honourable Member: None of our Liberal M.P.s will stand up to speak for Manitoba.

Ms. Wowchuk: Now the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach) says that Liberal M.P.s have not stood up and spoken for Manitoba, and I have to agree with him. When it comes to the transportation issue and the privatization of rail lines, that is very true. We wrote to Lloyd Axworthy; we contacted Marlene Cowling and other M.P.s; we asked them to come and meet with

us—David Anderson, who is the Minister of Transport, we could not get anywhere. They could come to Dauphin for a photo op and talk to students, but they could not talk to the people who were concerned about the abandonment of rail lines.

Madam Speaker, I am talking about the federal government, their lack of commitment to agriculture, but I do believe that the provincial government has a responsibility too, and should be also putting their money where their mouth is and fulfilling their commitment to the words that they say that they want to see diversification and value added in the rural community. To have that happen, we have to have research, and I think it is very important.

The government would show a very good sign. They have not showed a very good sign to rural Manitobans when it comes to talking about Manitoba Telephone or listening on Telephones, even though the majority of Manitobans do not want it privatized. So they have a chance to regain themselves here with the farming community and show them that they really do recognize how important the agriculture industry is.

* (1530)

I look forward to hearing an announcement by this government that their share of the surplus of GRIP, some \$16 million, will be designated for agriculture research, and we will see agriculture research programs spread out across the province. You know, Madam Speaker, agriculture is not only an industry of southern Manitoba; it is an industry of central Manitoba; and it is an industry of northern Manitoba. There are many opportunities for growth for the agriculture industry. We cannot just focus our attentions on the southern part of the province and do research on the possibility of doing more irrigation so that McCain's can have more potatoes and those kind of things; we have to look at how people in other areas of the province can also contribute to the food supply of the world. We know in The Pas there is a very good grain belt. It is a small area, but they can grow good crops there. There are opportunities to move farther north with cattle production and even growing some crops.

What the government has to do is show leadership and do the research that we require so that everything does not concentrate on the southern part of the province. It is

not fair to take the revenues from the resources from the northern and central part of the province and concentrate it in the south, but give nothing back. It is time for the government to recognize that there is need for research in agriculture, but have that research distributed across the province and give other opportunities. It does not have to be research for big-scale operations; maybe we can be doing research and encouragement of people growing their own food and becoming more self-sustaining.

There is much that the government could do. I encourage them to recognize that, although GRIP is terminated, they do have a responsibility to make a decision on the money that is left over. I encourage the government to do their part, put their money into research, and follow up to the federal government and encourage the federal government also to fulfill their commitment to Manitoba.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading Bill 23, The GRIP and Related Programs Termination and Consequential Amendments Act.

Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 24—The Agricultural Credit Corporation Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 24, The Agricultural Credit Corporation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société du crédit agricole), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 25—The Jury Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger), that Bill 25, The Jury Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jurés), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, I just wanted to put a few words of disappointment on the record. While generally this bill is good and fixes up a mess that was introduced by the former Minister of Justice back in the early '90s, a mess of a piece of legislation that was set as such by at least two court levels in Manitoba and does go so far as to recognize the principle that if someone is fired because they are summoned for jury duty they should be entitled to some damages, the government did not go further and put that principle wholly into effect. All the government did to this bill was allow damages for wage loss up to \$5,000. Now why they would cap it they have not answered, certainly to our satisfaction, I do not think, in any reasonable basis. The courts of Manitoba can certainly give orders in excess of \$5,000 and do so on a daily basis.

Not only that, they have failed to recognize that someone can be fired—as has happened, and we know of two cases, in fact one case that led to the amendments—and not lose simply wages but lose benefits, lose seniority. Worse yet, it may be that monetary compensation by way of damages is not enough, that reinstatement is what is needed to put the person back into the position they would have been if not for the wrongdoing by the employer. So we are very disappointed the government would not fully embrace the principle that it seemed to give some attention to in this bill, by allowing the full recovery of damages that can be awarded by the court, not by the person having to go launch a civil suit and endure the weight of such a case and the cost of pursuing such a case but pursued by a Crown attorney, or indeed we had proposed that the option be made available for independent counsel to be retained for the purposes of an action under this section.

I think that the failure of the government to fully embrace this principle of allowing for full damages when one is fired for being summoned for jury duty attests to the inability of this government both to respect employee rights and respect situations that workers can find themselves in in this province and, unfortunately, fully respect the importance of the jury system to our justice system in Manitoba. If the government had fully embraced the importance of both workers and protection of workers, particularly those that are called for jury duty,

and the role of juries in our society, I think they would have seen the wisdom of adopting our amendments at committee.

With those words, Madam Speaker, we are prepared to see third reading of Bill 25.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 25, The Jury Amendment Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 27—The Museum of Man and Nature
Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 27, The Museum of Man and Nature Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Musée de l'Homme et de la Nature et apportant des modifications corrélatives), be now read a third time and passed

Motion presented.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, we agree with the two purposes of this bill, first of all to change the name to one that is more politically correct from the Museum of Man and Nature to the Manitoba Museum. We think that is very appropriate.

The second purpose of this bill and the most part of this legislation will make the museum a separate identity from the Museum Foundation. This will address concerns that donors have that the legacy of donations could be used to absorb the operating budget of the museum in this climate of Conservative fiscal cutbacks. So we support this bill and are glad to see it passed. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is third reading of Bill 27, The Museum of Man and Nature

Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 28—The Winnipeg Stock Exchange Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 28, The Winnipeg Stock Exchange Act (Loi sur la Bourse de Winnipeg), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 29—The Winnipeg Commodity Exchange Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 29, The Winnipeg Commodity Exchange Act (Loi sur la Bourse des marchandises de Winnipeg), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 30—The Dairy Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 30, The Dairy Act (Loi sur les produits laitiers), be read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, this act is intended to position Manitoba's dairy industry to adopt a harmonized Canada-wide system of dairy product production and inspection standards. Specifically it gives inspectors some real powers to search and find companies who violate these standards. Inspectors also are given more authority to enter and inspect premises in a legal framework for obtaining a search warrant.

This bill also gives the minister legal right to set regulations governing dairy production in Manitoba. With this act in place it is hoped that some inter-

provincial trade barriers will come down. This will not happen overnight but a national standard is a step in the right direction. This act is supported by the dairy marketing board and the Manitoba dairy producers.

One subject that might come up are the provisions for unpasteurized milk production. In other jurisdictions this has been a big issue. It appears that some people do not like pasteurized milk. Unpasteurized milk is also used in some cheeses. They are supposed to taste better. Since this bill gives the minister the right to set regulations. We might want to ask what provisions, if any, have been made to accommodate the unpasteurized milk lobby. We might also want to ask about the bovine growth hormone.

With these words, I will let the bill pass. Thank you.

* (1540)

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading, Bill 30, The Dairy Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 34—The Contaminated Sites Remediation and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 34, The Contaminated Sites Remediation and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi concernant l'assainissement des lieux contaminés et apportant des modifications corrélatives), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Before I make my comments on Bill 34, I just want to make a general comment on what we are doing here today, that we as a Legislature will be passing well over 30 bills with unanimous consent. It often appears to the public and to the media that all we do in this House is that we argue back and forth and act like children; those are some of the comments that we hear. I think it is important for us to

recognize that on this side of the House, as we are attempting to be—and we are—responsible opposition, when we feel that there is legislation out there that we feel is in the best interests of this province, we do support it.

Madam Speaker, Bill 34 addresses the process of dealing with contaminated sites and the associated cleanup costs as identified in the 1995 State of the Environment Report. There are over 600 contaminated sites. New sites, unfortunately, are being added all the time to that. Contaminated sites could be water, or, in some cases, it could be soil that is contaminated. I know of a situation in my own community in the Rockwood area, the West St. Paul area, a number of years ago where the water aquifer in that area was contaminated by—it was revealed that it was contaminated by Bristol Aerospace. Unfortunately, solvents used in the cleaning of machinery found their way into the water supply of that area. At the time it was noted by the water geologist from the Department of Natural Resources for the Province of Manitoba, and he claimed that this is probably the worst water contamination situation in Manitoba, a contaminated site.

