

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

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

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, June 5, 2008**

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

*PRAYER*

**House Business**

**Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Official Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I seek leave to move directly to Bill 236.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there agreement to move directly to Bill 236? [*Agreed*]

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 236—The Domestic Violence Death  
Review Committee Act**

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** I move, seconded by the MLA for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat), that Bill 236, The Domestic Violence Death Review Committee Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

*Motion presented.*

**Mrs. Driedger:** Mr. Speaker, I wish I could stand up in this House today and say that we didn't need such legislation as this. Unfortunately, I can't do that because domestic violence is an issue that still exists out there. It isn't a problem of the past; unfortunately, it is something that we are still dealing with, and it is still a problem in Manitoba.

In fact, in 2005, a Statistics Canada report found that Manitoba had the highest rate of spousal homicide in the country. I think that statistic speaks for itself and means that more needs to be done in our province. I think any time any of us hear of a domestic violence death, it is something that truly shocks us. I'm sure many people were quite shocked to hear of a situation that recently occurred in Alberta, and, you know, it just reinforces again that domestic violence can be such a horrendous situation and lead to such horrendous outcomes. That's why I think we need to do everything that we can to address this issue in Manitoba.

I was certainly pleased that there were a number of initiatives started in the '90s. Zero tolerance particularly is one that stands out, where, because of

a lot of initiative and effort from a number of people in Manitoba, that moved forward. I can assure you that was not something that was easy to bring forward. It required a lot of debate. It required a lot of effort, but it was something that people believed in at the time and really put effort behind it to try to work out the kinks and to move it forward.

So, you know, it is recent events in Manitoba that certainly have brought this to the fore again. I have to say that it was a situation recently here in Manitoba that made me want to see what else we can do. That was the death of Shannon Scromeda, a 25-year-old, who was fatally struck with a hammer in her home and the hammer blow killed her. She was murdered by her boyfriend. She leaves a young boy, a young child, now motherless.

I don't think that is a situation that any of us, you know, can even accept or be prepared to accept. I think what we have to do is take situations like Shannon Scromeda's and look at them and use it as an opportunity to learn what we can do by examining these situations. Look for trends. Look for risk factors. Look for gaps in programming and resources that were available or unavailable to a victim of domestic violence.

In this situation, when you have, you know, a situation where somebody is murdered, there are opportunities to learn from that. In learning from that, the intent would be that we could take all of that information, put it together and try to come up with ways that we could prevent such situations from happening again because any clues we can derive from incidents of abuse can help the experts develop more effective prevention and intervention strategies. Perhaps there is something in Shannon's situation where we could pinpoint, well, maybe there's an opportunity there we could learn from and prevent something like that from happening again.

Mr. Speaker, I would note, too, that in this legislation, what it does is it sets up a committee of experts that would actually be charged with the review of these domestic violence homicides. Based on this committee, which would be struck by the government, it would be put in place by the government and it would be a committee that reports to the Legislature. This committee would look at the circumstances and all of the factors around this issue

and study it well in advance, probably, of how we could expect an inquiry. We could then, in effect, move in front of inquiries which take a long time, which are very expensive. What we could do is have a group of experts that would be there on a three-year term as indicated in the legislation, and then, that committee would make their recommendations to government.

Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to note that, I believe it was in Ontario, because this idea has come from some experience in Ontario. The most recent report of the Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee indicates that, if nothing else, a body committed to collecting and analyzing data over time can identify trends, systemic issues, and risk factors and see gaps in programs or responses.

The one thing that they were able to identify, and as banal as it may sound, they did find that a prior history of abuse is the No. 1 risk factor. While that may seem pretty obvious, it in fact, was present in 92 percent of the fatalities. You can take information like that and use it as part of your data collection to build a picture of trends.

\*(10:10)

The No. 2 risk factor was pending separation, at 82 percent; again, something that may seem obvious in some ways, but in fact now, Ontario was able to look at it through what they were doing and in fact, lead to some concrete evidence.

The report also noted—and this one I found quite interesting—that communities of fewer than 25,000 are the source of 25 percent of the deaths. So it was small communities where they say 25 percent of the spousal homicides are occurring. Certainly, a finding like that could be used to guide decisions as to where to target resources. We know that this would certainly not be the be-all and end-all, in terms of dealing with domestic violence.

A number of initiatives over the years, with the zero tolerance, certainly were a substantive move forward to address this issue. Dealing with and recognizing and supporting women's shelters is something that is also very, very significant. I would suggest, maybe it's time also to look at that a little bit more to find out what we can do in terms of women's shelters being used in a more proactive and preventative way.

Through this legislation and the setting up with this committee, I'm sure we could glean enough information to be able to look to what we need for

the next 10 years in Manitoba around this issue of domestic violence. Based on this statistic that women are at higher risk of being killed by their male partners than women in any other province, I think this legislation is imperative in Manitoba. We have to pay attention to what's been happening out there.

I would indicate and give credit to Dr. Jane Ursel from RESOLVE, who was the person that came forward and recommended this legislation. I would also indicate that she has been very helpful to me in providing the report from Ontario and what they were able to find. I do credit her and the work that they are doing at RESOLVE to address this pretty horrific issue of domestic violence.

I think it would be in the best interest of Manitoba women not to hesitate on this legislation, to move forward quickly. I've been speaking with the women's shelters; I will be addressing this issue also with every women's group in this province.

I hope this government will take this legislation. I know it's a private members' bill but, because of what it stands for, because of the significance of preventing domestic violent deaths, if we can, I really hope that this government will put politics and partisanship aside and support this private members' bill. I think it's critically important. Thank you.

**Ms. Jennifer Howard (Fort Rouge):** I want to thank the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) for bringing this issue forward in the Legislature. I know that she often brings forward issues that are very important to women and to children. I want to thank her for doing that again today.

I want to begin by just speaking a little bit about the history of dealing with the issue of domestic violence and where we've come to in this province and this country.

I want to start off in the 1970s, the decade in which I was born. Those were the days when this was an issue that was simply not spoken about. For a long time, I think, the idea that what happened in the home, what happened behind those walls was nobody's business but the people inside that home.

It was in the 1970s, I think, as the second wave of the women's movement was growing, that women started to put together shelters and safe houses. Women started to break the silence about the realities of their own lives and started to talk to each other. It was then that there started to be places that women who were experiencing violence and abuse could come to in safety.

Then, I think, in the 1980s, we saw that issue begin to be brought out in the House of Commons and in Legislatures. Whenever I am out speaking to women's organizations or young women, I always use this example to demonstrate how far we've come in this fight.

In the early '80s, there was an MP in the House of Commons, an NDP MP named Margaret Mitchell, and she's just published her autobiography. I would strongly recommend to everybody in this House to read it. In those days there had been a report on domestic violence and violence against women. So she in the House of Commons raised a question in question period to the minister responsible, something that all of us in this House would take—a right that all of in this House, I think, would take for granted. So she raised a question about violence against women, and she was greeted with laughter, laughter from members of the opposition. I think that today we could not imagine such a thing happening in this House. I hope we could not imagine such a thing happening in this House where somebody would rise to speak on an issue of such importance and such a critical issue and be greeted with laughter. So I do think we have come quite a long way since that time.

Then, I think in the 1990s again, we saw a resurgence of activity, action and interest on the issue of domestic violence. I think that mostly came out of the experience of December 6, 1989. All of us, I think, can remember where we were at that moment that we heard of the 14 women killed in Montreal. I think that, also, certainly for women of my generation, was a defining moment when we realized that, as far as we had come in the fight for equality, we were nowhere near where we needed to be yet, that there were still places in the world where women were made to feel unwelcome, that even though all of us, I think, who have that experience of sexism and misogyny in our lives—and this was an experience with that writ large and horrific. I think out of that came more work, more study and more discussion in the 1990s.

Recently I had the occasion to visit with an agency in my constituency, the Winnipeg Children's Access Agency, and this was an agency that actually came out of some of that work in the '90s that came out of the Pedlar report in this province. It's an agency that tries to set up a safe and neutral place for non-custodial parents to visit with their children. I think often when we talk about domestic violence we don't always talk about and consider the effects on

the children who are in those homes, what the effect is of growing up in an atmosphere of violence and abuse, what the effect is of having as your only model of an adult relationship one that is violent and abusive.

So I visited this agency and I'm proud to be able to say that this agency is moving to a larger location soon with the assistance of the Community Places program. But, Mr. Speaker, it was an agency that I didn't know much about, and I think it's one of those organizations that probably none of us know much about until we need it. But I was very impressed with the work that they do there with staff and with volunteers, even when families are in crisis, even when families have broken down, and often because of violence issues, to still try to help the children in those situations have contact with their parents in a safe way.

So there's no doubt in my mind and from my experience in the world, both working in the community and with many, many women that I know, that this is an issue that touches women from all walks of life. It is an issue that touches women from all classes, from all geographic areas, from all professions.

I want to speak a little bit about some of the work our government has done on this issue. I also do want to talk a bit about what's in this bill. My understanding of this bill is that it acts on recommendations that came from Dr. Jane Ursel, that came out in the newspaper after the last horrible murder of a woman in this province, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that there have been meetings held with Dr. Ursel, the Minister of Labour (Ms. Allan) and officials in the Family Violence Prevention Branch, and we are in fact moving on her recommendations.

