



Second Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)**

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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-Virten	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	Rupertsland	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

Tuesday, May 14, 1996

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS
PRESENTING PETITIONS**

Home Care Services

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Carole Lobos, Diane Scott, L.R. Fardoe and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plans to privatize home care services.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Vivian L'Henaff, Maureen Onofreychuk, Vicki Rinn and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Tanya Harrap, Karin West, Marilou Atrienza and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Rachelle Todd, Gordon Clark, S. Schmidt and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Home Care Services

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

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

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have read the petition of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes? The Clerk will read.

* (1335)

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

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of

Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee of Supply

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of Committees): Madam Speaker, the Committee of

Supply has adopted a certain resolution, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I am pleased to table the Supplementary Estimates for the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

* (1340)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery, where we have with us this afternoon thirty-five Grades 7 and 8 students from River Heights Middle School under the direction of Mrs. Mary Kirk and Mrs. Louise Gaston. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe).

Also, we have 20 adult ESL students from Sir William Osler School under the direction of Irene Halgren. This school is also located in the constituency of the honourable member for River Heights.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Sciences Centre Capital Projects

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, we tabled yesterday—the impact of the government breaking its March 1995 pre-election promise—a report that shows the devastating impact on the surgical wards in both the children's and adults' facilities at the Health Sciences Centre.

Also in a critical state is the word of this government, because the first day that the election campaign had promises, on March 22, the Conservatives and Premier Filmon promised an infrastructure and Manitoba Works program, a term that we know quite well, and promised the Health Sciences Centre funding in that infrastructure program as the first election promise of the campaign, the \$600 million funding would be there so that needed capital works projects would go forward.

I would like to ask the acting Premier why this government and why this Premier broke its word on the first campaign promise they made to the people of Manitoba on March 22, 1995.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Madam Speaker, this government has not broken their commitments with the people of Manitoba. The first piece of legislation that was passed by this government was the passing of the balanced budget legislation in Manitoba, bringing some discipline to the expenditure of public funds to make sure that we will be able to carry on with the essential services for the people of this province long into the future, unlike the NDP and their spending and their taxing of the people of Manitoba and putting us in the situation where these tough decisions have had to be made.

Mr. Doer: The Premier, the day he made the commitment to health capital funding, the day he made his first election promise, before the Jets, before Pharmacare, before home care, he said, and I quote: that this promise ensures that infrastructure funding will not be sacrificed to balance budgets. That is why we are going to make a five-year capital commitment.

I would like to ask, again the Deputy Premier, why are we going to have children in the pediatric centres placed in such jeopardy? Why are adults going to be placed in such jeopardy? Why did this government make a promise on March 22, say it would not be subject to balanced budgets and break its promise after the election? When were they telling the people the truth? During the election campaign when they promised the capital for the Health Sciences Centre or now when they have broken their promise to the Health Sciences Centre?

Mr. Downey: Madam Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition would take a little bit of time and do a little

bit of reading and a little bit of research rather than to try to get a quick political clip out of Question Period, a commitment was made of \$1.5 billion over five years. If he looks at the budget, there is a \$300-million commitment made. This government is putting in place a strategy and a plan for the long-term future of this province, unlike the New Democratic Party, that took \$27 million and spread it in the sands of Saudi Arabia, which did absolutely nothing for anyone in this province.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, many members of the media tabulated the promises made by political parties and included this first election promise, this first promise that was outside balanced budget, according to Premier Filmon, so that we could have a five-year capital investment in our health care facilities, including the William Avenue facility. This was the first promise made by the Conservative government. We now see the impact on children, on adults, on waiting lists, on children's pediatric services. We now see the impact of this broken promise, a situation where the Health Sciences Centre accreditation is at risk, where adults and children are at risk for surgery in the operating rooms, where waiting lists will not allow for early intervention for children's services, and on and on.

* (1345)

Will the government do the correct thing and follow through today on their election promises so we will not have the devastating impact on patient care at the Health Sciences Centre and other facilities where they have had broken promises in terms of capital commitments the first day of the election campaign, Madam Speaker?

Mr. Downey: Madam Speaker, again, if the member would—can I refer him to the 1996 Manitoba budget? Go to page 18. It is clearly expressed there as to what our capital expenditures are: over \$300 million.

Madam Speaker, he is not referring to the numbers of increases in hip replacements and joint replacements in this province, first-time-ever lung transplants in Manitoba that came out of the health care system, increase in heart work, all of those critical operations, all on the increase, and that is on behalf of the people of Manitoba. That is our priority: health care spending, education and family services. That is what we are doing, and I would ask the member—in fact, I am

prepared to get the information for him to clearly point out the additional work that is being done in the health care facilities in this province all across the board to help better the lives of people in this province.

Health Sciences Centre Kidney Dialysis Unit

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Speaker, it has been known for some time that the kidney dialysis unit at the Health Sciences Centre was going to reach capacity this year, and now we have a document from the Health Sciences Centre saying that indeed it has reached its capacity.

Given the March 1995 election promises of the Filmon government, can the Minister of Health tell us why, in spite of promising capital spending and improvements in places like kidney dialysis, this government has done nothing to take these recommendations seriously and make improvements to the kidney dialysis unit and many other areas of the Health Sciences hospital since this is a vital service for hundreds of Manitobans?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, if the honourable member takes the time to examine the expenditure pattern of this government on all of the various services referred to in part by the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), but also including dialysis services across our province, he will see that there are, have been, and continue to be significant increases in expenditures for those things. That reflects the requirement in the system each year. Because dialysis is a life-preserving service, more and more people need that service. It continues to put pressure on the system and we continue to respond to that pressure.

Mr. Martindale: Given the Conservative government's election promises, can the Minister of Health tell us and tell Manitobans, especially people getting kidney dialysis, which is a matter of life and death to them, why he has not implemented the recommendations, which I presume he has had for some time from the Health Sciences Centre, that would save the government money by making improvements at the dialysis unit? Why will he not act on recommendations that they say will save money?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member, I hope, has been following developments in the health system, and he will

know that, as an expenditure of total budget, the Health department receives more than any other province in this country, 33.8 percent of spending, up from the 31 percent or so in the bad old NDP days. There have been significant improvements. Those improvements have not just been in the city of Winnipeg where we do see increased services for hips, knees, hearts, MRI, and all of those things, but in those areas of Manitoba that have been neglected so badly by the NDP government in the past. We have paid attention to the mental health needs of Manitobans wherever they live and the other needs of Manitobans in places where they need to access those services.

I appreciate the honourable member's question, but he needs a significant updating on what has been happening in this province.

* (1350)

Mr. Martindale: Will the Minister of Health, who is part of a government that made election promises to spend money on capital improvements to hospitals, assure Manitobans that they are going to keep these promises, particularly for kidney dialysis patients, or are there any promises at all in the area of health that this government is going to keep? What promises, if any, will this government keep in the area of health care?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, the honourable member does not subscribe to the principle that people ought to live within their means. That is why—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

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

Mr. McCrae: —I say from time to time that if we followed all of the advice that we get from honourable members opposite, we would have destroyed the health system some years back. That is not something we propose to do. The honourable members one day ask about the Urban Planning Partnership for an integrated hospital system in the city of Winnipeg and—[interjection] They do not want to hear my answers anyway.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Madam Speaker, Beauséne Citation 417

is very clear that "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate."

Our member asked a question as to which, if any, of the health care promises that this government made in the last election will it keep. The minister is not only not answering that, he is wasting Question Period time. I would like to ask you to ask him to finally answer a question or not waste any further Question Period time.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable minister, to complete his response.

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member for Thompson is embarrassed by the record of the government that he supported, and that is why he has such difficulty with the answers that I give sometimes in this House. Might I add, he should be embarrassed by the performance of the government that he supported, Madam Speaker.