Madam Speaker, the legislation has a number of issues in it or issues related to it. Municipalities, for example, will not be responsible for the remediation of a site that they have acquired through tax sale. Creditors will not be responsible for remediation of a site. The act encourages mediation and negotiation to apportioning cost for cleanup, and it also makes an amendment to The Environment Act which allows the Clean Environment Commission to apportion costs based on the polluter-pay principle.

It also provides and establishes a registry of contaminated sites and notices on land titles and notices to municipalities, and it will note that the Union of Manitoba Municipalities recommended acceptance of this legislation, the same Union of Manitoba Municipalities that last week condemned this government's attempt to sell off our publicly owned telephone system.

There are a few concerns that we have, and I raised those on second reading. They deal with one aspect, and that is that a suspected polluter hires his or her own investigator. We realize that within the act the director can order further investigation if needed, but we have

some concerns with that, that a suspected polluter can hire someone to do an investigation into the pollution that that individual or that company may cause.

Another is a certificate of compliance may be issued by the director if a security is left with the director that the remediation will occur. Well, there is a concern that those who have the financial resources will apply for and receive the certificate of compliance when they provide the security but may not remediate that site. There is a concern there.

Another one is, there is a very generous grace period to correct defaulters. Now, when you consider that someone is already in default of the act, they are allowed another 21 days to correct their default. So they are already in violation of the act, but they are given another 21 days, and we feel that is very generous.

Overall, we feel that the super lien that is included in the act, the stronger cost recovery that is included in the act are all good things for Manitobans, and good things for trying to deal with at least 600 or more contaminated sites.

We would also like to urge the government to look into the issue of a superfund, for example, which is a contribution made by chemical manufacturers and petroleum refineries. This occurs in the United States, and it is administered by the federal government, provides for a fund that is used to remediate orphan sites, which is, I believe, if there is an orphan site here in the province, the taxpayers have to pay for the remediation of that site.

So, Madam Speaker, with those few comments, I do want to offer our support of the legislation, and we will be voting to make this legislation into law. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

The question before the House is third reading, Bill 34, The Contaminated Sites Remediation and Consequential Amendments Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 37—The Ambulance Services
Amendment Act**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 37, The Ambulance Services Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services d'ambulance), be now read a third and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 40—The Pension Benefits Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 40, The Pension Benefits Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les prestations de pension), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 42—The Northern Affairs Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 42, The Northern Affairs Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les Affaires du Nord), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Madam Speaker, I just have a few remarks on Bill 42, The Northern Affairs Amendment Act. We, of course, support this bill. We feel that the bill does not, however, empower community councils throughout northern Manitoba to improve in their daily life.

* (1550)

I have had the opportunity of visiting a number of Northern Affairs communities in northern Manitoba over the past several years, and it is always unfortunate to see the site of the conditions of some of the communities that aboriginal people for the most part have to live under and the conditions that they have to live under both in the infrastructure and also with the level of services that they do not have access to that perhaps southern Canadians and southern Manitobans generally take for granted.

For example, in one community that the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) and I visited last year in Brochet, we had the opportunity of meeting with both the mayor and council and members of their community. They told us about how hard it was for them, being that they were not Indian people, they were not legally recognized as treaty Status Indians under law and recognized as such by the Indian Affairs department. So they were, I would say, a group of people that are lost between the cracks. They are neither First Nations as recognized by the Government of Canada, and at the location they are located they are neither Metis. So they cannot fully capitalize on the services that are available to Metis people. They are just generally recognized as aboriginal people being located in this very isolated community.

It is very hard for them to access medivac services, for one thing, and this is not only in this community that I am talking about but indeed other communities throughout northern Manitoba. Other communities that fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Northern Affairs, of course, have told us other problems that they are faced with including the fishermen in Berens River and other communities on the southeast side and the problems that they have had in trying to make a livelihood for their families and to put food on the table for their families and their children and their elders, and they find it extremely hard.

What we understand the act to do is it allows perhaps these communities to incorporate and pursue initiatives that they were unable to pursue before, and naturally we support that. Housing is in extreme shortage for many of these communities, and we have said over and over, not only in First Nations communities but in Northern Affairs communities throughout northern Manitoba, we have people that are sometimes overcrowded to a point where we have 30-40 people living in one dwelling. Of course, this not only creates the potential for health hazards, but it also is a fire hazard, and it is extremely unfortunate that we in a modern-day world find this acceptable. So we are naturally in support of Northern Affairs communities that are pursuing to find initiatives that will improve their lives on a daily basis in these northern communities that I am talking about.

Madam Speaker, the Northern Association of Community Councils under the leadership of Sonny Clyne,

who is a constituent of my colleague for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), has done a good job in communicating some of the concerns of the Northern Affairs communities to this government and also to governments before this one over the years. We are optimistic for the community councils that they will find a level of living which is comfortable and compatible with other Canadians and the level of living that other Canadians now enjoy.

So we support this bill; however, we do not see it taking full effect in that it will rectify the problems that are existent in Northern Affairs communities particularly. However, I think in the time to come that whether it be this government or another government that may govern in this province in the years ahead, they will definitely have to take these communities a little more seriously than they have. For the most part their budgets in maintenance, for example, are far less than what they really need, for example, to keep the roadways operational, to make sure that the kids are able to go to school and have safe passageways in the roads that we have in northern Manitoba, which sometimes cannot be considered roads but simply trails. Although we have come a long way with our community activities in bringing the communities to a level where they are comfortable, there is still a lot of work that has to be done, Madam Speaker.

I have always made it a point to be selective in a commentary that I make, and I look forward to working with this government to ensure that this act is enforced and to ensure that the communities that I have been describing here will realize the maximum benefit from this act. I do not believe that the results will be immediate, but certainly I think that the work lies ahead not only for this government, but for other governments to come in the years ahead.

With those few remarks, Madam Speaker, I would like to conclude at this point by indicating our support for Bill 42.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, just a few comments to say that we will be supporting this bill here, and we have some concerns with the fact that the minister seems to have too much power but, after listening to the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), who knows his community inside out, and after giving

such an eloquent speech in regard to helping out his communities, we have to say that we will support this bill.

Our concern, like I said, is the power that is given to the minister, but on the long term, I think, working in co-operation, like the member has said, we will be prepared to let it pass and support it. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading Bill 42, The Northern Affairs Amendment Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 44—The City of Winnipeg Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Reimer), that Bill 44, The City of Winnipeg Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg et apportant des modifications corrélatives), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 45—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 45, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur), be now read a third time and passed.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable government House leader, seconded by the honourable Minister of Labour, that Bill 45, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act, be now read a third time and passed. Agreed? [interjection] Sorry. Is there leave to have the honourable member for The Maples? [agreed]

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, I just want to put a few comments on the record in regard to The Consumer Protection Amendment Act, Bill 45.

This bill is one of the end products of the 1995 agreement on internal trade between Manitoba, the federal government and the other provinces. As part of the agreement, all provinces agreed to harmonize the legislation with regard to direct selling. In doing so, no province would lessen the protection consumers now have. Manitoba is the first province to amend their legislation.

This act gives the consumers the right to cancel a retail sale within one year after entering an agreement that does not meet the standards of this legislation or if the vendor has failed to provide the material service. If a credit agreement was also entered into, then that agreement is also cancelled. This legislation is pro consumer, and we welcome its passage. Thank you.

* (1600)

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading, Bill 45, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed. Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 46—The Securities Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 46, The Securities Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les valeurs mobilières), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): In regard to The Securities Amendment Act, a recent decision in the Ontario Court of Appeal has undermined the conventional method of rule making in the realm of securities. The securities commissions throughout the country regulated their jurisdictions through the issuance

of policy statements. Policy statements set guidelines for securities regulation. Recently one of these policies was challenged as being ultra vires, the Ontario Securities Commission. A court agreed, stating that the policy statement was invalid because it was more in the fashion of a requirement than a guideline. As a consequence, securities commissions throughout the country have been granted the authority by their respective governments to make regulations as they always have.