But I think one of the things that is important to note in our time in office—and I would not claim by any stretch of the imagination that any government has a monopoly on action on domestic violence. I do believe that the former government also took this issue quite seriously. In that time I was working in the community and had many very good discussions with the Minister of Justice at that time, Jim McCrae, who was also the Member for Brandon West. I knew that, probably because he had five daughters, this was an issue that he took very seriously. Since '99 we've almost tripled funding for a range of domestic violence services and that now totals over \$12 million per year. I think it's important that those

services are in all areas. They are not only dealing with what happens when a woman and her children leave a situation. They're not only for shelter and court costs, but there are also services in there that aim to help prevent violence against women.

\* (10:20)

In that time, Manitoba's gone from having the highest average domestic homicide rate to now the lowest average rate of female domestic homicides. That's not to say the job is done. I think everyone in this Chamber would agree that one death of anyone from domestic violence is too many, but there is some progress being made.

In November of this year, there was an announcement of the historic \$2.6 million investment in domestic violence initiatives. This was focusing on some of the issues I spoke to earlier: children who are exposed to violence, security enhancement to women's shelters, and an increase in funding to improve the recruitment and retention of workers who provide those services.

I've worked with a lot of those women who work in the shelter system. They are an incredibly, incredibly dedicated group of women, many of whom have had this experience in their own lives, have survived that experience and now transformed that experience to help other women.

Early on in my term as an MLA, Mr. Speaker, I did have the opportunity to meet with people, board members and staff at Osborne House, whom I had worked with previously with the Women's Health Clinic. One of the things that we were able to work on together was to secure funding from the Winnipeg School Division and the Department of Education for a school program in shelter.

They had brought this to me because of the experience of children who are in shelter and the way that their education is interrupted over and over again. Many of those children never have the experience of going to school for a full year. So I was pleased to be able to assist in that, and I know it's going to just strengthen their services and the fine work that they do.

I see my little red light flashing, so I know that my time is coming to an end, but I did want to thank the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) for bringing forward what I think is a critical issue, an ongoing issue, an issue that we need to continue to address, an issue that we need to continue to understand and take action on.

Thank you very much.

**Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Minnedosa):** Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to congratulate the Member for Charleswood for putting forward a bill that, I think, can only strengthen the supports and co-ordinate the supports that are available for families and, most importantly, for women who are looking for some leadership on this very serious issue of domestic violence.

Statistics Canada has found that Manitoba women are at a higher risk of being murdered by their male partners than women in any other province. To me, that speaks to the need of a co-ordinated and a stronger effort in dealing with domestic violence within our province.

It's hard to fathom, but, between 1974 and 2004, Manitoba had the highest average homicide rate for women. Our rate is 50 percent higher than the Canadian average for that period, at 1.5 deaths per 100,000 couples. Mr. Speaker, what that says is domestic violence affects all sectors of our province, all sectors of our population and all regions of our province.

In my role as an MLA, as a legislator, I've had the privilege and the opportunity to meet with many organizations throughout the province which do great work in providing supports and resources for families in need, women in need, when they're faced with situations that have taken them out of their homes and into places where they're looking for support and help, places like Aurora House in The Pas, the Y in Thompson and Selkirk's women's shelter.

There are so many organizations and groups that provide supports and resources. I am so proud to say that many of them I have met personally and have learned from their expertise, heard of the challenges they face and tried to see what I can do to try to make a difference in helping them move their wishes forward.

Recent events across Canada remind us that even the happiest-looking families may have problems that no one is aware of. Mr. Speaker, I live in a rural community and I know first-hand that there are times when situations occur in households that we know nothing about. Could be our neighbours; could be our friends. I think that, generally, people are proud of their homes and their families and they don't want people to know when things go bad or when things go wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it's important to realize that in some communities like Souris, Manitoba or Thompson, Manitoba or Nelson House that often these individuals are looking for people to come or to have resources available for them so that they can get away from a bad situation and look at ways to mend and to either rebuild that family or to move on.

Living in a rural community I know that a lot of these resources are just not available in my community and I do know that in communities in the north, as well, if the resources are not—the resources are mainly focussed in urban centres. So we need to be looking at ways to address that challenge. I know that the rural stress line, with having an increase of 400,000 calls from 2004 to 2007, that their Web site having those many hits is an indicator that people are looking for supports, looking for resources and are not finding them within the communities so are going online in a discreet way to find out what they can do to try to address the challenges that they're facing in their homes. I think that's a major red flag, Mr. Speaker. I think that families who are not able to access those supports and resources are looking for ways to make things better and to make those changes so that they can access those supports.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, it's easy to turn away and then we don't have to deal with the pain and the horror at the loss inflicted on a family by a beloved member of that family. I think that events such as Take Back the Night, which I've attended both in Brandon and in The Pas are excellent venues and excellent ways of educating the community as a whole on the devastation that families have experienced by losing loved ones.

I think that by having victims of violence speak out and speak on the challenges that they've faced in trying to deal with keeping their children safe and trying to find out a safe route to keep themselves and their children safe is admirable for them to be able to speak publicly about it and to speak about how they have found the resources and the strength to move past the violence and into a safe environment.

Curbing domestic violence is about paying attention and I think attention to detail is something that is critical. I think that, you know, there have been reports, the *Stolen Sisters* report that talked about the need for resources or supports in place to help curb the violence and to take children and to teach them that this is not a common situation. This is not the norm and that we need to be looking at ways to break the cycle. I think there are so many

other resources that have been provided but we need to pull all of that together and I think that this bill is going to do that.

Mr. Speaker, this bill provides the resources for that to happen. The multidisciplinary committee will review the circumstances surrounding deaths that occur as a result of domestic violence and make recommendations to help prevent further deaths or future deaths in similar circumstances. So the mandate of this committee will be to look at all of the recommendations, look at all of the situations that have occurred over time and to deal with—or work through this process and put forward strong recommendations that have to be implemented. It's a co-ordinated effort. So I think that we need to learn from this. We need to help prevent further incidents of death in similar circumstances and we need to be seeking this information and pulling this information together.

The member who spoke prior spoke about the family violence prevention branch and the work that they do and it is admirable work but we need to do more, Mr. Speaker.

\* (10:30)

I know that when I was a young mother, I paid special attention to the former member for the Legislature, Gerrie Hammond, who, I believe, was a leader in the area of domestic violence prevention and worked tirelessly in trying to find supports and resources available to make a difference. I think it's in the memory of people like Gerrie Hammond that we need to continue to strengthen our supports and resources in our communities.

The Westman safer families project which was recently announced, I think, will respond also to the need to address the multiple needs of families when violence takes hold of their homes and their families. I think that there are projects out there that have to be recognized and supported.

I do believe that what the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) has put forward is a very strong step forward, and I want to give her credit. I think we should be supporting this bill and moving it as quickly as possible through the process, so that it becomes law. We can then feel that we've got a co-ordinated effort, a committee that will focus strictly on this very serious issue. It would be in the best interests of all Manitoba families. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Labour and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to have the opportunity this morning to speak to this particular piece of legislation.

I just wanted to comment. I know that the MLA for Charleswood asked me a question in the House in regard to the meeting with Dr. Jane Ursel who is the director of RESOLVE, who works at the University of Manitoba. I told the MLA, at that time when we were in the House, that we had a meeting planned.

We were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with Dr. Jane Ursel on May 2. We had officials from my department at that meeting and officials from the Manitoba Women's Directorate. We also had officials from the Department of Family Services and Housing. We were pleased to have the deputy minister from the Attorney General's office in that meeting as well as staff people that have been very, very involved and have worked with Dr. Ursel with the family Violence Intervention Unit that is a very, very important part of the Department of Justice, which has done a great deal of work in this area here in Manitoba.

From that meeting, we decided that what we were going to do is set up a multidisciplinary team. We established that team and, obviously, Dr. Jane Ursel, who made the recommendation to us to establish a death review committee, will be on that committee with officials from those three departments.

We've also asked Marlene Bertrand, who's the chair of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, to sit on that multidisciplinary team because of her expertise, not only as the chair of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, but also because of her expertise with the Department of Child and Family Services, when she worked tirelessly on behalf of women and domestic violence. Her expertise is going to be invaluable as well as Dr. Jane Ursel's as we move forward with this very, very important issue.

I just also want to comment that we're very, very fortunate that Dr. Ursel was also appointed to the Women's Advisory Council about a year ago, so we have the ability to have her ongoing counsel because she is a member of our Women's Advisory Council. We're very pleased to have the benefit of her advice as we move forward on this very, very important issue.

I have had an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to review the domestic—to read, actually, and review the fourth annual report of the domestic violence death review committee. It is a report that was produced by the Office of the Chief Coroner in the province of Ontario, 2006. They made 33 recommendations in regard to some of the reviews that they've done.