With respect to capital improvements in our health system—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I will again raise the point of order on Citation 417. I fail to see what, if any, of these comments that the minister is making have to do with anything to do with any of the questions that are asked or anything to do with Question Period generally. The only thing I am embarrassed for is this Minister of Health and the incompetence of this government on health care.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order, I will agree with the honourable member for Thompson that indeed he does have a point of order this time. The honourable Minister of Health strayed way over the line in completing his response.

Home Care Program Privatization

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, before there was a home care strike and before we had leaked the Treasury Board document to let Manitobans know what government was doing in terms of privatization and, in fact, before a provincial election when the government promised one thing and did another, they had an advisory committee that recommended, let me quote: contracting out all service deliveries not advisable due to difficulty ensuring quality and co-ordinating service.

* (1355)

Madam Speaker, why has this government insisted on the privatization when in fact their own committees recommended so strongly against it?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): The Continuing Care advisory committee did make its opinion known. It was not altogether clear that the whole committee felt that way, but it was felt that all service delivery ought not to be contracted out until other things are done. I agree with that. That is why we are talking about a proposal to bring in competition with respect to 25 percent of the services in the city of Winnipeg only; 75 percent remain under the system that the member supports which is, let us go back to the way things used to be.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, according to the minister's own committee, their own graph, the present system is more cost-effective and more efficient than any of the other models. Can the minister explain why he is not looking at his own graph, his own analysis which shows that the present system is more cost-effective and more efficient and in fact privatization is more expensive and less flexible? Why is he not listening to the recommendations of not just his advisory committee but the committee that examined and studied home care and made recommendations prior to the election campaign?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, yesterday the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) asked about the home care appeal panel and its work and a number of its cases and the nature of them. In addition to issues related to cleaning and laundry, which have come

before that particular appeal panel, there have been complaints in the past couple of years about unreliable service, inconsistent worker attendance and high worker absences, dissatisfaction with the worker or the case co-ordinator, inconsistent workers, too many workers involved in the same home or constantly changing workers, unreliable service, inconsistent worker attendance and high worker absences, no service during worker vacations and statutory holidays, improper scheduling and no service during worker vacations and statutory holidays, et cetera.

Now, Madam Speaker, I dare say that in any system of home care service delivery, there are going to be complaints, but the honourable member wants us to go back to what we used to have and that is a quote, I think, from his own policy statement. The appeal panel tells us that we do need to make improvements.

Mr. Chomiak: Can the minister explain why they are insisting on privatization when the minister's own graph of comparisons of all of the costs of all of the companies involved in home care compared to the government are all more expensive than the present government home care workers? Can he explain why they are doing that when his own graph tabled in this Legislature shows that the costs of private companies, on all cases, are higher than the government?

Mr. McCrae: I do not know how many times Vera Chernecki has told me, Madam Speaker, that our home care service is not responsive enough. You will find that in numerous MNU documents and reports. While the honourable member is reading reports, which he loves to do, unlike the honourable member for Inkster who has all these reports and does not read them, the honourable member for Kildonan will not even read MNU reports.

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I sit very patiently listening to the Minister of Health go on a diatribe about concern about health care when we know he does not have the concern. He is clearly imputing motives on my behalf in terms of reading or not reading reports. I would ask that the Minister of Health contain his political cheap shots to the New Democrats when he is being asked a question from the New Democrats, and if he wants to have cheap shots

at me, at least allow me the opportunity to be able to respond to the cheap shot and address it so accordingly.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health, on the same point of order.

Mr. McCrae: I know what I said. I did not mean for it to sound so much like a cheap shot. I really did not. The honourable member for Inkster did tell me about a report, that he had not perused the whole thing, and it was on that basis I said that. I should not have said that, and I am sorry.

* (1400)

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable Minister of Health for that retraction.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Just on a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: On the same point of order?

Mr. Ashton: On a new point of order, Madam Speaker. The minister, once again, is not following our rules, which are very clear in Citation 417. The previous comments of the minister, once again, show contempt for this House and I would like to ask that you bring him to order. He should not be wasting the time of this Legislature as he has been continuously, including with his last answer. He should be answering our questions.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order by the honourable member for Thompson, I will take it under advisement to review the transcript and the remarks of the honourable Minister of Health and report back if necessary.

Manitoba Telephone System Cable Assets

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, last Thursday in this House we tabled a report from the Manitoba Telephone System showing the true value of the cable network, which they were forced to sell, exceeded \$62.9 million on a very conservative estimate. It was a very strategic asset that the company had which they were forced by this government to sell.

The Minister responsible for MTS told the House that he had a study which put the valuation at a ridiculously low \$7 million, but his usually sharp memory failed him. He could not remember who had done it or when it was done.

Has the minister had a chance to refresh his memory? Will he table that study today and tell us who did it?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, the study was done by Deloitte and Touche, and they determined the value at \$7.5 million as I reported to the member last week.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, outside the House the member responsible for the Telephone System stated that management had supported the sale of the Manitoba Telephone System. Will the minister reconfirm to this House that the management of MTS recommended the sale of the cable system to the cable interests for which it was sold for the ridiculous sum of \$11 million?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, the member brought some piece of paper or several pages of paper to the House saying that this was an official report. It came from the mid-management level of MTS. I am informed by the senior executive it never reached the executive committee of MTS; it never reached the board of MTS and the board—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, in the process of operating the Manitoba Telephone System, the senior executive of the board made the decision that the sale for \$11.5 million was a \$4-million profit over and above the appraised value of the system.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, words almost fail me at this point. How does the minister explain a document from Ernst & Young, commissioned by the then-president of the Manitoba Telephone System Oz Pedde, which suggests not only is the strategic value of the cable system very, very large, but that they should hang onto it at all costs because telcos from around the world were seeking cable assets, buying cable assets wherever they

could, going into partnership with cable assets because they knew this was the evolution of telcos around the world?

Will he then respond to this document which I will table?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, the member fails to recognize the reality of what is going on in the telecom industry in this particular country—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Crescentwood that you asked the question, and the honourable Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System has tried on two separate occasions now to respond to your question. I would appreciate your co-operation in affording him the same opportunity you were afforded in posing the question.

Mr. Findlay: Within the country of Canada there are nine telephone companies in the Stentor alliance. I think the member probably knows that. Only one telephone company owned a cable asset, the Manitoba Telephone System. Clearly, CRTC was not looking favourably on that particular situation. Eventually they were going to probably make some degree of recommendation that the divestiture happen.

In addition to that, there was a need for many millions of dollars of investment of capital in the system to upgrade it to give a standard of service that the consumer wants today. At the same time, there are satellite services up above capable of beaming down cable television.

I had asked the member, given those consequences, we did not want to put the taxpayer at further risk in terms of raising more capital in a very risky venture with a lot of competition. Basically, we wanted to assure the ability of somebody to do that investment to improve the quality of service to Manitobans in the form of cable television. The service providers of Manitoba Cable Television Association can and will do it.

Home Care Program Privatization—Impact on Women

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): My question is for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Vodrey). Today the Liberal Women's Commission held

a panel discussion on the privatization of home care and, more specifically, the impact that it will have on women. As we all know, women continue to be ghettoized in low-paying sectors of the economy. Women constitute the vast majority of home care workers, so any negative impact from the government's plan will disproportionately affect women. Joslyn Bauml, a part-time home care worker who is afraid that she will lose her job, told the panel that privatization of home care must be viewed as a women's issue.

Does the Minister responsible for the Status of Women agree that privatization of home care is another step by this government that will reinforce the ghettoization of women in low-paying sectors of the workforce?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, the honourable member is correct to raise questions relating to the status of women in the workplace in Canada and in Manitoba; it is always right to do that. I want the honourable member to remember too that, in addition to the increased employment we expect to see in the home care sector in the medium- and longer-term future because of the nature of the demography of our country, many, many of our clients, a majority of our clients, are female people.