Rules made by the Securities Commission can be overturned or amended by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. The rules must be published in the Gazette. The rules will be treated in the same manner as a regulation under the provisions in The Evidence Act. Unless we have any particular problem with this bill in which securities have been administered, there is not much to object to in this bill. Therefore, we will be supporting the bill because it merely ensures that the guidelines that the Securities Commission has always made will stand a court challenge. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading, Bill 46, The Securities Amendment Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed. Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 51—The Civil Service Superannuation Amendment, Public Servants Insurance Amendment and Teachers' Pensions Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 51, The Civil Service Superannuation Amendment, Public Servants Insurance Amendment and Teachers' Pensions Amendment Act (Loi sur la pension de la fonction publique, la Loi sur l'assurance des employés du gouvernement et la Loi sur la pension de retraite des enseignants), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, this bill amends three acts that provide pension, life insurance benefits for civil servants and employees of Crown corporations, boards, agencies, and pension benefits for public school teachers. The four types of changes to these three acts are, No. 1, changes to the pension plans to allow days off without pay, commonly referred to as Filmon Fridays, to qualify as pensionable service. The employee cost of this bill will be paid out of surplus employee contributions in the two funds. Following that, employees will pay their share as part of their regular pension contribution.

The second type of change is necessary to implement changes agreed to with the unions that will allow employees to purchase service in respect of several types of leave. These are maternity and parental leave service, periods of seasonal layoff when employees are converted from year-round to seasonal, and equivalent to full-time service for employees who choose to reduce their hours to less than full time and who are within five years of retirement. In addition, as agreed to within the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, correctional officers will be permitted to retire up to five years earlier than normal. The full cost of this change will be paid for by one percentage point increase in the contributions of correctional officers. The Manitoba Government Employees' Union also agreed to transfer \$7.95 million of surplus in the group life insurance fund to the province. The change will allow similar transfers by agreement between other employees and employee groups participating in the plan.

Changes required by Revenue Canada to ensure the pension plans remain registered for income tax purposes are the third type of change. These changes do not significantly affect the benefits payable under the two plans.

The fourth type of change is general amendments needed to take care of some housecleaning matters, but we will be keeping a very close eye on what effect these changes have once it is proclaimed and put into practice. We will give guarded support to this legislation.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 51, The Civil Service Superannuation Amendment, Public

Servants Insurance Amendment and Teachers' Pensions Amendment Act.

Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 52—The York Factory First Nation Northern Flood Implementation Agreement Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 52, The York Factory First Nation Northern Flood Implementation Agreement Act (Loi sur l'accord de mise en oeuvre de la première nation de York Factory relatif à la convention sur la submersion de terres du Nord manitobain), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): Madam Speaker, just a few remarks on this bill, Bill 52. I want to say a few words about this bill. Of course, we know that this was proclaimed at the federal level by the national government, and I know that congratulations are due to past leadership in the community, including the current-day leadership at the York Factory First Nation, Chief Eric Saunders and the council members, the elders and the community members who ratified this before the other levels of government, of course, proclaimed it under the federal bill and also under the bill that we are currently debating in this House.

A lot of our comments have to be positive about the leadership of this community. I have had the chance of being in York Landing a number of times. In fact, the last time I was at York Landing I was with the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) and the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), and we took the winter road from Split Lake to York Landing. As members may know, Madam Speaker, the York Factory First Nation came to be when the original settlement located at York Factory at the mouth of Hudson Bay, and the people there were relocated inland to the present location they are in now. There are a lot of stories about that relocation as well, and the people still talk about the happier times that they

experienced and where hunting was abundant and also a way of life. The traditional way of life was much easier to access than it is currently in their current-day location where they are now.

We, of course, recognize that the York Factory First Nation Northern Flood Implementation Agreement to be a modern-day treaty with the Cree people of the York Landing community. We recognize that agreement as such, and they along with the other four communities, the original five, that were part of this, of course, decided upon a referendum in their own community to proceed and acknowledge and agree with the agreement that was negotiated by Chief Saunders and his council that they feel will be for the good of their community in the years ahead.

* (1610)

I know that they have the young people in mind when they first talked about this issue in their community. They talked about the conditions that they were experiencing, and even though this particular bill will not correct the wrongs that currently exist in the York Landing community, it certainly is a right step in the recognition of First Nations people and their inherent right to the land, first of all. York Factory First Nation with the original other four that were considered the five bands began negotiations shortly after the Northern Flood Agreement was signed in 1977, the Cross Lake, Norway House, Nelson House and Split Lake and, of course, York Factory First Nation were all involved with the five bands since 1977 and finally negotiating this. It is long overdue. Yes, we recognize that, and perhaps we can say other governments in the past were at fault for not implementing it sooner; however, the fact is that we are following the lead of the federal government, we are following the lead and the persistent leadership of York Factory in what they are trying to do and what they feel is right for their people and the generations that lie ahead of them.

So, Madam Speaker, with those few comments I just want to indicate that we will be supporting Bill 52.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 52, The York Factory First Nation Northern Flood

Implementation Agreement Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 53—The Nelson House First Nation Northern Flood Implementation Agreement Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 53, The Nelson House First Nation Northern Flood Implementation Agreement Act (Loi sur l'accord de mise en oeuvre de la première nation de Nelson House relatif à la convention sur la submersion de terres du Nord manitobain), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Madam Speaker, again I rise to speak on Bill 53, The Nelson House First Nation Northern Flood Implementation Agreement Act. Again we want to congratulate the leadership in that community, both past and present. Of course, Chief Jerry Primrose and members of his council, including Darcy Linklater and many others, David Spence, have been persistent in their efforts to ensure that this agreement became law. Also, they went through a process of ratification in their own community.

Nelson House is not without its problems, of course. Like other communities in northern Manitoba, other First Nations communities, it certainly has experienced a number of problems over the past few years. Nelson House has been a lead player in documenting and illustrating to other Manitobans the poor condition of Highway 391 which goes by their community on to Lynn Lake from Thompson, and they have been very active in bringing to the attention of other Manitobans that we have bad roads in northern communities and in northern Manitoba. Unfortunately, because of the condition of Highway 391, it has taken the lives of way too many people in the last several years, and I know that with the leadership of Chief Primrose and other leaders that will come in the future that they will continue advocating on behalf of the people, not only for the travelling public

that use that Highway 391 but, indeed, for other initiatives in their own community.

I mentioned one time in this House that the community was dealing with some of the social problems that they experience in their own community but, also, in northern Manitoba communities generally, and that is the problem of the residential school syndrome, alcoholism, drug abuse, solvent abuse, and they have embarked upon an initiative that should be embraced by all, and that is the solvent abuse treatment program that they have there. It is called the healing centre, which deals with all these elements, with all the social ills that aboriginal people have faced over the years, and they should be commended for their effort in what they are doing.

It was my pleasure last summer at the gathering of the Cree Nation to work with some little children, ages five to 11, who had begun drumming. In fact it is a little girls drumming group, and it is the first time they ever were a part of a pow-wow or celebration at the Cree Nations gathering that was held on the Opaskwayak Cree Nation territory near The Pas last July. It was an honour to hear these little children, ages five to 11, sing the songs of our people, sing the songs of our ancestors to the people that were assembled there but, also, they were recorded, and I know that these recordings are going to live on in the years ahead. I hope that these young people will look back at those tapes and the videos that were taken of them at that pow-wow because that will remind them that aboriginal people have come full circle in reclaiming their identity and also their way of life.

So I want to congratulate again the persistence of Chief Primrose and his council members. I have a number of friends, in fact a number of relatives in the Nelson House community and I commend them for the efforts that they have made over the years and, again, we regard this agreement as a modern-day treaty in addition to Treaty No. 5, of which the Nelson House people are a part, that was signed in 1875 and adhesions made following that.