Mr. Speaker, they made recommendations on specific cases that had been through the courts because, of course, it's not legal to do any work unless the cases of domestic homicide have been through the courts. I've had an opportunity to read all of the recommendations and it provides us with valuable information because of the simple fact that we have done so much work in Manitoba in regard to domestic violence. We're actually known as the leader in Canada in regard to this particular issue, and it provides us with some information and some data, in regard to policy areas, where we know that we have done a lot of work in, as well as providing us with information in regard to what might our project and our Manitoba solution to this, what it might look like in regard to moving forward on this particular file.

I think it's very important, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the statistics that have been put on the record in regard to domestic homicides in Manitoba. We had a good opportunity to talk to Dr. Ursel about those statistics because she is the expert in Manitoba, and in Canada, probably, on statistics because that is obviously one of RESOLVE's very important jobs to do, to collecting data, to know exactly how we're doing. I think it's very, very important to put correct information on the record in regard to the statistics.

Manitoba has gone from having Canada's highest average domestic homicide rate at 16.1 per million, that is data from 1974-2000. We now have new data from RESOLVE and Statistics Canada, the data was collected from 1993-2006, and we have dropped to 7.5 per million. We are the lowest in western Canada, and we are also second or third lowest in Canada.

But, having said that, Mr. Speaker, one death is too many, and that's why this issue has been a very, very important issue for us as New Democrats, not just since we got elected but as the MLA for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) said, for many, many years this has been a passionate issue for women and men in the New Democratic Party.

I wanted to also comment on the Ontario domestic violence review committee report. What



they did after they made their recommendations, Mr. Speaker, is they categorized the recommendations in regard to major themes. Their major themes resulted in four major themes: awareness and education; assessment and intervention; resources, and issues that are child-related, because of course, we all know that this isn't just a matter that affects women in the family, it affects not only women, but children. It affects the whole family, quite often parents, grandparents, immediate family members.

This is a very serious issue that affects many, many people, and we know that from our experience when we gather on the 6th of December in memory of the women that were killed at Polytechnique in Montréal. We're joined by many, many women and family members who have had tragedies in their families, and it's an opportunity for us to come together and to heal.

I wanted to just touch base in regard to the programs and services that we have implemented around the domestic violence issue, and I wanted to touch base particularly on the some of programs and services that we have put in place in rural Manitoba, because the MLA for Minnedosa (Mrs. Rowat) spoke in regard to situations that are occurring in rural Manitoba.

*Ms. Marilyn Brick, Acting Speaker, in the Chair*

We believe that we have to provide programs and services just not for our urban centres but for those women who are in rural areas who may be isolated. We know that this is a very private issue, a very personal issue and can be a very difficult issue to get at. If you read the domestic violence review committee report, it's quite staggering in regard to actually how many people in the family sometimes knew about the situation, they knew that there was a concern in the family, they knew there were problems, and they just weren't sure what to do. It's quite often a situation where people don't want to speak up and sometimes what occurs, Madam Acting Speaker, is that it becomes a situation where it goes on too long and they wait.

\* (10:40)

I just wanted to talk a little bit about the programs and services once again. We have tripled funding for a range of domestic violence services, now totalling over \$12 million, and we have expanded services in rural areas. We expanded services in 2004, domestic violence victim services, from five to 28 communities because we knew that

there needed to be better access for women, children and families in rural Manitoba so that we could try to prevent this from occurring outside of our urban centres.

We have put a legislative framework in place in regard to domestic violence issues. We made amendments to The Domestic Violence and Stalking Act, making more victims of domestic violence eligible to access protection orders, including people that are dating but not living together. We've also passed The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act, making it easier to enforce court orders from other jurisdictions.

Also in 2004, we expanded the mandate of victim support workers to help victims obtain civil protection orders either before or after charges are laid.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Brick):** Order. The honourable member's time has elapsed.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** I rise to talk to Bill 236. The Manitoba Liberals support this initiative. We see that when we come together, for example on December 6, we listen to far too many cases of domestic violence in Manitoba, and it's time to ensure that we are learning from what has happened in each of these cases. We're putting in place better mechanisms and approaches to prevent these instances of domestic violence in the future, so I see this initiative as a good initiative. I know there's some debate over precisely what the statistics are showing, but certainly from the number that we hear about each December 6 and from the stories that continue to surface of incidents of family violence in the newspapers, we know that there is too much still happening in Manitoba. This is clearly an important area of concern; it should be of concern to all MLAs and, hopefully, this bill will come to a vote and go on to committee.

I was not sure whether I understood the minister in her remarks as to whether she actually supports the bill or doesn't, but I hope she will support the bill. This is an area where I've had discussions with quite a number of people. I know members or constituents in my own constituency of River Heights have raised this issue with me, feeling passionately that more needs to be done in this area.

One of the people who has been involved in research of this area is my sister-in-law, Nikki Gerrard, who is in Saskatoon, and she was co-editor of the book *Intimate Partner Violence*, which

brought together material from a number of experts in this area from across the country. It is certainly a tribute to Nikki and to the other people who contributed to that book that the effort is being made in the academic community, as well as bridging the community of people who are providing service to women and others who are subject, of course children, to domestic violence.

I believe that the broad issue here is really change in the culture. Change in the culture so that we are better and don't use violent approaches to resolving disputes, that we have problems with understanding that there are other approaches to communicating with people than trying to bully people, that we need to change the understanding and the culture in Manitoba so that people at all levels feel that they can communicate more easily without having to resort to violence and have learned ways of getting their point across without having to be violent about it.

Certainly, as a society, compared to a hundred years ago, there have been huge changes, but in terms of where we are today, there are still a lot of residual societal issues which we need to overcome. We need to have the kind of cultural and attitudinal shift away from bullying and harassment and toward being able to talk better with one another, communicate better with another, to be able to resolve differences, as well as being able to have mechanisms and approaches to help people when there are problems which are not easily resolved.

I would suggest that, in this instance, we've got a substantial piece of legislation that would help us move forward. The example of Ontario has been illustrative and supports this kind of approach, so I would hope that we have the support of all the members to move this bill to committee.

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** I rise to speak on Bill 236, The Domestic Violence Death Review Committee Act. I, too, would like to commend the Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger) for putting this on the agenda so that we can discuss this important issue today.

I don't know of anyone who has been a victim of domestic violence, and as a result has been killed or murdered, but I once did meet someone who was the victim of a very vicious attack. It was when I was working as a student chaplain at St. Michael's Hospital in downtown Toronto. One night, I was the duty chaplain, and I got summoned to the emergency department because a victim came in, a woman,

whose husband had tried to kill her with an axe. I was invited to go into the room where she was to pray with her because the doctors told me they didn't expect her to live, but by some miracle, she did live. So I visited her up in the ward and also visited her family members who were, understandably, extremely angry. She was one of the lucky victims who lived to tell her story.

I also went to a funeral, probably the saddest funeral that I ever attended. I was not conducting it; I was an attendee. It was in rural Saskatchewan. The victim was a woman who was a farmer. She was killed by her hired hand, who had killed her with a hunting rifle that was in the house and accessible, not locked and stored safely.

There's a debate about gun control as everyone knows. Some people would say ban guns of various kinds. The other side of the debate, which I find quite interesting, is that it's not so much the problem of the guns but of the people who use them. One of the examples that is used is countries where there's a very high ownership of guns but very low murder rates. Probably, Madam Acting Speaker, the best example of that is Switzerland. The reason is that all males have to do militia duty. In fact, I think they have to do active duty for a week or two every summer, and they keep their guns at home. That society has a very low murder rate. The reason is, I think, people's attitudes toward guns and toward how disputes are resolved.

\* (10:50)

Madam Acting Speaker, what I think we need to do, in addition to enacting good legislation and having good programs and having good programs for assisting victims, we also need to work on how individuals in society solve problems and disputes, whether it's by violence, which is way too common in our society, or whether it's by talking, by counselling, by conciliation, by mediation. There are some very good organizations that are providing services in these areas.

One such organization is Mediation Services. I'm hoping to attend their annual meeting in June, but I'm going to have to squeeze it in between a couple of graduations, so I may not make it. But I am currently taking their certificate program in conflict resolution, and it's based on a restorative justice model. I have both been a recipient of services there. Instead of going to court, I requested the use of a mediator at Mediation Services. But now I'm taking courses, and

after 22 or 23 days of courses, I hope to get a certificate in conflict resolution.

*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*

So I think we need to support these organizations, as we do with government funding, so that people have alternatives, that they don't turn to violence as their first response when there are disagreements.

A very good way of prevention, I think, is through education. Every year I'm invited to Sisler High School on December 6 where they have a ceremony to commemorate the young women who were murdered at their university in Montréal. I think the organizers do a good job. The masters of ceremony are the co-chairs of the student council, but the people who are lighting the candles are young men from the classes at Sisler High School. It's a very moving ceremony. The gymnasium is full of students. Mr. Speaker, it's very worthwhile to educate a younger generation, so they think and reflect on that memorial day, so they know that there are alternatives and better ways of dealing with disagreements and don't find themselves involved in violent situations.

So this bill, Bill 236, establishes the domestic violence death review committee, Mr. Speaker. This multidisciplinary committee would review the circumstances surrounding deaths that occur as a result of domestic violence and make recommendations to help prevent future deaths in similar circumstances. All reports made by the review committee would be provided to the designated minister, tabled in the Legislature, and made public by posting on the government's Web site.