I would like the honourable member to remember that because those people are going to need services. If we go back to the way we had it in the first place, which is official NDP policy, we would destroy our Home Care program. It would collapse because it is not responsive enough. It is not efficient enough. The scheduling is not as good as it should be. Improvements can be made. I would like the honourable member to remember that the clients of our home care system, a majority of them, are women.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am wondering if the Minister of Health then can give women the assurances that in fact we will not see drastic cuts in terms of wages to the women who make up approximately 90 percent of home care service workers.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, every indication demonstrates the commitment of this government to the Home Care program. Certainly, if you look at the budget in 1988 of somewhere around \$38 million and compare it with the budget today of somewhere around \$91

million, you see a very, very significant improvement in funding and a very, very significant commitment to that program. That program means employment. Hundreds and hundreds of people have been added to the list of employees of the Home Care program over the last eight years and I suggest that hundreds and hundreds more will be added in the years to come. Men, women, people are prepared to work in a competitive environment so that we can bring about excellence for the clients of our system, most of whom are women.

* (1410)

Mr. Lamoureux: My question to the Minister of Health then is, will he recognize, as many individuals who presented to the panel today, that the privatization of home care will reinforce the disadvantages already faced by women in the workforce?

Mr. McCrae: I do not think I can do that, Madam Speaker. When one considers the employment that has been generated in this program and will be generated in this program, there will be a lot of people receiving their incomes through this program, to some extent at least, not very much but to some extent, on a competitive basis and that competition brings about the best service for the client. That is the No. 1 priority. In a competitive environment wages have to be competitive in order to keep people working in the system, and that is what we expect will happen.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System. This minister and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) now admit that they have changed their public position on selling MTS after the election. I want to ask the minister, what was the exact date that he decided MTS should be sold off?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, over the course of the last number of months, we looked at the circumstances the telephone industry was facing within Canada. There were certainly lots of technological challenges and a lot of capital cost needed to upgrade the systems. There is a lot

of competition in place and the system had reached the point where 70 percent-plus of their revenue base is under competition. The regulators making change—[interjection] Over the course of several months I told the member that these sorts of issues were becoming very apparent to us, and the member might have noticed the CRTC made a major decision on rate rebalancing in November, I believe in '95, and the federal cabinet reversed that. That is a very uncertain environment for the telephone system to exist, with technology requiring more investment of capital, competition. In the analysis of all those events, we hired investment individuals to do an analysis and make recommendations back to us, which is what we reported on.

Mr. Jennissen: Why did this minister write to the secretary-treasurer of the City of Flin Flon on April 16, claiming that, quote, no decisions have been made or will be made about the privatization of MTS without public discussion—when this minister announced the sale on May 2 without any public discussion? I will table the documents.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, there has been public discussion for some time on this issue. There will continue to be public discussion in the upcoming months as we go through the process in this House of ultimately introducing legislation and the process that will follow thereafter.

Privatization—Impact on Rural Manitoba

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): How will this minister address the concerns of northern residents who currently pay less than one-quarter of the actual cost of residential telephone service, a dividend of approximately \$35 each month, and who will no longer enjoy such a benefit once MTS comes under private for-profit ownership?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, I want to inform the member that he is wrong, wrong, wrong a hundred percent of the time. He absolutely fails to pay any attention to how telephone rates are regulated in this country. They are regulated by CRTC, for his information, as they are for Bell Canada and B.C. Tel which are privately owned companies. That

form of regulation will remain exactly the same in the future as it does today. So he is dead wrong. He is misinforming the public with that kind of a statement.

I really appreciate the kinds of comments coming from the public, headlines like: a good thing and employees are happy with it, pragmatic privatization and other comments from the Brandon Sun, it is a good issue for Manitobans. Those are the comments from Manitobans. They understand the issue. That member is trying to misrepresent and fearmonger by irresponsible statements.

Brandon General Hospital Service Reduction

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health.

Because of millions of dollars of cuts to the Brandon General Hospital budget in recent years, there has been a reduction in the number of services offered by that hospital. Waiting time for operations is getting longer. Ear, nose and throat care and full-time ophthalmology services are no longer available, and now Brandon General Hospital is about to lose its thoracic surgeon. At the same time, this minister has reneged on promises to modernize and redevelop the hospital facilities.

My question is, how can the Minister of Health, who is also the MLA for Brandon West, allow the Brandon General Hospital to deteriorate as an important regional hospital in this province?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): That will not be happening, Madam Speaker. I wonder if the honourable member agrees with the thoracic surgeon who is leaving Brandon, that what we need is a two-tier system for medicare in Manitoba. I wonder, since he is going to make reference to that particular position, if the honourable member for Brandon East agrees with that position, that we ought to have one system for the rich and another system for everybody else in Manitoba.

Transition Funding

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Can the minister explain why \$38 million is being allocated for hospital transition support in Winnipeg, as outlined on page 9 of the 1996 budget document, and no monies apparently are

being provided for adjustments at the Brandon General Hospital or indeed other hospitals outside of Winnipeg? Why is there no transition support for the Brandon General Hospital?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): I think the honourable member is aware that Brandon is 127 miles away from the city of Winnipeg and its role in the Urban Planning Partnership is somewhat unique from the role of the other hospitals in the city of Winnipeg, so the honourable member ought to work with apples and apples when he wants to raise questions in this House.

The honourable member is the pioneer of hacking and slashing at Brandon General Hospital. He and his colleagues, in 1987, calling it health reform, laying out no supports anywhere else, hacked and slashed away at the hospital beds in the Brandon General Hospital. I am not about now to take very much advice from the honourable member whose only idea of health reform was to hack and slash and not to do anything in the community, not to work with the nursing profession in the development of nurse resource centres, not to build the breast screening program province-wide and not to do all of the other things that are part of a well-thought-out reform program, Madam Speaker.

Brandon, Manitoba Physician Resources

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Speaker, our government has a very proud record of developing the Brandon General Hospital, whether it be a Westman regional laboratory—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Brandon East, with a final supplementary question.

* (1420)

Mr. Leonard Evans: Can the Minister of Health explain why the city of Brandon is losing so many doctors?

Three have left recently and three more are expected to leave before the end of the summer. Furthermore, Madam Speaker, it is very difficult to replace those doctors that have either left or are about to leave, and

therefore Brandon and the Brandon General Hospital are going to suffer a decline in medical services available to the citizens of that area. So my question specifically to the minister: Why is the level of medical services declining in the city of Brandon?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, if the record of the New Democrats was such a proud one, why is it that the people of Manitoba, in 1988, so very, very clearly threw all of the New Democrats out of office in the province of Manitoba? The largest tax grab in the history of the province of Manitoba was brought about by the Doer-Pawley government and the honourable member for Brandon East was senior among them. In fact, when the cuts happened at Brandon General Hospital, we were not able to find the honourable member for Brandon East to explain that situation.

With respect to doctors, we have traditionally in Canada an outflow and an inflow—more inflow, mind you, than outflow—but in recent times we have heard reports of some surgeons in Brandon and specialists leaving for more favourable fields, claiming that the two-tiered system is for them. Well, it is not for me. If the honourable member wants to fight for the two-tiered system, let him do it.

Pharmacare Deductible Calculation

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, many families in this province are suffering because their deductible for Pharmacare has gone up four or five times with this government. I want to ask the minister, how can he justify calculating the deductible for Pharmacare based on the income from veterans pensions when people on veterans pensions do not even use Pharmacare and that this is penalizing them in an unfair way? How can he justify calculating the deductible for Pharmacare based on veterans pensions when veteran pensioners have their medications paid by Veterans Affairs?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I remind the honourable member of her inaugural speech in this House where she quoted Karl Marx proudly. Karl Marx, she was so proud to tell us, said, "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."

This honourable member who worships at the shrine of Karl Marx ought to be cheering loudly for our Pharmacare program.

Point of Order

Ms. Cerilli: On a point of order. I would ask that you have the minister withdraw his incorrect statements. He may be able to read my mind if he knew that I was quoting Tommy Douglas and J.S. Woodsworth in my opening comments.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. On the same point of order?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, I guess so, Madam Speaker, on the same point of order.