The Nelson House community, with the York Factory First Nation, is also part of the original five that were affected by the 1977 Northern Flood Agreement and the effect that had on northern communities.

The Northern Flood activities took their toll on aboriginal people because a lot of aboriginal people in

the community that I am from originally and also the other four, I am talking about Cross Lake, Norway House, Split Lake, Nelson House and York Factory, who are part of the Nelson River system, were drastically affected because it altered a way of life, their trapping, their fishing, their hunting. That way of life is no longer there and will never come back, unfortunately.

Nevertheless these people and the elders have instructed the young leadership, including the people I mentioned earlier, that with new technology our young people have to embrace those as well as embracing a little bit of our past and embracing some of the future and incorporating those so that we become contributing members of our society.

That is the motto of the leadership of the Nelson House community, and I fully take my hat off to them and offer them congratulations in persevering and being able to weather the many obstacles that lay in their negotiating process with the federal government and with the provincial government, and I want to indicate our party's support for Bill 53. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 53. The Nelson House First Nation Northern Flood Implementation Agreement Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 60—The Law Society Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Bill 60, The Law Society Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société du Barreau), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 70—The Animal Care Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 70, The Animal Care

Act (Loi sur le soin des animaux), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

* (1620)

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): The Animal Care Act is certainly one of importance as well, and it was an act that came forward as a result of the controversy that arose with the puppy mill industry and some of the distressing situations that became obvious to the public where people were breeding animals and treating them and housing them in very unsafe conditions and in very inhumane ways. As a result of that, as a result of pressure on the government, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) has brought forward The Animal Care Act. I have to say that the part of the act that deals with the puppy mill industry are certainly very good, and the amendments that the minister brought forward changing a few clauses in the act also enhance the act and will result in better treatment of animals and bring in place control, and give the people, the inspectors, the authority to come in and enforce the law when we see that those people who are raising these animals are treating them in an abusive way.

There is also another section of the act that deals with the livestock industry and the farming section of agriculture, and in that section as well, Madam Speaker, there has been a need to upgrade legislation, because when there was inhumane treatment of animals there was not the strength in the act to have people come in and ensure that the animals were properly treated. As I said, the act allows now for people to come in and inspect and ensure that animals are treated fairly, and the amendments that the minister have brought in will, I think, even strengthen the legislation more. As the minister said, this is leading legislation in Canada, and hopefully the other provinces will follow.

Also, the one concern that we have with the bill is that there is no component of education. We have to do much more as a community, and particularly I think about the agricultural side of it, to educate the public on the role that animals play in the farming industry and educate people to realize that when farmers are raising animals, whether it be cows or horses or hogs, that farmers want these animals to be in a healthy condition and treat them

in the best possible way, because if they are not healthy animals they are not of much value to the producers. So I think that there is a need for this legislation. It is a step in the right direction, and we have to do much more in education.

The one question I have, there was one section of the legislation that was deleted, and it says that a clause is deleted that a person who is keeping animals, cats or dogs or animals like that, has the right to refuse an inspection. I wonder why the minister has changed that clause. He has indicated that he would provide for us the information as to why this particular amendment is put forward, but I do not think—I have a concern that a person who is housing animals in an unsafe condition can now refuse an inspection. That has not been spelled out for us clearly, but certainly we applaud this move to bring a safer environment for the animals in this province.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I simply want to express my appreciation for the support and constructive advice that I have received from different quarters with respect to this bill, from members opposite and indeed from interested members of the public, particularly those who spoke for and on behalf of The Winnipeg Humane Society.

As I indicated at the committee stage, this is a bill that I see evolving. Amendments will come to it from time to time as we proceed in that educational process that the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) spoke of. Once again, I appreciate the general support that this bill has received, and I might say, I say that on behalf of all the animals that this bill is meant to protect.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading Bill 70, The Animal Care Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 71—The Manitoba Film and Sound Recording Development Corporation Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and

Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer), that Bill 71, The Manitoba Film and Sound Recording Development Corporation Act (Loi sur la Société manitobaine de développement de l'enregistrement cinématographique et sonore), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion agreed to.

**Bill 77—The Natural Products
Marketing Amendment Act**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that Bill 77, The Natural Products Marketing Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la commercialisation des produits naturels), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes to put a few comments on the record with regard to this bill, because this is one of the bills where we saw co-operation from all members of the House working on behalf of the farmers, the dairy producers of Manitoba. In fact, our rules say that we cannot bring in legislation after a certain date, and that was earlier on in the year, in June.

The Manitoba Milk Producers realized that they needed an amendment, and the amendment that they needed was to The Natural Products Marketing Act. Dairy producers across Canada have been working over the last several years to organize themselves into pools to share their milk products, and Manitoba is in two pools, one pool with the eastern provinces and another pool that is being negotiated with the western provinces. They came to an agreement, and as a result of this pooling there will be a large amount of money, over \$2 million, in the pool that will be coming to Manitoba producers. But when they got to sign the agreement, legal advice was given to them that there had to be an amendment to The Natural Products Marketing Act before they could sign the agreement.

They came to the Legislature and to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) with this request, and all parties recognized that this was an important piece of legislation and one that we should work together on to ensure that it

was passed, because we do not want to see revenues withheld and held in a pool and not in the hands of Manitoba producers.

Had we not passed this amendment, this pool of money would have had to sit in the pool until the next session, until the next Legislature, where we could pass this piece of legislation. So I am very pleased to have been able to co-operate. We saw co-operation on all sides of the House to ensure that this piece of legislation passed, and we were assured that the pooling concept, a concept that we very much support, was able to proceed and that there would be benefits for Manitobans as they share in the eastern pool, and we look forward to working with other provinces, along with the dairy board, to ensure that the western pool is successful and that there is a benefit to all producers.

The one concern that I do have with the dairy industry, Madam Speaker, is that although we are pooling—we produce a lot of milk—we are losing in the value-added jobs and the processing of these products are going to other provinces. I hope we will see as a result of this legislation work done not because of this legislation but we will see the government working with the industry to ensure that we have value-added jobs in the milk processing industry as well.

I just want to conclude by saying I am very pleased that we were able to co-operate and bring this legislation forward on behalf of the dairy producers of Manitoba.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I too just want to put a few brief comments on the record with respect to Bill 77. In fact, this is one of those bills which gives me reason to believe that government can work in co-operation with both opposition parties and in fact what we have seen was the association, the Manitoba dairy producers I believe is the organization, that one is realizing that the opportunity was there in order to make an amendment that would resolve the problem which the member for Swan River just finished talking about. They had taken fairly immediate action in terms of trying to build a consensus between the government and both opposition parties.

We had indicated to them when I had the opportunity to meet with the group that in principle we would not have too much of a problem supporting what it is they

were doing, in fact, just allow me a couple of days to be able to refer to a few people. I did get the opportunity to do that and in essence believe that this is in fact in the best interest of the industry as a whole but would applaud the government for taking the action and the association for trying to build a consensus on something that was unanimously supported from all three political parties inside this Chamber and in fact, it appears, had good, substantial support from within the industry.

With those few words, Madam Speaker, we are prepared to see this bill pass and, once again, just applaud the work of the nonelected officials in seeing a problem and resolving it.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is—is there leave of the House for the Speaker not to see the clock? [agreed]

An Honourable Member: Question.

* (1630)

Madam Speaker: Question? Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading, Bill 77, The Natural Products Marketing Amendment Act. Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, I wonder if there is a will of the House to sit a special sitting tomorrow morning at 10 a.m., to consider condolence motions. Leave would also be required to sit the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources scheduled for tomorrow morning at nine o'clock to sit concurrently with the House.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to convene the House at 10 a.m. tomorrow morning to deal with the condolence motions and also sit concurrently in the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources? [agreed]

Mr. Ernst: The Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources scheduled for 6:30 p.m. tonight is cancelled.

Madam Speaker: The Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources previously scheduled for 6:30 p.m. this evening is cancelled.