Well, on this side, on the government's side, we are already in the process of creating a domestic violence death review committee. A meeting was held on May 2, 2008 with Dr. Jane Ursel, the director of RESOLVE, family violence research centre at the University of Manitoba, the Minister of Labour (Ms. Allan) and senior officials from the Department of Justice and Family Services to look at how a domestic violence review committee would work in Manitoba.

Out of this meeting a multidisciplinary team was established. The committee members include Dr. Jane Ursel, who made the recommendation to

establish a death review committee, and Marlene Bertrand, the former director of the Family Violence provincial program, along with officials from three departments.

Not only are we taking action in the present, but we have a good record when it comes to domestic violence prevention and programs. Since 1999, we have almost tripled funding for a comprehensive range of domestic violence services now totalling over \$12 million per year, up from \$4.3 million in 1999.

Manitoba has gone from having Canada's highest average domestic homicide rate at 16.1 per million—data from 1974 to 2000—to now the lowest average rate of female domestic homicides in western Canada at 7.5 per million. This data is from '93 to 2006. Even that number is too high, because if I'm correct, Manitoba has a little over one million people. If there are 7.5 deaths per million, that means that seven or eight people per year are victims in Manitoba and that would be women. So it's sad that we can actually predict how many people, based on averages, are going to die every year as victims of domestic violence, domestic homicide.

Even though that number is half of what it was, it needs to go down. Our goal really should, as a society, be zero. We don't want any victims of domestic homicide.

On November 1, 2007, we announced an historic \$2.6 million investment in domestic violence initiatives focussing on children exposed to violence, security enhancements to women's shelters, and an increase in funding to improve the recruitment or retention of workers who provide services to women and families in crisis.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is one of the leaders in providing services to the victims of domestic violence. Some of the highlights include, in 2005 we made arrangements to The Domestic Violence and Stalking Act, making more victims of domestic violence eligible to access protection orders, including people that are dating but not living together.

Well, we have done many things. I'll just read a few more before my time expires. We also passed The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Act, making it easier to enforce court orders from other jurisdictions. Mr. Speaker, in 2004 we expanded

domestic violence victims services from five to 28 communities for better access outside urban centres. Also in 2004 we expanded the mandate of victim support workers to help victims obtain civil protection orders either before or after charges are laid.

There are other items as well, but I'm running out of time, and I'd like to thank all members who have participated in this debate. We look forward to further improvements and fewer victims every year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Ms. Sharon Blady (Kirkfield Park):** Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to speak to this piece of legislation brought forward by the honourable Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger). As someone that has spent the better part of the past two decades working as a feminist activist and working on issues of significance and importance to women, I think the one thing that we really need to remember in looking at any kind of bill regarding domestic violence is really that it comes from a larger place and that taking action on it is something as has been laid out by other honourable members from this side, something that this government's been doing already.

We need to think back to where this all originates from, and a wonderful feminist academic scholar named Iris Marion Young put together a very succinct model that speaks to the five faces of oppression. Those five faces of oppression are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. What's interesting is that, when you work through Ms. Young's definitions here for each of them, you realize that many women who are the victims of domestic violence are in fact victims of most or all of these five faces of oppression.

When we think of exploitation as something where people's labour is used by others for their own benefit, we see that most oftentimes women who are victims of domestic violence have been exploited within the domestic model. Mr. Speaker, they have been exploited by their abuser, whether that's been through control, isolation and other things that abusers will do.

Mr. Speaker, they've also been marginalized and that's where we have seen the statistic mentioning the predominance of victims of domestic violence coming from rural communities because there is often much social isolation there and again the social

isolation we speak of from various generations as mentioned by the honourable Member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard), the idea that when people are basically in a social circumstance where it's not spoken about, that is in itself a form of marginalization that keeps people from being able to protect themselves and to access the kinds of services they might otherwise need.

That brings us ultimately to the situation of powerlessness. Again, women who are victims of domestic violence and die at the hands of an abuser are the ultimate example of someone in a position of powerlessness where they have power exerted over them but are unable to exercise any power within their own lives.

In the case of many women who are of Aboriginal ancestry or of immigrant ancestry, Mr. Speaker, we also have notions of cultural imperialism which become part of these women's abuse cycles in many cases, where again they experience further marginalization or exploitation based on racial stereotypes, and that ultimately brings us to violence, which is the core issue here. What's interesting about the notion of violence, as explained by Dr. Young, is the fact that it's not merely the act of violence which is a control mechanism but even the fear of violence.

So one of the things that is so important when looking at issues around domestic violence and those who die at the hands of abusers is the idea that, long before a hand was laid upon them, they lived in fear of a hand being laid upon them. That's one of the things that we need to work towards, and we need to work towards raising that veil of fear, raising that idea that someone could possibly hurt you as being fearful and enough of a control mechanism. So we need to provide women with those kinds of services, and the thing is that we are already working on these things.

\* (11:00)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When this matter's again before the House, the honourable member will have six minutes remaining.

The hour being 11 a.m., we will now move on to resolutions, and we will deal with Resolution 15, Lack of Provincial Government Support for City of Winnipeg Nutrient Management Projects.

## RESOLUTIONS

### **Res. 15—Lack of Provincial Government Support for City of Winnipeg Nutrient Management Projects**

**Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), that

WHEREAS the protection of water resources is an investment in the long-term health and well-being of Manitoba's environment and economy; and

WHEREAS since taking office in 1999, the provincial government has made countless announcements and promises about cleaning up Lake Winnipeg; and

WHEREAS the provincial government's announcements and promises have not yet been shown to have resulted in meaningful improvements to Lake Winnipeg's health, as seen in the proliferation of algal blooms and the repeated issuing of beach advisories; and

WHEREAS Manitobans have demonstrated their commitment to adopting practices aimed at protecting the province's water resources for future generations; and

WHEREAS Manitobans expect the provincial government to demonstrate this same level of commitment; and,

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg is fulfilling its obligations to reduce nutrient loading, such as implementing expensive upgrades to its waste-water treatment facilities; and

WHEREAS the costs of these upgrades is estimated to be in the range of \$1.8 billion; and

WHEREAS in the 2008 Manitoba Budget Address, the provincial government said it will invest \$235 million for the upgrading of Winnipeg's waste-water plants, which falls well short of a true one-third funding commitment; and

WHEREAS Manitobans are increasingly frustrated with the provincial government's rhetoric and recycled promises on Lake Winnipeg and have lost confidence in the government's ability to rectify the situation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to stop the rhetoric and consider working on meaningful strategies that will

result in measurable improvements to the health of Lake Winnipeg; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba strongly urge the provincial government to consider fulfilling its commitment to provide one-third of the total funding toward the upgrades of the City of Winnipeg's waste-water treatment plants and to addressing the combined sewer outfall issue.

**Mr. Speaker:** It's been moved by the honourable Member for Tuxedo, seconded by the honourable Member for River East,

WHEREAS the protection—dispense?

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

**Mrs. Stefanson:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring this resolution forward to the House today, and I hope that members opposite will consider passing this, because I think it's time that we start to have some real results with respect to cleaning up Lake Winnipeg. I know members opposite, and certainly the Member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson) has probably heard from a number of his constituents who are very concerned about the water quality in Lake Winnipeg and would want to see that these waste-water treatment facilities are upgraded in the city.

The problem that we've seen so far, Mr. Speaker, is that, unfortunately, members opposite have yet to set real targets with respect to the clean-up of Lake Winnipeg and they have yet to really come through with the one-third of the funding. What members opposite don't realize is that what we want to do, and what our goal is, is to stop the dumping of raw sewage into the river which ends up in our lakes and prevents our children from being able to swim at beaches because we know year after year after year what we see are warning signs on our beaches eventually. And what happens is it prevents our children from being able to swim safely and enjoy their summertime in cottage country and on our beaches.

Our beaches and our lakes in Manitoba, many Manitobans like to enjoy, many people from the City of Winnipeg, of which many members across the way represent various ridings in the City of Winnipeg, and I'm sure they will hear from their constituents how important this issue is. They want to stop the dumping of raw sewage into the rivers to ensure that when they want, on the weekends, often,

they pack up their campers and they like to go camping out to our parks and various beaches on Lake Winnipeg, and so they pack up for the weekend, Mr. Speaker. They pack their children up, they head out to, whether it's Gimli or various other beaches on Lake Winnipeg, and what do they do? They pull up to the beach only to find a big warning sign that it's not safe for their kids to swim in the water there.

I think it's time that this government—and I will remind members opposite, I know they love to go back to the 1990s and talk about the dark days of the 1990s and all this sort of stuff, but I'll remind this government that they have, in fact, been in government for nine years, almost nine years. They have done nothing toward improving the water quality in Lake Winnipeg. What I would say is, that it's time for this government to finally take action on this issue. It's bad enough that they've done nothing to date. It's bad enough that year after year our families continue to go out to the beaches only to find warning signs and be prevented from actually swimming and enjoying playing activities, and doing water activities at our beaches. It's bad enough that year after year they continue to have to go through those steps. But maybe now—maybe now—this government will see fit to, in fact, pass this resolution, to maybe take some action, take some pro-active action with respect to cleaning up Lake Winnipeg.