I remember it well, a great man said, and that is what the honourable member for Radisson said and she has just referred to two. We will have to do some research on the point of order raised by the honourable member, but it sounds awfully like something Karl Marx wrote.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order—order, please. Time for Oral Questions has legally expired. I will deal with the point of order.

I will take the point of order under advisement and, if necessary, report back to the House.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Flag Day—Morden Elementary School Census Day

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Madam Speaker, last Friday I had the pleasure of attending a celebration of Canada at Morden Elementary School as students took part in a ceremonial raising of our national symbol as part of Flag Day.

The Canadian flag is a symbol that conjures a variety of feelings for people the world over. In many countries our flag is a beacon for freedom and for hope as our peacekeepers provide aid to their war-torn countries. For others, Canada and the maple leaf stand for opportunity and the promise of a better life as they attempt to escape oppression and persecution. This was a chance to reflect

on the privileges and blessings we enjoy in our great nation. The young people who joined in the chorus of O Canada! at the raising of the Canadian flag represent—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. This is Members' Statements time, and every individual member is an honourable member and has the right to put his or her comments for two minutes on the record. Now, I am requesting the co-operation of all honourable members to respect other members' rights and listen attentively or leave the Chamber.

The honourable member for Pembina, to complete his remarks.

Mr. Dyck: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The young people who joined in the chorus of O Canada! at the raising of the Canadian flag represent the future and promise of our country, a country that in turn offers them promise and future. That day, more than most, I counted myself a proud Canadian. On this day, May 14, I ask all members and citizens of our province to count themselves in as proud residents of Manitoba as it is Census Day in Canada. By taking this time to fill in their delivered census forms, Manitobans are ensuring that our province receives its appropriate and full share of federal transfer dollars—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Would the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) please pay attention to the request for order?

Mr. Dyck: By taking the time to fill in their delivered census forms, Manitobans are ensuring that our province receives its appropriate and full share of federal transfer dollars for programs such as health, education, daycare, housing and highways. The results of this census will also help government gauge their demographic, economic and cultural make-up which will, in turn, help to guide the formation of policy.

Madam Speaker, Manitobans have many things to take pride in today, as I ask each of them to take the time to be counted as proud residents of our province. Thank you.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am, for the final time this afternoon, reminding the House that if there is lack of co-operation from both sides of the House, I will have no alternative but to call a recess and have a meeting with the House leaders in my office.

Seasonal Camping Fees

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, from the time when this government tabled their budget, we saw that this government was taking an attack on some of the most vulnerable in our society, and among those, our seniors. We see that through their plan to privatize home care, elimination of eye examination and destruction of Pharmacare that seniors are going to pay much more to live in this province. Many of the low-income people are also going to be squeezed to the point where they will not have the ability or the resources left for any entertainment or recreation.

Our seniors, many of whom are on fixed incomes, are now having their recreational opportunities taken away from them as well. It is absolutely outrageous that this government would move to increase seasonal camping fees up by 100 percent in some areas. In my constituency, areas like Wellman Lake have gone from \$390 to \$480, huge increases in costs.

But the other area where there is an increase that is hurting our seniors is in the area of seasonal camping fees. Seniors have the ability to go to the lakes from Monday to Friday—or I should say they did have the ability to go for \$3.50 per day. Now under this government that is raised to \$10 a day in addition to an additional entry fee of \$25 per year. This is outrageous, and this is hurting many people. I have had calls from seniors in my constituency who have said this is taking away any opportunity of recreation that we have. The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) is saying, if it is \$20, fine. But it is a much greater increase than seniors can afford, and it is absolutely disrespectful that this government should take this kind of attack on seniors.

I would ask that they reconsider what they are doing because the seniors who built this province should have

the opportunity for some recreational activity without being penalized by this government.

Heart Transplant Surgery Support—Community of Domain

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): I rise to pay tribute to a community that pulled together to assist a young Canadian. His name is Chris Manness, and he is awaiting heart transplant surgery. Chris is a Grade 12 student at Sanford Collegiate. Since his birth, he has been awaiting the day when he will receive a new heart. Until recently Chris was very active and participated in many sports. Among other sports, Chris enjoyed curling and participated in my junior curling program at La Salle when I was teaching junior curling. Unfortunately, his heart continued to grow weaker and he was forced to stop curling. However, what could not be weakened was the spirit of support that grew stronger with every passing day.

* (1430)

I am proud to be a member of the community that has taken it upon itself to assist him as he seeks a heart transplant. Chris has a very contagious spirit, and I am not surprised at the level of response his need has generated. Recently Chris was informed that his heart surgery was imminent. While this is certainly good news, it also meant that monies would be required as he awaited surgery. Without even so much as a second thought, the community where I live banded together and sponsored a fundraising social for Chris.

The social was held at the La Salle Centre this past Friday, and upwards of 300 people turned out for this worthy cause. I am informed that some \$21,000 was raised that evening. Home-baked goods and donated items were auctioned off, and, in the true spirit of philanthropy, most products fetched prices well beyond their market value.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish Chris well as he journeys towards having a new life. I know that there is still uncertainty, and I am sure that there have been and will continue to be anxious moments. I am very pleased that Chris is finally in the position to receive the transplant that he so desperately requires.

I also want to thank the community in and around Domain for their tremendous support and compassion. I am very proud to be a member of a community that personifies the true spirit of giving and which is willing to act selflessly for those who need our help. I am proud to live in a community where neighbours help neighbours. Thank you.

Regional Health Boards

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I wanted to bring to the—not necessarily to the attention of the House because everyone is already familiar with this whole process in terms of the regional health boards that have been created, but on Monday, in yesterday's newspaper, there was an article that was printed which talked about what was happening in another province. The reason why I want to bring this up at this point in time is because we have argued that what this government has done; they have created another level of administration to administer cuts in health care in rural Manitoba and then to say, no, no, no, it is not us that is making the cuts, if you have anyone to blame, do not blame us, go ahead and blame the regional health boards.

Well, we do not believe that this government is prepared to accept responsibility for things that are going to happen. It was interesting when I read in one of the daily newspapers that in Regina opponents are criticizing the Saskatchewan government for making district health boards the scapegoats for unpopular funding cuts while triumphantly proud of its medicare history. The Liberal Party there is criticizing, saying this government has played dirty pool and continues to deflect the blame every time it has bad news, Liberal critic Buckley Belanger charged last week. Instead of taking responsibility for the cuts, they are letting health districts fight their battles for them.

The concern that we have for this government is that it is going to try to emulate what is happening in Saskatchewan. By creating these regional health boards, they are going to be putting or reducing the level of funding to rural Manitoba health, expecting the regional health boards to take the blame. They are trying to do what we believe is a step in the wrong direction by creating this administration, which we estimate is likely going to cost somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$3 million. That money could have been put into health care

in rural Manitoba as opposed to creating a new level of administration at the same time cutting back on health care needs in rural Manitoba. Thank you, and I find it most interesting that they are trying to emulate what is happening in Saskatchewan.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): On a daily basis we are seeing very serious questions raised about the ability of this government to deal with anything related to MTS. We have seen a pattern of sell-offs at cut-rate prices. We have seen the Yellow Pages deal, the Faneuil deal, and, most recently, we have revealed information in this House on just how incompetent this government has been and this minister in dealing with the public assets of this province.

In case the minister does not understand the strategic value, I will read from the Ernst & Young report which, by the way, was delivered to the president of Manitoba Telephone System, which stated: There is a wealth of evidence demonstrating the strategic value of a cable television plant to a local exchange carrier. In our view, MTS is indeed fortunate to own cable TV facilities and to have had a number of years' experience in maintaining this type of distribution plan. As broadband services to the home become a more significant revenue stream for telephone companies and as cable TV companies become more aggressive in encroaching on traditional exchange carrier lines of business, this asset can only increase in strategic value.