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, the Clerk is reminding me that the condolence motion meeting of the House for tomorrow will be from 10 until noon or until such time prior to noon that we would complete our work.

Madam Speaker: The House will sit from 10 a.m. till 12 p.m. to consider condolence motions.

Committee Change

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Morris (Mr. Pitura), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Thursday, November 7, at 9 a.m., be amended as follows: the member for Morris for the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik).

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: The hour being 4:30 p.m., time for Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 22-Enhanced Crop Insurance Program

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that

WHEREAS recent policy changes by the Federal Government, such as the elimination of the Western Grain Transportation benefit, cuts to agriculture research and other cuts will increase financial uncertainty facing Manitoba farm communities; and

WHEREAS the Gross Revenue Insurance Program is coming to an end; and

WHEREAS national insurance programs, such as NISA, do not provide adequate protection for farmers; and

WHEREAS enrollment in the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation programs has declined because farmers believe that the programs offered do not meet their needs; and

WHEREAS many recommendations to the Manitoba Crop Insurance Review Committee have not been implemented; and

WHEREAS farmers must have the ability to protect themselves from disaster.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Provincial Government to consider enhancing crop insurance programs so that they will provide adequate coverage for Manitoba farmers and correct the shortcomings in the current coverage which they have identified.

Motion presented.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Speaker, there has long been discussion about an Enhanced Crop Insurance Program, and there was discussion about setting up a federal, a national program, a support program that would be national in scope and provide for a level type of support for the agriculture producers of this country. We heard about this national safety net program or Enhanced Crop Insurance Program that was going to come forward, but as I understand it, the negotiations broke down and now we have each province doing its own crop insurance.

Now, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) has put forward an Enhanced Crop Insurance Program, and that was announced in December of 1995, so the minister I know when he gets up he will say that, yes, he has put forward an Enhanced Crop Insurance Program, but the crop insurance program and the policies under crop insurance that this government has put forward have many shortcomings. The government in their announcement put forward different levels of coverage that you could get, and one of them was a 50 percent coverage, a coverage that would offer a 50 percent of long-term yields with no premium charge to producers.

However, producers would also have the option of selecting higher coverage of 70 percent and 80 percent of eligible crops. Well, I have spoken to many, and I know the minister is going to say that he has addressed the concerns, but there were many recommendations that were put forward by the Crop Insurance Review Committee that have not been addressed, and I have talked to many producers who have said that the 50 percent is not offering them any coverage. It is not a good program. Producers are telling me that coverage is not adequate. I encourage the minister to recognize that, although he has put a program forward, he has to listen to producers, and the program that he has right now is not meeting the producers' needs. Many producers are saying that the additional coverage is very expensive and they cannot afford it. So they do not have adequate coverage.

There are other areas that I want to address, Madam Speaker, and I think that government is not meeting their obligation to producers. They have put in place a crop review committee, and that committee put forward many recommendations, and although some of them have been addressed—and one of them that was addressed was the one on the appeals process that producers can take part in when they have a concern with crop insurance. I think the amendment that the minister has brought forward under the crop insurance legislation this time, that part addresses the concerns of producers quite well, and we will look to see how that can be improved as well.

There are other shortcomings, and one of the shortcomings, Madam Speaker, is the coverage on hay. That program has been cancelled, and although the minister said that there was poor participation in the program, that was one of the reasons for cancellation, the minister has to, if that is not adequate, then look at another program. There is no coverage for wild hay, and this year we see many producers suffering because of that. We have raised this issue with the minister, we have raised it with the minister of disaster assistance. There has to be a way. If you are not going to offer a program of crop insurance on wild hay, then the government should be able to meet with these producers, and I know the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) has met with them, but not only meet with them, come to a solution and offer them some assistance. Other times there was a program to help producers move hay. These farmers have called and said they are in desperate need of help. They have to make a decision as to whether they are going to reduce their herds

or buy hay. They cannot keep their herds and buy hay as well. The government could step in, as they have in other times, and help the producers get the hay that they need to ensure that we do not lose the herds that we have.

The other area, Madam Speaker, that I am awfully disappointed in this government with respect to crop insurance, is their lack of action on big game damage. Now this is an issue that has been raised many, many times, and we have spent a lot of time discussing it in the House. Again, it is fall and there are still crops out on the field in our part of the province and in many parts of the province, and we are starting to get big game damage, lots of elk, lots of deer on the land, and the coverage that the government offers is inadequate. The producers feel that they should have 100 percent coverage on this. They do not have 100 percent coverage. In fact, the coverage that they do get is very low in comparison to what their input costs are, and I have to say that I agree with the producers that if the government who is the owner of the wildlife, of the deer and the elk and the moose, if the government is not going to listen to the producers and take into consideration the many recommendations that producers have made as to how the wildlife damage can be controlled, then they have the responsibility to compensate these farmers.

* (1640)

The government is quite willing and negotiating with the federal government to compensate for wildlife waterfowl damage, we should be looking at how you can compensate for big game damage. These are the people who did not agree with the government last winter when they decided that the way that they would control wildlife is by setting up elk ranching and capturing elk. That did not solve the problem. There are still huge numbers of elk, and I have to tell the minister, even if he decides to proceed with the capturing of elk again, which I know he will, that will still not solve the problem. The numbers—you have to look at other ways and you have to take into consideration that these farmers have to change their farming practices because of the number of elk. The minister is a livestock producer, and I am sure he has heard of the practice of row grazing that some farmers are using, and they leave their hay out in rows so the livestock can graze, feed out in the field, and they would not have all the waste pile up in the yard or in their pens

when it is still very wet in the fall, and it is a cost-saving measure because you do not have to bale the hay, but these farmers cannot take part in that practice because of high numbers.

So, Madam Speaker, there are many things that the government should be doing. I know the minister is going to get up and read his press release saying that, yes, they have introduced a new crop insurance program. They have made some changes and some of them are good, but the minister has not—if you listen to the producers, the coverage that is offered right now is not good.

What we also feel that the minister should have pushed much harder on is to have a national safety net crop insurance program, and we heard the minister say many times that he was in favour of that. I am not sure, the minister has not given us clear indication why that whole system broke down, but I think this government was one of the first ones to go ahead and announce their own crop insurance program.

An Honourable Member: The last.

Ms. Wowchuk: The minister says they were the last. I will look for the comments from the minister, but he should be able to tell us why we do not have a better crop, an enhanced crop insurance.

The minister has brought in, as I say, crop insurance. I hope the minister will take the time during the time out of session to listen to producers and recognize that the crop insurance program that has been brought in with the 50 percent coverage is not meeting the needs of producers. Although it does not cost very much money, there is no return on it either so producers are finding that side of it disappointing.

We have to look at ways that we can work with the farming community to give them the security that they need. Farmers spend a lot of money putting in crops, and there are farmers this year who have put in, invested, and the minister knows full well that it costs a lot of money to put in a crop. Fuel, seed, fertilizer, chemical, all of those bills have to be paid, but the farmers have not many—I would say about 25 percent in my part of the province have not taken off the crop. Will crop insurance pay out on these crops?

They will have to wait till spring to harvest them, and I am not saying that you should be paying out on a crop that is sitting out in the field, but we have to work together and you, as a minister, have to work, meet with the producers. When recommendations are made by committees, if you put a committee in place and you send a committee out to work on this, then take seriously their recommendations.

I know there are financial consequences that come with them, and the minister talks about financial restraints, but I am sure that if you came forward with a crop insurance program that looked at cost of production, what it costs the farmer to put that crop in, and where a farmer was able to ensure that he was going to get some of his or her costs back, they would be much happier with a program like that. Those are the things that the minister has to look at, Madam Speaker.