The waste-water treatment facilities represent about five percent of the loading of phosphorus into our lakes and rivers. Phosphorus, as we know, is one of the most serious nutrients that causes the algal blooms within the lake. We know that from scientific research, Mr. Speaker, and yet, members opposite refuse to want to accept scientific research. They refuse to want to do anything with that scientific research in terms of moving forward and preventing the dumping of raw sewage into our rivers and lakes. I think it's unfortunate. I think members opposite have an opportunity today to stand up and join with members of this side of the House toward taking real action and real initiative toward cleaning up our lakes and rivers for our children.

I hope they stand side-by-side us today and support us on this resolution because it's very important. Especially, as we're now coming through—and it has been a late season getting started. It was a very cold winter and we know on the May long weekend there was some ice out on the lakes still, and some people were prevented maybe, that

weekend, from having a good quality weekend out at the lake. That's the weather. That's something that we can't really, you know, we can't control—although members opposite seem to think they can—we can't really control that side of it.

What we can control is, we can control the dumping of raw sewage into our lakes and rivers. That is something that is within their purview. I know there's many ministers opposite—we're not quite sure which minister is responsible for the dumping of raw sewage, but I did ask, in Estimates, several ministers the question where we could find—and I know my colleague, the Member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), also asked these questions. We asked the government questions such as, you know, where in your government department will we be able to find the \$235 million that is earmarked toward the upgrading of the waste-water treatment facilities in the city of Winnipeg.

We asked the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) that. Oh, well, I don't know, it's not in my government department. I asked the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Lemieux). I took it upon myself and I packed up my books from that Estimates, I went to the other Estimates room and I sat down and I asked the Minister of Infrastructure, now, where would I be able to find—where is the line within your Estimates books where I would be able to find how much money is earmarked toward the upgrading of the waste-water treatment facility in the city of Winnipeg. Oh, well that's not within my government department, that's within the purview of the minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs. So I pack up my books again and I head over to the next committee room where we've got the Estimates process for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Ashton). I sit down and I ask that minister, where do we find, where's the line item that has the \$235 million earmarked towards the upgrading of the waste-water treatment facilities? Once again, Mr. Speaker, we get the runaround from this government.

\* (11:10)

The fact of the matter is, they don't have the money they promised towards the upgrading of the waste-water treatment facilities. Not only that, Mr. Speaker—I think it's important that we also go to this point—not only is the promise of the \$235 million nowhere to be found, but the \$235 million does not represent one-third of the \$1.8 billion that's needed towards upgrading these waste-water treatment

facilities in the city of Winnipeg, so they can stop the dumping of raw sewage into the lakes.

Mr. Speaker, that's what we want to do on this side of the House. I don't care what government department is responsible for what or where. I don't care what level of government—I know members opposite love to blame the feds; they love to blame the city and they love to blame everyone else but themselves. They refuse to take responsibility for themselves, but I think it's time to set aside all that rhetoric in favour of getting some real results with respect to this issue.

If they really, truly, want to clean up Lake Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, then they will do the right thing today. They will stand with us, side by side, in a fight towards stopping the dumping of raw sewage into our rivers and our lakes.

That is what we hope members opposite will do today. I look forward to hearing them and I look forward to seeing them stand, side by side, in passing this very important resolution today.

**Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I would suggest if there was a section in *Hansard* that was called fiction, we'd file this resolution and the last speech under it, because the Member for Tuxedo represents a party that has zero credibility on city of Winnipeg waste water.

By the way, I'm not going to spend a lot of time talking about the '90s and the Tory record, because nothing happened. If I was the Member for Tuxedo, I wouldn't want to talk about the 1990s either, but I'll talk about this Conservative Party in opposition because, if you think they didn't get it in the '90s when they didn't refer the City of Winnipeg waste-water treatment facilities for licensing in 1993, when they didn't license a single part of the waste-water treatment facility, Mr. Speaker, if you think they didn't get it in the 1990s—I won't even get into their position on The Water Protection Act where they not only opposed the act, their leader, when he was running for the leadership, said he would scrap water regulations—but you know what?

The Member for Tuxedo got up and, in 10 minutes, waxing eloquent about nutrient reduction in Lake Winnipeg, never put on the record that the Conservatives want to scrap the clean environment recommendation and licensing we're putting in place that requires the removal of both phosphorus and nitrogen.

It's interesting. The Conservatives are talking about doing only half the job. By the way, Mr. Speaker, I've got nothing against the city of Regina but—can you imagine—the city of Regina is currently moving to the removal of nitrogen and phosphorus. What the Conservatives want, they want us to have worse waste-water treatment than the city of Regina.

How about those great environmentalists, our friends in Alberta? What did they do? They removed both nitrogen and phosphorus, Mr. Speaker. We would be the only major city in western Canada not removing nitrogen and phosphorus.

How they can stand up and talk about Lake Winnipeg when they don't want to do a single thing about the removal of one of the significant contributing factors to the problems in Lake Winnipeg? So, let's start from that basis. By the way, it's not just a question of what they haven't done. This kind of charade that the Member for Tuxedo is playing in terms of the funding is beyond belief because, first of all, she mixes her numbers.

In one comment, she talked about \$3 billion. I was going through *Hansard*. But what she does—and this resolution, again, should be filed under fiction—she talks about waste-water treatment facilities. There are three facilities that are being licensed and, in fact, I put on the record where the funding—she asked in my Estimates where the funding was coming from. In fact, the Member for Gimli (Mr. Bjornson) was there, the Minister of Education. In fact, I can give the numbers. I gave them in question period, but she's not interested in the facts.

In 2006-07, we provided \$8 million. We provided \$9 million in 2007-08, and we're going to be providing further funding this year.

I pointed out she should maybe take a drive over to City Hall where she'll find out that this year, by the way, the overall capital expenditure, this is from the water and sewer rate reports from the City of Winnipeg, is about \$26 million. With all of the city infrastructure, it's going to accelerate and it will peak in the year 2012. Mr. Speaker, that's when we will be flowing more, because we have committed not only to our original infrastructure commitment, but to the one-third share, which is approximately \$700 million of the waste-water treatment facilities.

By the way, I know you don't agree with the Clean Environment Commission, you don't agree

with removing nitrogen, but if you go back to the Clean Environment Commission, what they said is this is required. We have accepted that. We've licensed the West End plant.

Then, they said, the 50-year plan, the City's 50-year plan for getting rid of combined sewer overflow, was unacceptable. That would be phase 2. So we're committing to a full one-third of phase 1. There is some federal money through the original infrastructure commitment. There is not a full one-third. The City has committed to a full one-third.

Now, the \$235 million, this again, for the member, read the Clean Environment Commission, read the licence, read the City of Winnipeg report. This will be completed in the year 2014.

This is the way we fund major projects. I know the Conservatives don't have much of a history, whether it was with hydro dams, they didn't build any. They didn't expand the floodway. They didn't do a single thing in terms of upgrading waste water. So they don't know what it's like to actually deal with a major project.

Here's the way it works. The CEC says, license it, we license it. The City says, we got to build it, it's going to cost us money. We're going to build it over 2000 to 2014, and we say, we're there for our one third. That's how you build major projects in this province.

They're not builders, and they don't care about the environment. I'll be seeing—you know, I look for her on the weekend—the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson), I mean, I won't even get into the fact that they opposed the Kyoto Accord. I remember, Stu Murray and that great leadership team, this is the Flat Earth Society. They can dress themselves in green clothing, but you know, this is not warm fuzzy environmentalists on the opposite. They don't want to remove nitrogen. They still don't get it. I laughed, by the way, yesterday when the Member for Tuxedo tried to play to the galleries of young people. You know what makes people feel cynical? Young people, and I've talked to them—the Member for Tuxedo, you'd think she was saying we're not going far enough on nutrient removal. You know what their position is: we're going too far.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) in November said we should only be reducing

phosphorus not nitrogen. Not just last year or the year before.

**An Honourable Member:** Phosphorus is worse.

**Mr. Ashton:** They don't get it. Ah, now the Member for Tuxedo says phosphorus is worse. You know, Mr. Speaker, we don't cherry-pick on nutrients. When the Clean Environment Commission and every other major City says we have to remove both nutrients, we remove both nutrients. Lake Winnipeg cannot wait for the end decision of members opposite.

Oh, it's worse, phosphorus is worse. You know what? Regina gets it, Calgary gets it, Edmonton gets it, the NDP government gets it, the members opposite don't get it.

Mr. Speaker, let's put on the record. When the members opposite were in government they did nothing on city of Winnipeg waste water, they did nothing on Lake Winnipeg.

Since we've been in government, we have brought in the Lake Winnipeg action plan, lake stewardship board. We had not only gone to the Clean Environment Commission on waste water, we've licensed the first plant. We've got our money committed through to 2014, and it will make a difference, the single largest point source in terms of Lake Winnipeg, it's not the only thing we're doing. I look forward to the comments of the Minister of Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick), who I'm sure will outline many of the other aspects.