Madam Speaker, this government and this minister does not understand the convergence of technologies. I really wonder, if they are really that incompetent, what is going to happen with the sale of MTS? We are now dealing with the whole company being sold off. We are seeing the first serious questions raised about the way in which they are dealing with this, and what really disturbs me is, here is a case where this information was ignored by the government.

I ask the question, and I hope to be asking this question throughout the session, how much consideration was given to the whole issue of sale? Did it go to the Board of MTS? Did it even go to the Conservative caucus until it was a fait accompli?

We know it did not go to members of the public. So I ask the question, Madam Speaker, how can anyone trust the ability of this government, which has broken its election promise, which has had no public consultation, which has in the past had a record of demonstrated incompetence in dealing with public assets involving MTS? If you cannot trust them on those issues, how can you trust them with dealing with our public asset, the proposed sale of MTS?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call the opposition day motion.

OPPOSITION DAY MOTIONS

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that

BE IT RESOLVED that this House condemn the provincial government for seriously jeopardizing the future of our health care system by privatizing home care, making dramatic cuts to Pharmacare, making major cuts to our hospital system and eliminating coverage for such services as eye examinations.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, this is indeed a very serious matter, and I think it is appropriate that this being the first Opposition Day motion under our new rules, that it be on the issue of health care because we believe that there is a crisis in our health care system in this province. It is a crisis that has been brought upon this province not through any plans, announced agenda, by this Conservative Party.

In fact, we all remember the election in which this Conservative Party went around saying, trust us on health care. Who can forget those ads of the Premier (Mr. Filmon)? [interjection] Not the jail ads. We can get into that in another debate, but remember those ads where the Premier went around and said to the people of Manitoba, trust us on health care.

Who can forget? [interjection] For the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), no one is going to forget that, and they are definitely not going to forget it going into the next election because they are going to hold this Conservative Party accountable for not telling the truth to Manitobans.

But, you know, we are dealing with a situation when in less than a year after the election in which they said they would preserve health care, look at what they have done, Madam Speaker. They have announced the privatization of home care, and their cabinet document is very clear. The entire system is going to be privatized.

Madam Speaker, I have never seen what I have seen the last several weeks in this province, and despite all the abuse that has been heaped upon many of the people involved by this government, people have shown incredible courage in fighting against the privatization of the home care system. I am talking about the clients, the clients who have come to this building, both for the hearings and the demonstrations, often in very difficult personal and physical circumstances.

* (1440)

I want to talk about the many Manitobans who came to the public hearings, which were boycotted by this government, who spoke passionately about the need to preserve a public health care system, and, yes, I want to talk about the home care workers, as well, because, Madam Speaker, I have heard all the attacks in this House against the home care workers. I have heard the attacks against the union bosses. We, even on our side, have been subject to the same attacks, most recently with the despicable comments made earlier today by the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) against one of our members, but, you know, no kind of personal attack can take away from the very real courage the clients and home care workers and many Manitobans have shown in standing up on this issue.

Madam Speaker, it is a phenomenon, because I say to the members of the government opposite that outside of the 31 members of this caucus, this government caucus, and perhaps their political staff, it is very difficult to find anyone in this province who supports what this government is doing.

It was ironic that Ralph Klein was here a few weeks ago, even Ralph Klein in Alberta blanked on a very similar issue involving privatization of laundry services. What does it take to get the message across to this government that you do not have the mandate and you do not have public support? In fact, the public is saying, smarten up, come to your senses, listen to the people and drop the privatization plan.

Madam Speaker, it is not just the home care issue. When did the government promise the massive increases to Pharmacare deductibles in the election? Was that in those ads, those famous ads? Was that in any of the campaign promises? I have talked to people who are faced with massive increases in Pharmacare costs. A friend of mine, a very good friend of mine is on the Life Saving Drug Program, wiped out by this government and because of the increase in deductible will be paying \$1,500 to \$2,000 a year for those life saving drugs.

I have talked to people who are victims, a senior the other day in the north end of the city, who said, how can this government turn around and raise my deductible to more than a thousand dollars and she particularly had some very choice quotes—some of which I cannot repeat—for the Premier (Mr. Filmon) who went around in the election saying we do not raise your taxes, we are not going to raise your taxes. She told me to bring to this Legislature the fact that what more of a tax can we get, and a worse tax at that, than a tax on pharmaceuticals by raising the deductible. That, indeed, is equivalent to a tax, Madam Speaker, another broken promise.

They have done many other things in health care the last few weeks that bear no resemblance to what they promised in the election. [interjection] The member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) talks about nursing home rates. I talked to a resident of St. Vital—and I hope the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) will talk to the same concerns—this woman in St. Vital, she was faced with \$100,000 increase when her husband was ill over a several-year period, \$100,000 increase because of the previous increases that took place by this government. There are many other victims out there.

But, you know, we are seeing even today broken promises from this government on health care capital expenditures. How more cynical can you get than to go into an election campaign as the first item, the first

promise, to say that you are going to put in significant capital investment into such facilities as the Health Sciences Centre and then so cynically one year later turn around and tear up every last shred of those promises. Madam Speaker, there are other issues as well, the eye coverage. We put this in because we believe this is the wave of things to come with this government. We believe that we are headed for more and more user fees. It was interesting that the Minister of Health in Question Period talked about a doctor who believed in a two-tiered health care system. I look to that Minister of Health—and we know where he stands and we know where this government stands—we are headed to a two-tiered system in this province because of the government policies, but we in the New Democratic Party will fight. We will fight to stop the Americanization of our health care system. We oppose a two-tiered system.

But this is more than just a political debate, this is a debate about people. I look at members opposite and I ask them to do what I have been doing in my own constituency, what we have been doing in many areas of this province and just talk to people. I ask the members opposite how they can look some of the home care workers in the face when they walk in here today, how they could have looked some of the clients who are out there in the protests just a few short weeks ago, how they can look them in the face and not have some feeling of compassion for what their fight is about and have some sense that maybe, just maybe, this government made a mistake. You know, Madam Speaker, this government is increasingly getting into the bunker mentality. They are defending the indefensible conduct of some of their ministers. We have the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) making comments about bombs and slashing tires and worshipping at the statue.

I say to members opposite, I say to members opposite, there are two roads ahead on many of these health care issues, in particular I believe in the home care issue, because it is very much a symbol of what is happening.

The one road ahead is being charted by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health, and that is leading this government down to further crises in the health care system, to further and further opposition from ordinary Manitobans who are saying they do not have a right to do what they are doing to our health care system.

But there is another route, and I want to appeal to this government in this, the first Opposition Day motion on such a critical issue. The other route is to sit down and reassess, to listen to people, to talk to people.

We are a small province, a million people. Surely we can sit down and work out many of these difficulties. Surely we can bring Manitobans together to work on the challenges facing our health care system but, you know, it is going to have to start with this government doing a very simple thing, I believe, and that is saying that it made a serious mistake.

It would not be the first time a government did that. It is difficult to do, Madam Speaker, but if a government would just sit down and say, maybe we went too far on home care, Pharmacare and many of the other issues that they are raising in health, I believe there is an opportunity for this government one way or the other.

Politically, I know that if they continue on the first path, they will never get re-elected in this province, because the people of Manitoba will never trust this government again. If they choose the other path, we will fight the political fights another day. But would it not be better to deal with the crisis situation now, would it not be better to sit down, starting with home care workers, starting with home care clients, to work together in this province? Is this the Manitoba way, when we see this kind of crisis and this confrontation and the deliberate confrontation brought about by this Minister of Health, who has been attacking anyone who disagrees with him.

There is a better way. While our motion is condemning the government for its actions, our real intent today in this very serious debate is to say to the government, please reconsider. It is to say to the government, you made a mistake, say to the government, let us work cooperatively in this province to improve our health care system and not take us down the path towards a two-tiered, Americanized health care system, which this Minister of Health, this Premier (Mr. Filmon) and this government is doing at the present time.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, it is very sad really that we are rising today to condemn a government and a policy on health which is quite frankly contrary to what they promised the people in the last election. It is also outside of the political

rhetoric and outside of the political debates and outside of the Question Period arena.