As we have heard this government say many times, the agriculture industry is very important to the economy of this province. Farmers invest huge amounts of money into producing the crop and producing the food that feeds us all, and that is something we have to remember, that it is farming that feeds us all. It is not Safeway that feeds us, it is not Shop Easy that feeds us, it is the farmers that produce the food, and the farmers, when you look at their bottom dollar, are some of the lowest-paid people. They do it because they enjoy the work and they take pride in being able to produce food. Yes, we do, farmers do make a living as well, but we as a government and this government has a responsibility to see that farmers have some of the securities that they need as well. What they need is a crop insurance program that will give them some of those securities, that will give them some comfort that, should they be faced with a disaster, they will be given a reasonable return.

The concern the producers have is the number. It is not based on 100 percent of the crop, it is only based on 80 percent. You start figuring out what you are going to get covered for, you are going to get covered for 80 percent and then you are going to get 50 percent of 80 percent and it ends up that the farmer gets very little money. I refer back again to those farmers who are losing their crop and their hay because of big-game damage. Those are the ones, as well, that have their coverage return from crop insurance very low, and they become desperate. We know of one farmer who took matters into his own hands

and shot one of these animals and said, here, you take it. That is just an indication of how frustrated people have become with the system.

So I urge the minister to recognize that farmers were looking for a national crop insurance program, and I would encourage the minister to pursue that further. From what I understand from what the minister has said at an earlier date, that is gone now. But since we have a provincial crop insurance program we have to look at how we can enhance it and truly enhance it because, although the minister's title says, new, Enhanced Crop Insurance, the coverages, as I say, are not meeting the needs of producers.

Producers are telling me that there is a lot of red tape and that the 50 percent one, they are not going to get any coverage. They are not happy with what they are getting, with the way the formula is calculated and how their return is figured out, and they are not happy with the way this government is dealing with big game damage. That also is under crop insurance.

The minister has a review that has been put forward that suggests 100 percent compensation for producers who lose their crop to big game damage. That is supported I believe by farm organizations across the province who believe that that is the kind of coverage that we should have. So the minister has to look at that. The minister also has to look at whether or not there should be a program for hay insurance for producers and whether there should be emergency programs and whether that comes under crop insurance or whether that comes under another part of Agriculture.

But there are many aspects where farmers are at the risk of the elements, and their fate is determined by the weather in many cases. Even though they can make the best decisions on their farming practices, it is the weather that in the end determines whether or not we harvest that crop or whether there is feed for those cattle.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I would just like to say again that we have to remember that this is a primary industry in the province. It is very important to the economy. We have to do much more to promote the fact that it is farmers that do feed us all, and they are a very important link.

They do not only feed us all, the spin-off industries that are here in the city are affected. As agriculture goes, so go many of the other industries, and you feel that when the grain industry is bad or the cattle industry is bad, you see the impacts. Farm machinery is not bought, various things are not bought, and we have to ensure that those people who, as I say, feed us, people who work the land, people who produce our food, we have to ensure that we have adequate programs for them.

At the present time I do not believe that the crop insurance program that this government has put forward is in fact a real enhancement to what can be offered to farmers. I urge the minister to meet with producers and to spend the winter looking at how this program can be improved. But I especially want to urge him to look at the big game compensation package and look at the damages that farmers are facing and ensure that some of these—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (1650)

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, in speaking to the resolution put forward by the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), what first and foremost it points out is one of the difficulties with the arrangement that we have in this Chamber.

I am aware that the honourable member put this resolution on the order paper in the fall of '95 prior to some very fundamental changes to the crop insurance program that were just then being considered and put in place for the '96 crop year. So I will not be unkind to the honourable member for Swan River and take advantage of that fact simply because our arrangement was such that she had to put this resolution on the order paper some time ago, and quite frankly it is not current today. I think, to some extent, the honourable member alluded to that and recognizes that.

I am troubled, Madam Speaker, because I have a great deal of respect for the honourable member for Swan River. I know that she and her husband are active farmers in the Swan River Valley and I have had the pleasure of meeting her husband. I know that she speaks with on-hands experience when she stands up in this

Legislature and speaks of agricultural matters. I am just somewhat surprised that she does not grasp some of the things that have taken place with respect to crop insurance in the province of Manitoba.

So with those few comments, Madam Speaker, let me first of all acknowledge—and I say this very sincerely—let me take this opportunity that this resolution provides me to acknowledge and to pay tribute quite frankly to the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation of Manitoba, the management, the senior management. Some honourable members of the House may not be aware of it but, regrettably, we lost our CEO, Mr. Brian Manning, to the fair province of Alberta, and Mr. Neil Hamilton is now the current acting general manager, president of the organization.

To the entire staff and as well to the board that has conducted the policy matters for the Crop Insurance Corporation over these past number of years, I would like to particularly take this occasion to acknowledge the night on eight years of service that one Mr. Terry Johnson, the chairman of the board from Virden, provided in unstinting efforts to provide and bring the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation through some challenging and changing times. He is a farmer in his own right from the Virden area and regrettably tendered his resignation just a short while ago to look more seriously at the affairs of his own farm, and I certainly wish him well.

Let me also tell honourable members of this House that I was pleased just this morning to appoint a very worthy successor, in my opinion, none other than Charles Meyer, former federal Minister of Agriculture, to become the new chair of the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation. Mr. Meyer brings a host of experience, again as a farmer in his own right, a diversified farmer, a farmer who grew potatoes, cattle, grain and of course had that distinct and unique privilege of having served the country as Minister of Agriculture for a period of time. So I am pleased to announce to honourable members opposite and take this first public occasion to indicate that he is our new chairman of the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation.

Madam Speaker, the honourable member in the resolution talks about some of the recent changes that have taken place and there have been some very fundamental changes that have taken place. I want to acknowledge, while I am in the acknowledging mood, in

the tribute-paying mood, the dedication quite frankly and the work done by my predecessor, now the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), for instance, at a time when the grains industry faced very serious price collapse in the late '80s, '88-89. It has only really been my last several years of association with my peers at the national level that I realized to what extent Manitoba played—and the Minister of Highways and Transportation when he was Minister of Agriculture—in the formulation of what the member for Swan River talks about, a truly national program, the GRIP program that came to the aid of grain farmers at that period time.

It did come to the aid of grain farmers in a very formidable way. Nationally, it called for the expenditure of some \$4 billions of dollars. Provincially, the five-year program meant some \$800 millions of dollars of federal, provincial and producer—I always include the producer, as the member knows, the significant premium that the producer paid in this revenue insurance scheme, but, nonetheless, it provided a significant level of support for our grain producers during a very difficult period in their production cycles. But, Madam Speaker, I feel that Manitoba's dedication and Manitoba's concern and Manitoba's awareness of (a) the importance of agriculture and what governments could do and should do, both federal and provincial, to support that industry is second to none in this country.

The honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) wants to look hard and do some reading at about how, for instance, the Crop Insurance Corporation is being run and organized in our neighbouring province of Saskatchewan. She wants to look hard at some of the programs of support that that province—I do not say that simply because the government of the day in Saskatchewan happens to be of her political persuasion. It was not different when it was under the persuasion of my political party. But she knows full well that in Saskatchewan there is no big game compensation paid, or very little, for crops damaged. She knows that very well because her constituency borders and neighbours to the province of Saskatchewan.

I get letters from Saskatchewan farmers saying, and I get requests from Saskatchewan political leaders wanting to know, about the big game compensation program that we offer in Manitoba because the Saskatchewan farmers hear of it. They cannot believe that Manitoba Crop

Insurance Corporation will pay out some million dollars in big claim damage.

She is right. We have to look at how we can resolve this issue. I am not quite happy that we are facing that situation. It is not simply an answer of improving the payout from 75 to 80 or to 100 percent. But what are some longer-term resolutions to the problem? Should we not be using those dollars that are now currently being paid out in compensation to resolve with the co-operation of the farmers themselves, some program that would enable us to overcome that kind of expenditure of public money?