Let's put on the record, you have a clear choice when it comes to waste water in the city of Winnipeg. You want to clean up waste water, it's the NDP that has the clear commitment. When it comes to Lake Winnipeg, you can't trust the party, knowing it did nothing, but even in the year 2008, doesn't get it.

A critic, when they get an answer. Where the money is coming from, how many years it's going to flow over, what the cost of the construction of the waste-water plants are. When they get those answers, they still don't want to get it. You know what? They're living in fantasyland. They don't get it, they didn't get it in the 1990s, they don't get it in the year 2008.

\* (11:20)

I'm very proud of the fact that we're going to leave a legacy over the next number of years.



Licensing, for the first time, full nutrient removal, phosphorus and nitrogen, and I believe, over the next number of years, Mr. Speaker, you will see a significant improvement in Lake Winnipeg, but it won't come from scrapping water regulations, it won't come from ignoring the problem or ignoring half the problem. It will only come from a government that took responsibility, took charge of it, has put finances in place, put the regulations in place. It really does come down to a choice between looking ahead to the future, making the moves today to protect our water quality or, quite frankly, the failed rhetoric of members opposite.

They failed when they were in government, and when I look at what they are doing in opposition, I expect better than this resolution. This is really one of the most fictitious resolutions I have ever seen. I'll just finish by saying, not only do we need no lectures from members opposite in terms of waste water, I would suggest they spend another few more years in opposition. Maybe they should go out and do a bit of research on this because it's the year 2008 and, yes, we've been in government for nine years, Mr. Speaker.

We get it, we're working on the problem. After eight, nine years in opposition they still don't get it. They're still opposing significant things that we're doing to save Lake Winnipeg and our lakes and rivers and streams. If you really care about the environment you will support the government of the day. You will support the City of Winnipeg, not try and engage in this rather pathetic attempt to salvage some political credibility by a party that did nothing and, in fact, if they were back in government, would not only do nothing, they would turn back the clock, get rid of water regulations, not deal with nutrient—*[interjection]* Well, members opposite talk about rhetoric.

You know what, \$235 million, three waste-water treatment plants, they will be licensed, they will be operational in 2014. They will remove phosphorus and nitrogen according to CEC licensing. That will be the NDP legacy. This resolution, empty words, will be—I wouldn't call that a legacy, Mr. Speaker. But you know what, I know what people will remember. Not this resolution. They'll remember the actions.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East):** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. It's always interesting to follow

the Member for Thompson when he waxes so eloquently about the job that his government has done since they have been in power. I'll try not to be quite as loud as he was in my comments.

Mr. Speaker, I know he talked about us having to do some research. I'm not sure we need to do any research to know that they haven't committed a penny to dealing with the City of Winnipeg's combined sewer treatment system until after 2014. They're content as a government to continue to see raw sewage from the city of Winnipeg being dumped into our rivers and partially creating the issues that we see in our lakes today.

They certainly have cherry-picked and only looked at one aspect of what is needed to happen in the city of Winnipeg to try to ensure that the city is not contributing to the significant problems of algae growth in our lakes. I don't know what part of raw sewage being dumped by the city of Winnipeg into our rivers the NDP doesn't understand. Do they not understand that it's a significant issue today, that they've been in government for nine years and they're not even attempting to address the issue of raw sewage? If the minister talks about phosphorus and nitrogen and moving ahead, he's cherry-picked those as the issues that he's prepared to deal with today. He's not prepared to look at, he's not prepared to look at the dumping of raw sewage.

It was comical in Estimates to watch the minister try to explain away why there was no money in this year's budget. We have yet to see where the money is. He talks about it being a line item. He has never indicated how much money is in that line item to deal with the issue. Well, Mr. Speaker, he pointed to a line item, he says, in someone else's budget, not in his budget, because we know there's nothing in his departmental budget. He can talk about pointing to some line in someone's budget. How much in that line in that budget is to go to the City of Winnipeg?

Mr. Speaker, all we have to do is have some minister, whether it be the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), the Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Lemieux) or the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Ashton) stand up in this House and say, in this line in the budget, there's this amount of money. We've never heard the amount of money that's been put in this provincial budget to deal with the \$235 million that they talk about as their one-third share of the commitment; \$235 million is not one-third of the amount that the city needs in

order to get rid of nitrogen, phosphorus and stop the dumping of raw sewage into our rivers.

Mr. Speaker, it's about a \$1.8 billion line. They stand up with big fanfare and say that they've put their one-third commitment of \$235 million into the City to—or they're providing it to the City in order to live up to their one-third commitment. Well, that's NDP math; \$235 million, in my mind, is nowhere near a third of the \$1.8 billion that's going to be needed.

So maybe, Mr. Speaker, they should come clean. Maybe they should stand up; maybe they should—clearly, I'm hoping that members on that side of the House will stand up and indicate today that they've tried to hoodwink Manitobans and Winnipeggers into thinking that they've actually made the commitment to their one-third share of dealing with the City's issues and the City's problems. Mr. Speaker, we know that they're nowhere close to the one-third commitment that needs to be made.

Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about the Clean Environment Commission report and I'll quote from the Clean Environment Commission report that says the commission believes that senior levels of government should assist with the cost of achieving improved nutrient management and other water-quality-enhancement measures.

Mr. Speaker, those other water quality enhancement measures talk about dealing with the combined sewer system that this government seems to think doesn't need to be addressed until phase 2, which will start sometime after the year 2014.

In my mind and in the minds of many Winnipeggers, they believe that their provincial government should step up to the table, should be there for their commitment today to removing raw sewage from our rivers, that gets dumped into our rivers several times a year. They're asking this government to be a part of that process, not to talk about it after the year 2014, but to talk about it today, put their money where their mouth is and make sure that they're taking real action to deal with the issues from the City of Winnipeg that are contaminating our lakes.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words, I'm going to stop now. I know that there are many on the other side of the Legislature, many who represent constituencies in the City of Winnipeg that want to stand up, want to put their thoughts on the record, want to support this resolution and move on with

taking concrete action that needs to be taken to fix this problem.

\* (11:30)

**Hon. Christine Melnick (Minister of Water Stewardship):** Mr. Speaker, isn't it interesting that the opposition has changed their tune on the removal of nitrogen as well?

The Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) just told me they now support the removal of phosphorus and nitrogen. I think the Member for River East also stated that, so we'll see if they might do a nice little flip-flop on their opposition to the hog moratorium because, if you support the cleaning up of Lake Winnipeg, then in the words of Bill Barlow, the chair of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board, you have to support—from our perspective, the underlying theme of the whole issue is there are many sources of nutrient loading. There are no large sources you can go after to solve the problem. You have to go after all of them as evenly as possible, which is what we're doing.

Raw sewage is not mentioned in the resolution, so this is what happens with members opposite. They raise an issue; they find out we're way ahead of them and so they try to move quickly on another issue. The reality of this is that the City of Winnipeg has not, to my knowledge, given us a plan on the combined sewer systems. We will look at that when it comes in.

We're working with phase 1 right now, which is the waste-water treatment plants, that talks about the removal of phosphorus first and then nitrogen. I understand members opposite confusion because they're not used to dealing with multi-year projects and multi-year plans, Mr. Speaker. I understand how they're confused about it.

The reality of dealing with those plans is, in the first year, you ramp up; then, in other years, there's more spending as the project is in full throttle as we see with the floodway. Then you ramp down, but I understand their confusion not having any experience with this.

When we look at the removal of nitrogen, we look at, as my colleague stated, work that's being done in western Canada and we look at Calgary, Edmonton, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Lethbridge, Red Deer and now Regina.

So the real question here is: Why do members opposite want the people of the city of Winnipeg to

have a less level of waste-water treatment than the rest of the urban centres in western Canada? I'll just leave that with them to roll around with.

Even the federal government is coming along with us. The *Regina Leader Post* in February of 2008 said that, for the first time, the federal government—their buddies in Ottawa—will be setting regulations under the Fisheries Act for municipal treatment plants to meet, due to Environment Canada's responsibility to protect fish habitats, ensuring certain compounds don't enter into the environment.

Gary Nieminen, manager of Environmental Engineering in the City of Regina, said the federal regulations coming shortly basically address the aquatic toxicity issue of it, which is in part caused by nitrogen.

Even their buddies in Ottawa are on the right track. I compliment the federal minister, John Baird, for recognizing this and the federal minister of DFO, Loyola Hearn, both of them I have very good working relationships with, for coming on with that.

If going west is a little too tough for members opposite, we can talk about science that has been conducted right here in Manitoba. Scientific studies conducted in the Assiniboine River in Manitoba show that nitrogen is limiting at low flows and, therefore, the most important nutrient for removal.

This Manitoba study is consistent with studies conducted by Scrimgeour and Chambers in 2000 in western and northern prairie rivers—so, again, the same sort of terrain as we have—in which it was concluded that nitrogen limitation is more frequent than one believed and is more frequent in streams than in lakes.

This, by the way, is a document called, ten reasons for control of both nitrogen and phosphorus. I actually handed this to the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) during Estimates just maybe five or six weeks ago. It would be helpful if she read the information that was given to her; it might help solve some of the confusion on the other side of the House, but I'm not going to hold my breath for that one.