I hope this is an opportunity for members opposite to have a chance to listen to what the people of this province are saying and to pay attention to the articulate and dignified words that are being stated in this Chamber, in the committee rooms and across this province dealing with something that is very, very important to people, and that is the quality and future of their health care system and, particularly, the quality and future of the home care system.

Madam Speaker, I was personally very moved on April 22 when I had the opportunity to listen to a person named Evan Burns, whom I had met in 1993 dealing with changes in home care at a coalition meeting. In fact, some of the ideas he had, we put in our platform, and the government put in their platform. But Evan Burns, a young, intelligent man who, regrettably, through health, has to use home care and home care workers, made one of the finest speeches that I have ever heard about the belief and the necessity of having a nonprofit, publicly administered home care. He said to all of us—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (1450)

Mr. Doer: I am trying to spend some time, so members opposite will listen for a change. I would like the courtesy because Evan Burns—I want the Tory caucus that is heading in the wrong direction on this to listen not to the opposition, listen to the studies and listen to the people—Evan Burns said that they do not want revolving-door home care. They do not want the model that you are proposing, that they do not want a system of profit and Americanization of home care; and, as people who require the utilization of home care, they asked the government to stop, look and listen. They asked the government for two very modest requests: a one-year moratorium and, Evan Burns suggested, a set of public hearings.

Mrs. Duval was another speaker at this meeting, and she went on about the absolute necessity of care that her husband, regrettably, needed after he suffered a major heart attack. She has never been involved in any political

party and any political debate at any time in her life, but she talked about the most intimate needs of her husband, the most intimate needs being met by the home care worker that had been assigned to her husband and had worked with her family. She regretted that her husband had to go back to a health care facility, to an institution, because of the health care dispute, but she said clearly to all of us that she understood, and her husband understood, not only the tremendous service that they received from their home care worker and from this Home Care program in their own home, but she also understood, and her husband understood, and said so publicly that she does not blame, and he does not blame, the home care workers for his return to the hospitals. He blames the stubborn minister and a stubborn government that is proceeding on ideological grounds to proceed with profit in home care when, of course, they have no public mandate to do so.

Al Cerilli, speaking on behalf of the seniors of Manitoba, also said that this is a wedge to Americanize our health care system, and they do not want profit in home care and in health care. This deals with the vision that Canadians have of why we are a better country. Canadians have developed a health care system in a nonprofit, publicly administered way that is far superior to any experience we have in the United States. We are at two forks in the road in terms of home care. We have the Canadian way of nonprofit home care services publicly administered by the people, for the people, or we have the American way where we have a competitive system. The member opposite from Rossmere (Mr. Toews), whose close affiliation with Great-West Life favours the American way of profit insurance programs—of course, we know what happens in United States where one-third of their population does not have any medical coverage, one-third of their population is underinsured, and one-third of the most well off is able to receive health care, not on the basis of their health care needs, but on the size of their wallet or the size of their purse.

I say to members opposite: Do not listen to us; listen to the people. The two largest users of home care, who are they? Who are the two largest users of home care? Seniors, who have produced two letters to the government, which we have tabled in this House, that have articulated again that they want to be consulted and that they want the public to have a say in something that

is so fundamental to their well-being. The Manitoba league for the disabled. I tabled the letter in this House for Mr. Martin, who talked about the fact that they did not want to privatize home care services. Now they are large users of home care. They want changes to home care. Self-managed home care was a good idea, which we had in our platform in 1995, but the minister said in this House, I have consulted with Mr. Martin. Well, Mr. Martin says, in his letter, never once has the government consulted me about the privatization of home care. The minister then says that the Manitoba league does not understand this issue. The Manitoba league had to send another letter back to the minister and say, yes, we do understand the situation quite well. We understand it because we need it.

Michael Rosner, on behalf of the league, at the meetings that the minister failed to attend, said, and I quote: We have tried private orderly systems, and up until the early '80s we had a private competitive system. You want to look at a competitive model, go back to the evaluations of the early 1980s. We tried a private, profit, competitive system, and it failed us and so we were pleased that the previous government moved it into a nonprofit, publicly administered program.

So the clients do not want it. What about all the studies the government had? Connie Curran says, do not do it. Dr. Evelyn Shapiro, who was on the demonstration project from the provincial government, on the government's own demonstration project, says: It will cost more and will provide less quality of service. The government's own hand-picked advisory committee says: We were never consulted by Treasury Board. We were never consulted and we were not involved in this decision, and the government is making a mistake to proceed with the privatization and profit of home care.

People also know that we do not want a society where four people in the city of Winnipeg, some of whom had presented briefs to the government to proceed with privatization, will become millionaires so 3,000 people can take a 30 percent to 40 percent wage decrease. That is not the type of society I want to live in.

So I say to members opposite, you have heard the briefs from the Mennonite Central Committee. You heard the brief from Father Fred Olds. You have heard the brief from other religious organizations. You have

heard the briefs from clients. You have heard the briefs from workers. You have heard the position of the public. You are not moving in the made-in-Manitoba direction that the people want. The public wants changing home care, but they do not want to throw the home care policies and positions into the profit modality. They want to keep home care as an evolving program to meet the needs of AIDS people and seniors, but they do not want this thing to be treated like Ford or General Motors or McDonald's or Burger King.

We believe in a health care system that is nonprofit and administered by the people for the people. We want the government to listen as well. That is what they promised in the election. That is all we are asking for today. Keep your promises. Settle this home care situation, and let us have a made-in-Manitoba solution, as we always have had.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise and participate in this, our first Opposition Day. I understand this is our first Opposition Day. It is a tradition that we have now, I think, borrowed from the House of Commons. I worked there for a number of years, and I became familiar with the Opposition Day, and, no doubt, our rules will be altered somewhat from what they have there to suit our particular Manitoba needs here. But I support very much the concept of the so-called Opposition Day. I guess it replaces some of the other traditions that we have had that have sort of maybe outlived their usefulness in favour of this type of forum for the expression of opinion on the part of members of this Legislature. I very strongly support that. I am glad for that change in our procedures here. I do not know how many days there are in a session devoted to the opposition, but whatever number has been agreed upon, I support that because that is what this is about. Parliament is all about talking, and Parliament is all about exchanging points of view, which brings me to the next point.

I think we are entitled to differ. We are entitled to have philosophical differences, and we should have some respect for each other when we have those differences. I respect honourable members' opposite rights to have their points of view and I hope they respect my right to have mine. Mine is based, I hope, as will the performance of our health care system be based, on results rather than philosophy.

Honourable members opposite have been honest enough to come clean and line up with their friends and say, this is a philosophical issue. We know it is a philosophical issue for them because they throw all the buzzwords in when they make all of their comments. I believe they believe their own rhetoric, and that is okay, Madam Speaker. It is quite all right with me because they have practised it, they believe their philosophies and there is a rhetoric and there is a buzzwordism that goes with it, and honourable members opposite engage in that all the time, and it is okay. Two-tiered American-style is what I am talking about, language like that that they have imported into their vocabulary to help portray an image that is somehow sinister and horrible to everything that is done by anybody but themselves. [interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (1500)

Point of Order

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Speaker, the member implied that bombs and slashed tires—

Madam Speaker: On a point of order?

Mrs. McIntosh: —are not real. They are real. We experienced them in our own household. Thank you.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I have not dealt with the point of order by the honourable Minister of Education, and I was on my feet trying to maintain order once more today and I will not tolerate it again. You want the proceedings to proceed, then let us have this Chamber act in a responsible manner and have decorum in the Chamber.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

An Honourable Member: Both sides.

Madam Speaker: I am speaking to both sides.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: This House is recessed, and I would ask for a meeting of both House leaders in my office immediately.

The House recessed at 3:02 p.m.

After Recess

The House resumed at 5:12 p.m.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Madam Speaker, prior to the recess, I attempted to rise on a point of order regarding comments made by the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh), who said both from her seat and also on her feet that members on this side of the House support bombings, slashing tires. At one point, she went so far as to say that members on this side of the House support murderers.