I can report to her that in collaboration with my colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger), we have just this week agreed to involve farm community leaders from her constituency to come in and visit with us about how we can address the issues that particular area faces, which is, and I acknowledge, unique in the province of Manitoba. Unique in the sense that on the one hand Swan River Valley is unquestionably one of the most fertile pieces of real estate that we have in this province, speaking agriculturally. It is a beautiful valley and capable of tremendous production of crops and food. It is blessed because of its diverse geography with an abundance of wildlife and the adjacent parks and just in the landscape generally. So there is a conflict, and somehow we have to be smart enough to resolve it.

* (1700)

My resolution, part of the resolution, was to help reduce the depredating activities of Her Majesty's beef, elk, for a period of time by changing ownership from Her Majesty to farmers in a domestic elk farming program. She and her party takes great offence at that action although that is a logical and a reasonable way of addressing part of the problem and at the same time helping some other enterprising young farmers who wish to take advantage and have an opportunity as they are being taken advantage of in Saskatchewan or in Alberta. [interjection]

Pardon? Well, Madam Speaker, I am not speaking about the producer. I am talking about the objections on the part of this member, the member for Swan River (Mrs. Wowchuk), and her party to a partial resolution of the problem by engaging in a capture program that would

remove some of the elk that have become in fact resident animals on the farmlands that she is expressing concern for in this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I am being diverted by the honourable member's speech because there are other issues. Since the demise of that GRIP program, I was fortunate to have the active support of my colleagues and my cabinet, that we could transfer a significant portion of the resources dedicated to the GRIP program which, in its final years, on a provincial level alone, was in the order of \$32 million, \$34 million, to transfer that some \$18 million dollars and, at the same time, convince the federal government to transfer their portion to match at a 60 percent level our \$18 million for the Enhanced Crop Insurance Program.

Madam Speaker, if the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) wants to call that insignificant, then I beg to ask, where has she been? That is a major, major improvement to the program. More importantly, the fact that 80 percent of the seeded acreage of Manitoba is covered by crop insurance, an all-time-ever level, never achieved before, tells me more importantly than anybody else, anybody that can tell me in this House, that the enhanced program that I introduced for this coming crop year by and large was a success.

It has its shortcomings. One of the shortcomings has been, for instance, that because of the federal government's capping on their contribution and significant downsizing of their overall dedication towards the safety net program, we had felt that we had to, for reasons of maintaining the integrity of the program, put an 85 percent payout cap on the losses. That was not a move that I particularly enjoyed making.

I am hopeful that I may be able to, when final figures come out and final budgets are struck, that I can restore it back to the 100 percent payout level, because the honourable member is quite right, when we were talking about—we got all those figures put down where you are ensuring 70 percent or 80 percent or 60 percent, and then if it is only 80 percent of the 60 percent then the figures do become less significant.

So I am mindful of those issues that the member raises, and it is my intention to try and do something about it, but driven as I am by the realization that it is highly

questionable whether or not at the national level or at the provincial level there will be that readiness or willingness, that political willingness to enter into ad hoc agricultural support programs as we have had in the past. I am talking about the big ones, the billion-dollar programs for drought relief. That is why I felt very strongly going into these safety net discussions with my colleagues from across the land and with the federal minister that we ought to have a national program.

I want to tell the honourable members and the House that I tried, and we tried for years to bring that about. In fairness to my colleague the federal minister, Minister Goodale, he also tried for the better part of a year. It is no secret. These meetings are public meetings. Two significant provinces, Quebec and Alberta, were the holdouts. They were the two provinces that simply refused to enter into a kind of a national program that many of us were seeking. Failing that or finally recognizing last year in Victoria the federal government was persuaded to begin to move into bilateral agreements with individual provinces and, regrettably, that is the scene in that sense.

What we have to do is try to make the best of the world that we face and we have tried to do that. I have tried to insist that the federal government maintain some of the resources that they had to the GRIP program to our Enhanced Crop Insurance Program, and I was able to convince my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I understand—I was not in the Chamber, but the honourable member talked and referred to make references to the surplus count that is left in the GRIP program. First of all let me say thank God there is a surplus, that we had a management.

Madam Speaker, I realize that my time is out, but I will continue this debate with the honourable member on another occasion. Thank you.

Committee Change

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Thursday, November 7, at 9 a.m. be amended as follows: the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) for the member for Thompson

(Mr. Ashton); the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) for the member The Pas (Mr. Lathlin).

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Madam Speaker, I am happy to be able to put some words on the record with regard to the resolution put forward by the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk). I fully realize as well that the resolution was put forward in the fall of 1995 and, as my colleague the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) indicated, that a number of changes had taken place to programs since that time, and so as a result, the resolution, probably if the member had put it forward now, she would probably like to have rewritten the resolution somewhat from what it is.

Within the resolution itself, there are a couple of WHEREASes I think that I would have to say that I disagree with in terms of the enrollment in the Manitoba crop insurance programs, of which I will make the argument for, that it has not declined, it has increased, and also in respect to the recommendations of the Manitoba Crop Insurance Review Committee, that it claimed to not have been implemented, and make that argument as well that it has been implemented. I think in the THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that really the identification of the federal government is important to consider in that BE IT RESOLVED section.

So upon that, Madam Speaker, I would like to address some of the things that are happening in terms of the crop insurance programs in Manitoba, particularly the Enhanced Crop Insurance Program which was brought in for the first time this year. I believe that as far as the results are concerned, this new program was very well received by producers in Manitoba and that the anticipated acres that were—or projected acres that we thought would be enrolled in the program, the number of actual acres enrolled far exceeded our anticipated numbers and, as well, exceed those acres enrolled in the Gross Revenue Insurance program or the GRIP program, as it is normally referred to.

* (1710)

The total number of acres insured under the new Enhanced Crop Insurance Program for 1996 was 8,045,194 acres. The total number of tame hay insured acres for 1996 was 299,732. I think that speaks well for

the program because we have, if memory serves me correct, about 10 million acres of cultivated land in Manitoba; so we had 80 percent of the acreage signed up. If memory again serves me correct, the Tame Hay Insurance Program within the province had declined, and so the acreage for 1996 is certainly a very positive move in getting that acreage up again.

I would just like to share, as well, with members that in the coverage levels that were available were at the 50 percent rate to 70 and in the 80 percent rate. I point out to all members that at the 50 percent coverage, that basically producers in Manitoba did not have to pay any premium with the exception of an administration fee per acre for the program. So he essentially gave them a 50 percent coverage at little or no cost, and under that coverage level the all-risk acres that were covered were 2.312 million acres and tame hay acres under that program were 254,697.

However, at the 70 percent coverage level, which producers then had to pay a premium for their coverage, the all-risk acres was actually higher at 2.556 million acres. At that level as well the tame hay acres had dropped dramatically down to approximately 31,500 acres. At the 80 percent coverage level, the all-risk acres again increased to 3.163 million acres and again the tame hay acres at that level dropped again, because most producers probably felt that in regard to insuring tame hay that a 50 percent coverage level was adequate for their needs. However, in the all-risk area of insurance, it seemed to be that producers preferred the 70 and 80 percent coverage to that of the 50 percent coverage.

One of the other interesting items for this year, which I would like to share with members, is the number of claims that have come through this system for this year. This year there was a total of 573 reseed claims registered with an excess of \$2 million being paid as compared to 1995 when only 134 reseed claims were registered for a total of \$288,000. And that is directly traced back to the kind of spring conditions we had this year where it was a relatively cold late spring and a number of the crops that were seeded did not get off to a very healthy start.

Madam Speaker, there were 2,375 additional hill claims registered this year. This year most of the claims were registered in the western side of the province and payout to date is about \$3 million. As a result of more

severe storms in the past year, they had less additional hail claims but the total payout was over \$2 million more. This year, in terms of post-harvest claims, which is the all-risk insurance, 884 claims have been registered throughout the province. I guess the anticipated number is expected to go up over the next couple of months. I know that the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) indicated that a number of the crops in her area were still out in the field over winter.