The Member for Tuxedo talked about us not doing anything on Lake Winnipeg. Again, they're against the hog moratorium; they're against the water regulations. I guess they're against the thought that the sun shines in the day and then the moon comes

up in the night, so Flat Earth Society reigns supreme over there.

One year after the release of the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board's final report, the Province had completed or taken action on 94 percent of the some 135 recommendations, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank those who have worked so hard with us.

In the 2008 budget, we announced new resources for enhanced monitoring and inspection of septic systems. We're restricting the development of facilities, such as sewage treatment plants and lagoons, manure storage facilities and septic fields and environmentally sensitive areas. We brought in the water protection areas. We're the only jurisdiction in North America to protect all waterways across the province. First-of-its-kind legislation restriction on lawn fertilizers—we're the second in North America to do so. We have new waste-water treatment standards, higher Environment Act fines and more inspectors.

We're the first in Canada to introduce restrictions on phosphates in dishwasher detergent. We were very pleased that the federal government appears to be following our lead, Mr. Speaker. We were also very pleased that the government of Québec has brought in similar legislation.

We've committed 385 million for waste-water upgrades, 235 for the City of Winnipeg, 150 for rural municipalities. Together with matching contributions from federal and municipal governments, this will be a \$1-billion clean-up plan for Lake Winnipeg. This is following a recommendation by the Lake Winnipeg Stewardship Board, Mr. Speaker.

So, unlike members opposite, we actually listen to recommendations from people with expertise and we follow through on them, as with the CEC. But I understand the CEC was not particularly active during the '90s, perhaps, shortcomings, C-u-m-m-i-n-g-s, from one of the members opposite, the former minister.

There are new water protection areas providing no-go areas. There is, of course, the regional moratorium on hogs which members opposite are against.

Mr. Speaker, our government is the first government to invest significant dollars in scientific research, and if members opposite don't want to accept that from us, they can accept it from Al Kristofferson who says, a federal-provincial Lake

Winnipeg science subcommittee is prioritizing how to spend the \$18 million pledged by the federal government last year in new money. Very positive, Mr. Speaker.

The scientists are being given the opportunity to put together the programs. I think it's great, he said. He goes on to further say, the correct process is being followed to determine how this money is going to be allocated. I think it's wonderful. This is money that wasn't there before. You can't throw money at the problem. It's got to be spent wisely. So a leading authority on Lake Winnipeg, a leader in the Lake Winnipeg consortium and on the *Namao*, which we also fund, Mr. Speaker, is speaking in favour of the actions of this government.

We know that our government is the first provincial government that stepped up to fund the *Namao*. I remember my colleague from Gimli talking about this incredible scientific opportunity that we had here and how it hadn't been funded previously. So I want to thank him for raising that issue and for coming forward on making sure that we are funding it.

There are other major accomplishments. We heard the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) rapping the Clean Beaches Program. It's a program that we brought in to make sure that Manitobans are safe as they enjoy their summer activities. She talked disparagingly about the fact that we make sure that folks know about what is happening in their local beaches on any given day, Mr. Speaker. I think those same folks who have their families there, who have their small children there, who might have grandparents there, all sorts of age ranges and health concerns may be apparent, that they want to know the quality of the water and that they appreciate it. There are days when there has to be warnings put up, that's true, but there are days when there doesn't have to be warnings, and we want Manitobans, with our relatively short summers, to really be able to enjoy the beaches in Manitoba.

I want to give a big thank you to Manitobans who are really working with our government, who are really working to help us clean up the lake. A particular thanks to the mayors and reeves of the southern basin. We had a terrific announcement a few weeks ago around a lake-friendly logo campaign. We are working with the schools. The students will design the label. We will then bring the label out for the folks in the southern basin. I'm hoping and I'm very optimistic, Mr. Speaker, that

Manitobans from around our beautiful province will want to be a part of this label campaign because all of us want to play our part.

So, with those very few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will close my comments. I hope members opposite will have learned something from the comments given by the Minister for IGA, from the information that I've put on the record. I know that we have other speakers today who will be putting even more information on the record. It's nice to see they flip-flopped in a positive way. They are now supporting the removal of nitrogen from waste-water treatment plants. You know, miracles can happen on any given day and I think we've witnessed one today. Thank you.

\*(11:40)

**Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell):** My heart stopped for a second there. The minister who just spoke talked about miracles. I think that's the way that she has been running her department is hoping for some miracle to resolve some of the issues that she's faced in her department.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have to dwell too much in the past, but let me just say, when I listen to her stand up in this House and lecture the House on what it is she knows about nutrients and about cleaning up sewage and cleaning up Lake Winnipeg, and then you go back to her former department where today the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Mackintosh) has his hands full in trying to clean up the mess that she created, I can hardly imagine the kind of mess she will leave in this department after she has to give it over to somebody else to clean up the mess that she leaves behind.

So, Mr. Speaker, when she talks about personal attacks, I just have to look at her again and just mention the comments that she was making about the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson). I look at the member who sits in front of her, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs (Mr. Ashton) and the personal attacks he launches on individuals here when he can't really substantiate an argument based on science, based on fact, and he can't debate a resolution in this House based on what the content of the resolution is but rather then starts to attack an individual in this House.

That's their style, Mr. Speaker. That's their style. But I want to pay attention to what this resolution says because you see the NDP glom on to little catch words, "nitrogen," "phosphate," and you know those

are important elements. But, you see, that's as far as they go because those are the politically attractive words to use when you talk about nutrient loading. But there's a lot more in sewage than nitrogen and phosphorus.

Mr. Speaker, the heavy metals that are in this sewage are also impacting on the quality of the lake and impacting on the people who use the lake. But there are many other issues as they relate to cleaning up Lake Winnipeg and cleaning up the sewage that goes from Winnipeg into that lake. For years I have been talking to people who complain about Lake Winnipeg and about the quality of the beaches, and I say, well, the first thing you should stop doing is emptying raw sewage into the river that has to flow into Lake Winnipeg. That's the first thing you have to do.

Well, this government has been in power for nine years. They can't any longer look back at a former government and say, well, but you didn't do it, you know. Well, you've been in government for almost 10 years. It is time to take responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they spend money, but you can't identify how much they're spending. You ask them to identify exactly how much they're spending, and they'll tell you this is phase 1, this is phase 2, we're still waiting for the City of Winnipeg to supply us with information. But, when we try to find that money in the budget, they can't point to it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not hard for them to find the money that they can put into their party's pockets and line it with money. It's not hard to find the money to give COLA to the money that's going to be going into their party, but yet they can't find the money to put the COLA in for the retired teachers. That's really the way this government approaches things.

So, Mr. Speaker, this resolution talks about the importance of addressing the dumping of raw sewage into the Red River that flows into Lake Winnipeg. It talks about the importance of addressing this now, not later. It should've been addressed before, but this government continues to hoodwink the public into thinking that they're doing great things, but, in actuality, they aren't doing a great deal.

Mr. Speaker, and when they get caught, what do they do? Well, they blame somebody else. It's Ottawa's fault. That's an easy one. Or it's the Filmon

administration's fault, that hasn't been in government for 10 years, but it's their fault. Or it's the federal government's fault. But, it's never their fault; it's never their responsibility. It's always someone else's.

They're acting on something that they should've acted years ago: But we got more work to do; we know, but we're working at it. Yep. But what are the results?

Mr. Speaker, that's why people on this side of the House are motivated in bringing forward resolutions that call on this government to do something. They call on this government to put their money where their mouth is. They call on this government to act on things that are impacting the lives of Manitobans.

Now, you heard the Minister of Water Stewardship (Ms. Melnick) say, oh, well, now you're talking about nitrogen too, not just phosphorus. We've always talked about that, but then things that are causing the greatest problems have to be addressed first. That's what we've always said.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we understand what things have to be addressed when it comes to cleaning up Lake Winnipeg or our rivers. Now, it didn't take long for this government to put a moratorium on the hog industry in this province. I still am waiting for this government to identify, and I've asked this question many times, identify one hog lagoon that has caused a problem in our rivers. Identify one hog lagoon that has been dumped into the river in its raw form. They can't identify one. But when I asked that question about the City, can you identify how many times the City of Winnipeg has dumped raw sewage into the river, well, it's not once, it's not twice, it's not three times, it's many times. Unfortunately, it happens every year and it happens when we have a great big rainstorm. The plug is pulled and out goes the sewage into the river in its raw form.

But, Mr. Speaker, nobody is putting a moratorium on the city. Finally, when we deal with this issue, we're using a little common sense in saying we know that we can't address these all overnight. But I think the government has to put some urgency on this issue and address it in a shorter time frame than what it is doing. It didn't take long to put a moratorium on the economic engine in south-eastern Manitoba. Didn't take long to put that moratorium on with no scientific evidence, no recommendation from the CEC to do that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think that we should treat all sectors of our economy and our society in the same way. If you're going to give time to solve a problem in one area, then you have to give time to solve a perceived problem in another area, because there isn't an actual problem out there. What you've done in putting the moratorium on the hog industry isn't going to change the impact on the lake one iota. There isn't going to be any change in the quality of the water in Lake Winnipeg at all. But if you had addressed it in a different way, perhaps there could be, in the long term, a greater positive impact on the lake and on the river.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm interested in listening to some other members on the opposite side of the House. So I'm going to curtail my comments at this point in time to ensure that members on the government side can, in their learned way, express how they are doing things the right way in this province.