I do not know in which context the member was referencing that, whether it had any reference to do with many of the home care workers right now, whether it was aimed at any of us individually, but, Madam Speaker, I have never heard comments that are more unparliamentary in this House.

Even the Minister of Health, who was expelled from this House, Madam Speaker, and I would refer you to the debates and proceedings from 1987 in which the Minister of Health at that time was expelled for comments accusing members of the Legislature at that time of staging violent demonstrations, encouraging gangster-style violence. That member refused to withdraw that and was expelled from the House.

Madam Speaker, these comments are just absolutely unbelievable. To accuse members of this House, any member of this House, of the statements that were made by the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) is beyond belief. We may have our differences. We may have heated differences, but there has to be some basic level of language, of respect for members.

There are times when we all make statements that are perhaps things that we might regret afterwards, but I have never heard comments made of this nature, of this seriousness, and I would ask, Madam Speaker, that you take under advisement the comments that were made by the member, and I would ask that the Minister of Education unequivocally apologize to every member of this House for what were very clearly, absolutely unparliamentary statements on her behalf.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order, when the House became so raucous and disruptive, I had not even dealt with the point of order. I was attempting to clarify, indeed, whether the honourable Minister of Education was up on a point of order. I had not even established that at that point at time, and, unfortunately, the behaviour in the House was, in the opinion of the Speaker, so disruptive that I had no option or no alternative but to recess until saner heads would prevail.

I would also like to remind the honourable Minister of Education and all members in this House that when you are on your feet on a point of order, as soon as you are recognized, to identify that it is a point of order. It is very difficult for the Speaker to determine why you are on your feet once you have been recognized.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, I think all of us will agree that this has not been a stellar day in the history of the Manitoba Legislature. The kind of things that have gone on today from both sides of the House have been unbelievable, to use the word of my honourable friend for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

I was not present, Madam Speaker, at the very tail end when you recessed the House but was present for all of the time earlier than that. The Minister of Education can deal with the issue herself, but having had a personal experience with regard to a strike in which the life of her husband was threatened, the attempt to bomb their own home are significant issues in the life of the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) which are not easily forgotten. To tie, I suppose, support for one particular group in society over another or something of that nature may have provoked that incident, but she can speak to that herself.

Madam Speaker, I also wanted to talk just for a minute with respect to the actions of the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), who clearly, in front of, plain view of the entire House, stormed across the Chamber into the space in front of the—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the honourable government House leader to ascertain whether you were speaking to the point of order which the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has just addressed, because that was I believe why I recognized you, or whether you are now wishing to raise a new point of order, because I must deal with each individual point of order as it is raised.

Mr. Ernst: It is now another point of order, but, Madam Speaker, they all form part of the milieu today that caused the difficulties and caused the recess of the House. So, if you want me to raise it as a separate point of order, I will.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) and then the comments made by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), I will take the—

Mr. Ashton: I guess, Madam Speaker, if I can just clarify, I was raising a point of order based on the statements made by the Minister of Education. I am requesting that she apologize to the House for those statements. I appreciate that you are taking this under advisement, but it is a separate point of order based on the statements made by the Minister of Education.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Thompson, I indeed will take the matter under advisement to research Hansard, and I will study the transcript carefully and report back to the Chamber with a ruling.

Point of Order

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, on a new point of order, and that deals with the matter of the actions of the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), who earlier today stormed across the House, down in front of the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), and proceeded to have an exchange, primarily verbal, but did begin to shake her hand and her finger against the Minister of Health, which

I think clearly violates the House and the separation of opposition and government by utilizing the area between the benches as a sacrosanct area, if you will, at least by precedent, if nothing else. So I would ask you to consider that matter also.

* (1720)

Mr. Ashton: Yes, on the same point of order, Madam Speaker, I would point out that this matter is being raised now, coincidentally, several hours after it took place, not at the first opportunity. I also find it unfortunate that the government House leader did not reference the context whereby comments were made by the Minister of Health, redbaiting comments which were taken by some offence by the member for Radisson.

Indeed, I think it was obvious to all members in the House that there was a conversation that took place between those two members, but I wish the government House leader would put into context exactly what happened, because it was a conversation that began with the Minister of Health making comments, as he has done on other matters but, in this case, redbaiting comments, which are not only not acceptable to the member for Radisson but to many members of this House.

This is a very serious matter for us. We believe that members of this House have to be able to express their opinions without redbaiting, without the kind of unparliamentary language I referenced in the previous point of order. Not only would I suggest, Madam Speaker, that the government House leader does not have a point of order, I would suggest that if he truly was to deal with the real disruption in the House, he would have got up and referenced the comments made by his Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) earlier in Question Period today, which indeed were the basis of the discussion that took place between the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) and the Minister of Health.

Mr. Ernst: On the same point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable government House leader, I listened carefully to the comments he put on the record. I heard the position put on the record by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). I will indeed take this matter

under advisement, and I will report back to the House with a ruling.

Mr. Ernst: The member for Thompson suggested that I should—

An Honourable Member: Not a further point of order?

Mr. Ernst: On the same point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I have just advised the honourable government House leader that he had ample opportunity—

Mr. Ernst: Very well, Madam Speaker, on a new point of order.

Madam Speaker: Procedure generally dictates that each side of the House has an opportunity to put their views on the record on a point of order, and I have advised that I will take that matter under advisement and report back to the House.

Point of Order

Mr. Ernst: On a new point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: On a new point of order.

Mr. Ernst: That is correct. The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) suggested that we put in context the matter in which the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) had a confrontation.

I had hoped that we would not degenerate into that kind of activity, but I am quite prepared to put on the record the comments of the member for Radisson.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would have to remind the honourable government House leader that indeed he is speaking to the same point of order. The matter raised in the honourable member for Thompson's point of order relative to ministers put on the record by the Minister of Health I believe was raised in Question Period. I will research as a point of order, and I advised at that time that I would indeed take that point of order under advisement and report back to the House, so I now have three matters that basically relate to the incident in Question Period to report back to the House on.

Point of Order

Mr. Ernst: On a new point of order, Madam Speaker earlier referred to the actions of the member for Radisson. I now wish to refer to the language used by the member for Radisson.

During the time leading up to the recess of the House, the member for Radisson clearly, from her seat, witnessed by a number of members on this side of the House, referred to members on this side of the House as fascists and Nazis. That is the context in which the confrontation took place.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, indeed once again the government House leader did not raise this matter previously, and I also heard the comments that were made by the member for Radisson, and I heard the exact words she said, which are: How would you like it if we called you Nazis?

Madam Speaker, this member, this Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), I ask you to recall what he stated on the record. I have been in this Legislature for many years. I thought we had finished off the days of redbaiting and McCarthy-type tactics in this House. It is not acceptable for members of this House—this is not the 1950s. This is the 1990s. Members of this House should not be subjected to the kind of name-calling that the member for Radisson has been subjected to continuously since she has been a member of this House. If the members opposite cannot deal with the issues that we raise on this side, they should not stoop to that kind of personality attacks.

I think the government House leader should not be raising this matter as a point of order. He should be asking his Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to apologize to the member for Radisson for his totally inappropriate comments earlier today in the House.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): On the same point of order.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I just wanted to remind all honourable members in this House that in the opinion of the Speaker enough points of order have been raised. I will hear the honourable member for Inkster on this same point of order and would recommend strongly

that we get on with the business and the order of the day. We must deal with a motion before 5:30, and I must determine what the will of the House is.

Mr. Lamoureux: We appreciate the manner in which you have tried to put this issue to rest, and ultimately there was misbehaviour on both sides of this House which we would state, but, in essence, the issue of the day was to debate the home care services. Hopefully there will be leave of the Chamber that would allow us to continue debate for this afternoon, and that would be our recommendation after these points of order have been dealt with.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. If I am to understand the honourable member for Inkster correctly, he was not speaking to the point of order that I must deal with now. I will take the point of order raised by the honourable government House leader under advisement and report back to the House.