Of course, in terms of adjustment under the program, they cannot be done until next spring at which time it will be determined how much of the crop they can actually harvest, what the quality will be like, and then the claims will be paid out. However, Madam Speaker, compared to last year where there was over 7,000 claims and about \$20 million paid out, I would say that this year with regard to insurance has been a good one from the standpoint of the corporation with respect to the amount of coverage that was out there, the amount of exposure that the corporation had to paying out coverage, this year has been a much better year than some of the years past.

One of the important points about the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation—and I would support my colleague the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) with regard to paying tribute to the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation for the excellent, excellent work it has done over the past number of years and its initiative now to offer quality service to the customers. I believe that the corporation has been dramatically going in a direction to provide a high level of service to customers that deal with them, and of course they have tested it or surveyed their customers and apparently 95 percent of the producers said that they were happy to very happy with the service they receive in both the agency and of course my alma mater, the ag rep offices. Well, we always thought as ag rep offices that we did an excellent job of servicing the farmers anyway. Customer service was second to none. We always knew we gave good service.

Madam Speaker, going on to the extent of crop insurance—and I hope before my time is up I would like to share an idea with members here in terms of crop insurance. I think that the Minister of Agriculture pointed out a very important action that was taken by the federal government in terms of capping the number of dollars it now puts into provincial crop insurance programs. So that means if we happen to incur a very

disastrous type crop situation in Manitoba in any particular year that the federal government will be limited to the amount of dollars they put in the program. The province, on the other hand, their share of that funding will have to go up dramatically to offset that capping, and of course that is something that we—in terms of being able to put a program together—have to keep in context of being able to offer a program that can take that kind of a wild fluctuation on the provincial funding side and still maintain the program credibility.

Manitoba, in agreement with the federal government, was able to negotiate an assistance of approximately \$30 million over a three-year period and that, in effect, allowed the introduction of the Enhanced Crop Insurance Program and Manitoba has committed \$57 million in total to the safety nets for our farmers. Now this has gained us a full federal funding under the 60 percent federal, 40 percent provincial funding formula but this amount of money, I have to point out, is only there for three years. So for the next two years after this one, we will still be able to offer producers in the province the Enhanced Crop Insurance Program. Of course, the question mark is what happens in the fourth year when the federal transition payments are not there any longer to help put this enhanced program in place? I will finish off with that idea in terms of insurance.

GRIP was terminated this last year. I realize that just a while ago we just went through a third reading of a bill with respect to the GRIP termination act. I was going to put a few comments on the record there. I did not realize that these resolutions were coming up, and I thought, well, this is a perfect place to put some comments.

* (1720)

But, Madam Speaker, the GRIP program in Manitoba, the Gross Revenue Insurance program that came into effect, I believe it was '91—I could stand to be corrected on that—but it was a program that actually came into place when there was a tremendous amount of subsidy wars going on in the international community. As a result the Canadian, or the Manitoba farmer in particular, was being devastated in terms of low-crop prices as a result of the subsidy wars that went on between United States and the European economic community, with the U.S. EEP program, the Export Enhancement Program, resulting in much reduced prices so that in those ensuing

years when the GRIP program came in that it was a very important program from the standpoint that it put a lot of dollars into the agricultural economy and actually helped producers in the province keep their cash flow at a more or less constant level over the next four to five years.

This was very important because for the first three years of the program, as I recall, producers got a tremendously large payout under the program, and in the fourth and fifth years the program started to get back some of the money that it had paid out. So in the last year of the program, Madam Speaker, the program actually ended up with a surplus in the account as a result of the fact that the crops were good and that the prices had improved considerably.

Right in here the GRIP surplus of \$19 million that is producer money, I understand it is to be dispersed back to producers in February of 1997. If you take a look at \$19 million, I believe that is somewhere in the neighbourhood of roughly \$2 an acre payback to farmers. I know that the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) spoke before about the necessary dollars to go into research, talking about federal dollars and provincial dollars.

I agree with the member for Swan River that research is very important in agriculture and that the federal government portion of the money that was—what, \$19 million, I think you indicated that was available—that rather than going back to the federal treasury that should be coming back into Manitoba in terms of—could be a research foundation, so that the interest is used on an annual basis to fund research. I think that our government, and if we can get together and put some sort of concerted effort towards the federal government to try and make them good on their promise, that would be a great thing.

I would also like to at this time support the member in saying that the \$16 million of provincial money that is left over could also well be used to fund research in Manitoba.

And I am not going to get my last point in. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I, too, want to thank you for the opportunity to put a few comments on record. In

thinking of the whole area of crop insurance, the Enhanced Crop Insurance, and what my comments would be, I like the phrase that the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) uses on an ongoing basis. He is a modest cattle producer, and I would like to term myself as being a modest grain producer.

Mr. Enns: I never know whether it is my cattle that are modest or that I am modest.

Mr. Dyck: I am just being given a little more information here as to the modesty of it, so thank you, Madam Speaker.

I will proceed as one who has been involved in the production of grains, one who has had the opportunity to use crop insurance for many years. In fact, when I go back to specifically 1988, the year that we had a drought in this province, certainly it was beneficial to have been involved and to have had a good crop insurance program within this province.

Madam Speaker, I believe that as time went on and I know that my previous speakers have made mention of the fact that GRIP was introduced, and certainly the GRIP program was there to aid the producers during the time when commodity prices were extremely low. It allowed them to balance it so that producers would be able to meet the commitments that they had financially, and with that in mind I would also like to say that I do hope and trust that we will not again reach those periods of time when we have the low commodity prices. I guess in the last little while, it is interesting to see how these commodity prices have in fact been going down, but I trust and I hope that is something that is temporary and that we will not be going back in that same direction again.

Madam Speaker, the Enhanced Crop Insurance Program, and it is a new program, I think that we all recognize that, and I am sure the Minister of Agriculture recognizes that as well, and whereas maybe it is not a totally perfect program, certainly it is a program that has helped and has assisted the farmers this past year. I know that on our farm we participated in this program, and certainly, as in all insurance programs, you hope that you will never need to access and to use and benefit from the program. Yet, though, you need something that will tide you through the difficult times.

The honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) mentioned that in their area, Swan River area, there is about 60 percent of the crop, I believe she mentioned, 25 percent of the crop was out. I talked to one of my friends who was farming up in the Swan River area, I just talked to him three days ago, and he himself indicated that part of his crop was still out, and certainly a program such as this is designed to fill the gap so that the farmers are able to meet their commitments and at least cover their costs.

And, yes, the member indicated that 50 percent crop insurance coverage was something that was possibly not an adequate insurance program. I think though I need to—and the member knows this well—indicate too that there is the opportunity to take the 50 percent coverage or the 70 percent coverage or 80 percent coverage, whichever the producer so desires, and this again is a decision that the individual producer needs to make. I also recognize the fact that in business as in farming that everyone's situation is a unique situation and not everyone has the capability to cover costs or possibly has the reserves to cover the costs of production. So that is why the Enhanced Crop Insurance Program was introduced in order to allow those who wanted to participate and to participate at whatever the level they chose to be able to benefit from the payouts should they arise.

Again, Madam Speaker, I believe that this is something that the farmers certainly have an opportunity to

participate in. I know that the minister indicated the number of producers who had enrolled in this program this past year that certainly they were taking advantage of it, and it has much surpassed those who had been involved in the GRIP program.

Again, when I speak of the—and I represent the Pembina area, I know that many of the producers that I talked to were pleased with the program that had come out and did avail themselves of this opportunity and enrolled in it. Specifically, I would not know from the southern area as to the coverage level they took, though I know that they felt that this would be something that would tide them through the difficult times should there in fact be a period where the crops would be minimal, be that due to drought or be that due to flooding or whatever the reason might be. Just further to that, I want to indicate that again we were fortunate in the southern area that, as far as I know, 100 percent of the crops were taken off, and so they will not need to access the crop insurance program. But that is again where this program is so beneficial, where all producers in the province participate in the paying of their premiums and do assist those farmers, those in business who are not as fortunate and which crops are out there—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck) will have nine minutes remaining.

The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, November 6, 1996

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