**Mr. Bidhu Jha (Radisson):** Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to rise this morning to speak on this PMR which is brought by the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson). She's a pretty smart woman, but I recommend to her that she should request to change her portfolio because this environment issue is absolutely, absolutely not in the agenda of the opposition party. I mean, it's a fundamental issue that we are concerned about the environment, and that side says, me too, when they see this is becoming popular. This goes back to their federal cousins when Harper said no to Kyoto. Suddenly, when world pressure came, he's trying to put some kind of a face to say, well, we are also very, very serious about the environment.

So I think that this particular resolution which speaks, and I'll read, says, "government to stop the rhetoric." I would say this resolution itself is baseless rhetoric from the opposition, with a lot of words and no substance. I think this is now, I have repeated this several times, and my colleagues who like me to speak should listen, and the Member for Russell, that I have spoken several times with my open heart and mind, but I must tell you, sir, that I have not seen, over the last five years, a resolution that has come from that side that is innovative, that has universal appeal.

Sorry, Mr. Speaker, I must correct. There was one resolution that I, in my last term, got from a member from Carman, Denis Rocan. He brought that resolution on the anti-smoking bill, but they got rid

of him because this was something that was so good that we all participated and we are all participating.

\* (11:50)

The opposition's job is, of course, to bring alternatives and ask questions so the government is alert. But the problem is that I have not seen yet any of—except the last one where I mentioned about Mr. Rocan's resolution—that brings the dimension of liking for all parties to get excited and say, yes, we can do that. It is not something that—I am sorry to say, you guys should really do more research, Mr. Speaker, that opposition side, on issues like the environment.

This particular bill on the environment is very based on science. Now, you cannot challenge science; you cannot debate science. So here we are talking about the clean-up on two elements, main pollutants, which are phosphorus and nitrogen.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) said, no, one will do. It won't do, Mr. Speaker. When you are trying to fix a problem, you have to look at the signs. You have to look at the basic data available and work on that. You cannot really make this on, well, maybe—there is nothing maybe. It is a hundred percent or no. It is good or bad. It is not in grey in terms of science.

So I would say that we are already doing—the first Ministry of Water Stewardship was installed here and now the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Minister of IGA, took the leadership. He brought some good acts. Now the new minister is doing a remarkable job, and we are working on some of the new resolutions which are first time in Canada.

I think we are very proud to see these kinds of things that we are doing, enacting new legislations such as Water Protection Act and proposed first-in-Canada Phosphorus Reduction Act, making new regulations such as establishing the first-in-Canada water protection area and proposed first-in-Canada restriction on the cosmetic applications of fertilizers.

We are also talking about—now the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) said about the hog moratorium and all. Now I must say this, Mr. Speaker, for the record, that during the last election, the Leader of Opposition would have both sides. When he goes into the constituency, he would say, no. When he comes into the Chamber, he says, no, we have—so both sides, you try to really make—in

principle, when you are opposed to something, you should stand tall and say, I oppose it. That is it.

You're talking about democracy, Mr. Speaker. Let democracy not be confused democracy. Democracy means you speak what you believe in. I did not want to bring this subject up here, but I'm suggesting that we have been talking about the issues of democracy, the right to speak and right to send. When you see—and the Premier (Mr. Doer) spoke about this and the Member for Russell should understand—in my mailbox, I got some mails, bombarded every week, election-type of mail which says the picture of the Leader of NDP and says to stop trying.

Now that was absolutely an election literature that came, paid by—the minister of industries was the address that you return on. What has the minister of industry to do with that particular letter? Because they had a budget available? So they used that, or misused that, to really have a particular advantage. Now that's what I think is the misuse at times of some of the rights given to us by the legislatures on democracy.

So I think we need to talk. Whenever we talk about a bill or an act or a resolution, we have to see what is the substance in it. This particular one has absolutely nothing, but it is just to say that we brought a resolution on environment. That is it, for the record, but it is not—it has no substance. It has no meaning.

We have given \$235 million for waste-water upgrades for the City of Winnipeg in 2008 budget. I encourage members to vote for this budget, because that is what we have done for the City of Winnipeg. This \$235 million the Province has committed reflects one-third of the estimated \$700 million cost to upgrade the three waste-water treatment plants.

The City's new estimate of \$1.8 billion, up by about, I think, \$600 million, includes \$450 million for sewer replacement. The City primarily attributes this increase to rising material and construction costs. Although general construction costs have increased, they have not increased by 129 percent in the last four years.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about such issues which are numbers and signs, you cannot debate that. The fact is we have done it. It is in the budget, and if members want to really talk more details, I'm pretty sure that information can be available to them what that's comprised of.

I think that I would say that we need to really look at what are we trying to do in terms of debating here. I am always a spokesperson for don't waste time. Let us not waste time. Let us really move. I have been seeing the last few days what's going on here. We have a lot of good legislation to pass, lots of great things to do, so we should move ahead and keep moving ahead rather than keep grinding. Filibustering is his right. Of course, it's a democratic right, but let us not do it on issues which are really not important and it's really politicking.

So I am going to say how much can I emphasize on this particular resolution that is not really worth even consideration is that we are on record for improving, and here the David Suzuki Foundation states nitrogen pollutes groundwater and can cause an excessive growth of plant life in surface water leading to oxygen depletion. So we have to look at nitrogen as also an element that we have to remove.

So I think we are on the right track here, Mr. Speaker, this side, and I'm positive that members from the opposition are equally trying to serve their constituents in the best interest, but I think at times I would say very politely that they are mixed up with their policies and ideologies. In terms of environment, there is no debate.

The Prime Minister of this country has shown his change of colours to get the popularity. So the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) is a very smart woman, she speaks very well, and I think that she should try to get a portfolio that makes her understand the policies and issues that will be good for her and good for all of us.

I don't know how much time I have left. If anyone from that side wishes to speak, I would like to say that I'm now saying thank you very much and I will give opportunity to others to speak. Thank you.

### House Business

**Mr. Gerald Hawranik (Lac du Bonnet):** Mr. Speaker, House business.

**Mr. Speaker:** House business.

**Mr. Hawranik:** Mr. Speaker, in accordance with rule 31(9), I would like to announce that the private member's resolution that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on rail line abandonment sponsored by the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Cullen).

**Mr. Speaker:** In accordance with rule 31(9), it's been announced that the private member's resolution

that will be considered next Thursday is the resolution on rail line abandonment sponsored by the honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth):** Mr. Speaker, as the MLA for Gimli I'm absolutely delighted to rise and speak about this resolution. I'm quite frankly surprised that the Member for Tuxedo (Mrs. Stefanson) would bring this forward and suggest that this is simply rhetoric on this side of the House.

I know the Member for Tuxedo has on occasion come to my home community. We've bumped into each other now and again at the coffee shop. My timing has been rather unfortunate because she usually has her latté before I've had an opportunity to offer to buy her one when I usually come into the coffee shop, but I'll be sure to do that this summer.

But the Member for Tuxedo surely must be seeing all the good things that are happening that this government has been doing with respect to dealing with the issues of the health of Lake Winnipeg because when she drives into Gimli she's driving across the construction zone that is including bringing in the sewage pipe to take the sewage from the Gimli lagoon and put it into a state-of-the-art waste-water treatment facility where after 48 minutes the sludge and the waste that is brought into that facility goes through an ultraviolet light process, and I'm told that you could drink the water. I'm not going to do that, but after 48 minutes that raw sewage is converted to water that can go back into the lake. It is a state-of-the-art facility.

So the member says it's rhetoric about what's happening on this side of the House for Lake Winnipeg. If the member goes for a walk down Gimli pier, as I'm sure she has, she sees the *Namao*. When she sees the *Namao* she knows that the *Namao* is conducting research so that we know that the work

that we do to protect Lake Winnipeg is based in science.

Dr. Allan Kristofferson, who's someone I have a tremendous amount of respect for, has been doing work on the *Namao*, has talked to me on many occasions about that research and how you have to be cautious and careful in doing a longitudinal study to make sure you have a complete understanding of the problem before you try to make decisions that might have an adverse effect on the solutions.

\* (12:00)

So you have to continue to do the research. You have to ensure that the science is sound before you make decisions on how you'd reverse the trend that had been 30 years of neglect of Lake Winnipeg, before it reached the state that it's currently at.

The member might have attended some of the festivals in Gimli as well, where the Youth Community Partnership had been out providing education on eco-friendly, lake-friendly practices, where the Youth Community Partnership—she might have seen them in the local stores, doing an assessment of products on the shelves in local stores to see how many stores are carrying eco-friendly products, whether it's cleaning products or detergents or things of that nature.

Maybe she bumped into a teacher colleague of mine who's currently working on the curriculum resource supports to help educate Manitobans about the issues that we have in this watershed and how we have to work together to restore the lake to its historic health levels from 30 years ago.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have eight minutes remaining.

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



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Thursday, June 5, 2008**

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