* * *

Mrs. McIntosh: I do not know if I am rising on a point of privilege or a point of order. I will ask you maybe guide me in what is correct here. I feel, Madam Speaker, that there is a point of privilege for me that needs to be cleared up and maybe could be done as a point of order.

Madam Speaker: I have advised the House that I will not entertain any further points of order on the matters that ensued to cause the disruption in the Chamber today, and I would ask the honourable Minister of Education to identify whether she is on her feet for a point of order or a matter of privilege?

Mrs. McIntosh: I believe technically I probably was rising on a point of privilege and said in context what was said there and in my remarks. Also, I do not know, Madam Speaker, until I tell you what I was wanting to say and how you would rule on.

May I raise it as a point of order, and then you can tell me if I am out of order?

* * *

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, on a matter of privilege then, I would like to indicate that

as it has been said this is not been a stellar day for the House, but I do think it is important to clarify for the record some of the allegations made against me as a member in terms of the privileges of the House.

Madam Speaker, when we are trying to listen to a debate that occurs in the House and a point is being made by a member and accusations are hurled across the floor that may be picked up by Hansard that are untrue, is it my privilege to correct those across-the-way comments with a statement of fact and not be subjected then to what has happened since that time?

Madam Speaker, I think everybody in this house knows what I was referring to, including the members opposite. I must correct, the bomb was not thrown at her home, it was thrown at the office but there are police records and so on that will verify what we are saying. The member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) was also similarly affected.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am having great difficulty trying to follow the comments made by the honourable minister. If she indeed is on a matter of privilege she should be speaking to the fact of the manner in which she feels her privileges were violated.

* (1730)

I believe she asked a question of the Speaker in her earlier comments as to what correct procedure was, and I would suggest to the honourable minister that if she feels that somebody has put something on the record that she is displeased with, she should at that point in time stand on her feet on a point of order, and then we can deal with it correctly procedurally.

I would now ask the honourable Minister of Education that if she indeed is on a matter of privilege, that she express how she feels her rights as a member of this Assembly were violated.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, I came to this Chamber today prepared to listen to a debate, and—

Point of Order

Mr. Ernst: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, is there a willingness of the House not to see the clock until six o'clock?

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable government House leader. Is there willingness of the House not to see the clock? [agreed]

Order, please. Can I ascertain whether there is a time limit to be extended or whether it is open.

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, I believe it was until six o'clock.

Madam Speaker: Until six? Agreed? [agreed]

I thank the House for the clarification.

* * *

Mrs. McIntosh: I had understood that this afternoon we would be listening to debate. I was here listening to a debate. I was listening to a speaker, trying to hear what that speaker was saying. That speaker made reference to remarks made by a member opposite in her inaugural speech. When that occurred, the noise from the other side was such that my ability, my right, to hear the debate was taken away. More than that, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) then, in response to the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) quoting the member for Radisson's (Ms. Cerilli) inaugural address, said, you people are antiunion just like you say things about bombs and slashed tires.

That, I was afraid, Madam Speaker, was picked up by Hansard. I rose on a point of order to correct that as I believe was the correct thing to do, to say that indeed bombs and slashings do occur, and there are many, many, and the police records are clear, the court transcripts are clear, and they were directed against me, they were directed against the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) and other people, not in connection with this strike at all.

That interrupted the debate and it resulted in a whole series of things, including the things said by—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I have heard nothing in the comments of the honourable Minister of Education, with the greatest respect, that would lead me to believe this was a matter of privilege. What I am hearing is a regurgitation of the three points of order that have been extremely well addressed in this Chamber today and

which will do nothing to continue to enhance decorum in this Chamber.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The motion before the Chamber is, it has been moved by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), seconded by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, I would solicit if there would be leave of the Chamber to allow for the debate to take place that was lost as a result of the recess, if there would be leave of the Chamber to allow that to occur.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I believe the honourable member for Inkster is trying to clarify what was previously agreed to. My understanding is that what was agreed to is that I would not see the clock and that additional time would be extended till 6 p.m.

Now, is there willingness of the House to continue debate until 5:55 p.m., until such time as then the Speaker will put the motion? Agreed?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Speaker: No? I will ask once again. Is there leave of the House to continue debate for 20 minutes, till 5:55, to allow additional comments to be put on the record regarding the motion? At 5:55, the Speaker will ask the questions.

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, if it is to continue debate until five minutes to six and then put the question, there is leave from the government side.

Madam Speaker: There is leave?

Mr. Ernst: Yes.

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable government House leader.

Mr. Ashton: On House business, Madam Speaker, I would like to ask if there would be leave to add the time that was lost because of the recess and the points of

order. We have numerous members of the House who want to speak to a very critical issue, that of the situation in our system. We are quite prepared to come back on another day, reallocate the time, sit during the mornings, et cetera, but we should not be denied our right to speak on this important issue because of what has happened this afternoon, particularly the incident that we dealt with earlier, involving the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh).

I would ask, Madam Speaker, if there is leave to provide the equivalent amount of time so that the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and many members on our side can address this important issue.

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, there is no leave.

Madam Speaker: Leave has been denied to have debate continue on the Opposition Day motion beyond 5:55.

Mr. Lamoureux: Actually, Madam Speaker, I believe the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) was finishing up his speech.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health has seven minutes remaining.

Mr. McCrae: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, you are in the situation because leave was not given to extend the debate. The rules state that the vote should take place half an hour before the hour of adjournment. We extended the adjournment hour till six o'clock. We are in the situation, unless the government gives leave to extend the debate, we have to have the vote now, which means that the member for Inkster and many members on our side will not have the ability to debate. So I would ask for your ruling on that. We are in a position now that unless the government accommodates this matter and brings it back on another day—and we are willing to negotiate the time and the place—we will lose the opportunity to speak, and we will have to vote at this moment.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Thompson, I believe the record

will clearly show that leave had been established to have debate ensue and continue up until 5:55, at which time the question would be put.

Mr. Ashton: Just on the point of order, I want to make it very clear, Madam Speaker, we did not give leave to cut off the debate at 5:55. In fact, the leave was given to extend the time till six. Unfortunately, we are in the situation that our rules require a vote half an hour before the hour of adjournment. So we should either have had the vote at five o'clock, or we should have it, if we have a new adjournment time of six, at 5:30.

Madam Speaker, I once again ask that you clarify the situation, appeal to the government benches to give us the opportunity to debate this fully, because that is what we need. We need to debate this issue. We are willing to come back at another time to do it if necessary.

Mr. Ernst: On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter was that I stood up here just moments ago to clarify the situation. To continue debate until five minutes to six at which time the motion would be put is what we gave leave for.

We denied leave to sit beyond six o'clock or to make up the time that was lost earlier today. For that much, leave was denied, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am checking with the table officers, and, to the best of my recollection, no leave had been denied to continue debate till 5:55 p.m., at which time the Speaker would put the question.

* (1740)

If the honourable opposition House leader (Mr. Ashton) is now stating that leave was denied, the Speaker will have no alternative but to put the question now.

It has been moved by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), seconded by the honourable member—

Point of Order

Mr. Ernst: I wonder if you might entertain a two- or three-minute recess while I have a conversation with the opposition House leader.

Madam Speaker: Is it the will of the House to have a two- or three-minute recess so that the two House leaders can have a meeting? [agreed]

The House recessed at 5:41 p.m.

After Recess

The House resumed at 5:43 p.m.

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, in an attempt to resolve this issue, I wonder if there is leave of the House to have the Opposition Day motion remain on the Order Paper, which would, at some subsequent date to be negotiated

between the other House leaders and myself, have a continuation of the debate or a furthering of the debate at some later time.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave of the House to have the Opposition Day motion remain on the Order Paper and to have a date identified by agreement between the House leaders at some later date? [agreed]

Mr. Ernst: I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: This House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 14, 1996

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