

Third Session – Forty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-First Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLUM, James	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
BINDLE, Kelly	Thompson	PC
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy, Hon.	River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
CURRY, Nic	Kildonan	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FLETCHER, Steven, Hon.	Assiniboia	Ind.
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Clifford	Emerson	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott	St. James	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
KLASSEN, Judy	Kewatinook	Lib.
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan	Selkirk	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Burrows	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MAYER, Colleen	St. Vital	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine, Hon.	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REYES, Jon	St. Norbert	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	Ind.
SCHULER, Ron, Hon.	St. Paul	PC
SMITH, Andrew	Southdale	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Gimli	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
YAKIMOSKI, Blair	Transcona	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	St. Boniface	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 22, 2018

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Madam Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom and know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

Please be seated. Good afternoon, everybody.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 300—The University of Manitoba Students' Union Amendment Act

Mrs. Sarah Guillemard (Fort Richmond): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Radisson (Mr. Teitsma), that Bill 300, The University of Manitoba Students' Union Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Association des étudiants de l'Université du Manitoba, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Guillemard: Essentially, we are bringing forth this amendment to the act as requested by the student union at University of Manitoba and it is to update the language as well as to provide opportunity for referenda for the student body to have more say in how the organization runs.

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

Any further bills? No. Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Good afternoon, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Department of Health, Seniors and Active Living, Supplementary Information for Legislative Review, for the 2018 and '19 year.

Hon. Blaine Pedersen (Minister of Growth, Enterprise and Trade): Madam Speaker, I'm

pleased to table the Manitoba Growth, Enterprise and Trade, Supplementary Information for Legislative Review, 2018-2019 Departmental Expenditure Estimates.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister for Sustainable Development, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule, 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

Canada Water Week

Hon. Rochelle Squires (Minister of Sustainable Development): Madam Speaker, this is Canada Water Week, and today marks World Water Day.

Water is a vital resource and something we are particularly blessed with here in Manitoba.

When we see other countries suffering devastating droughts, it serves as a reminder that water is our most precious resource. However, with the blessing of an abundance of this resource also comes challenges. We receive water from four other provinces and four states south of the border. In fact, 70 per cent of our water and 50 per cent of our nutrients come from outside our jurisdiction.

That is why our government supports an integrated and holistic approach to water management, one that balances the use of engineered infrastructure with nature-based solutions that enhance natural ecosystems' ability to solve challenges such as flooding, drought and degrading water quality, all while building resiliency to climate change.

Using green infrastructure conserves natural ecosystem values and functions that provide an array of benefits to people and wildlife. That is why our proposed Climate and Green Plan and our sustainable watersheds bill are based on it. It is also why we made an historic investment into a conservation trust.

Together with the Climate and Green Plan, our sustainable watersheds bill and our conservation trust, we will help build a foundation for environmentally and economically sound decision making

around water management in Manitoba. This will sequester more carbon. It will protect us against flooding, and it will reduce nutrients, and—as well as protect valuable habitat for fish and wildlife.

Finally, I would like to recognize Earth Hour, which will take place on the evening of Saturday, March 24th, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement which inspires people to take action to protect our planet by turning their lights off as a signal in support of energy conservation. Our Legislature and government buildings will also be turning their lights off during this hour.

Madam Speaker, I invite all members to join me in celebrating these events to demonstrate our support for cleaner water, emissions reductions and energy efficiency. These elements will help make Manitoba the greenest and most climate resilient province in Canada.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Rob Altemeyer (Wolseley): I want to thank the minister for her recognition of World Water Day and extend a happy World Water Day to all Manitobans.

On this side of the House, on behalf of our caucus, I do, however, feel that I must respectfully but firmly remind the government of many threats to our water here in Manitoba which this government needs to be paying more proper attention to. Just a few examples.

The Red River Valley Water Supply Project is being actively pursued by North Dakota just to the immediate south of us. It could bring over two dozen foreign invasive species into our waterways, and this government has said absolutely nothing about it.

Multiple laws and regulations protecting our waterways from excess nutrients ending up in our lakes, rivers and streams have been weakened or done away with all together. The city of Winnipeg remains the single largest source of excess nutrients heading into Lake Winnipeg. This government has given the city 27 years to address the combined sewer problem and provided no support to fix up the North End Sewage Treatment Plant.

And let's not forget, Madam Speaker, the enormous damage that privatizing the commercial fishery has done, in particular for the four sheds who are out over \$1 million because a fish dealer licenced by this Province walked away with their fish and did not pay them.

And, of course, we also have the remarkable controversy and crisis at Manitoba Hydro, one of our crown jewels and an element that is—an entity that is completely reliant upon water in Manitoba.

For all of these reasons, Madam Speaker, this government has a long way to go. Our environment, the water in our environment, in our homes, in our industries and the resources that we have 'harvestedly'—harvested from the water for many decades are all being made worse and not better by this government, and that just simply has to change.

Let's use World Water Day as a call to action for all of us to do better.

Thank you.

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

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to speak to the minister's statement? *[Agreed]*

* (13:40)

Mr. Gerrard: Madam Speaker, it is important that we collectively acknowledge the importance of Canada Water Week, World Water Day and Earth Hour and send a signal to all Manitobans about the concern we have for our water, for Mother Earth, for our great lake, Lake Winnipeg, and its future and for access to clean running water for all.

But spoken concerns and real action are different. In this context, I mention a lake forgotten for almost 70 years by successive NDP and PC governments. It is Lake Winnipegosis.

In 2015, Seafood Watch called Manitoba's fisheries the worst managed in the world and identified Lake Winnipegosis as the worst of the worst managed lakes. The current government has given lip-speak to eco-certification, but we have seen no progress.

The provincial government has access to some of the world's best freshwater scientists at the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Experimental Lakes Area. The provincial government has access if it will partner to extensive traditional knowledge and experience. The knowledge, tools and resources for action are here.

We look forward to the government moving beyond speech to acting to look after our lakes, particularly Lake Winnipegosis, which has suffered so much neglect for so long.

With this said, Madam Speaker, I join others to celebrate Canada Water Week, World Water Day and Earth Hour. If we do not look after our own provincial environment, who will?

Merci, Miigwech.

Madam Speaker: Further ministerial statements?

The honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with her statement.

Bisons Women's Hockey Team

Hon. Cathy Cox (Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand up in the House and recognize the remarkable achievements of the University of Manitoba Bisons women's hockey team, who captured a national title this weekend for the first time in the program's 21-year history.

It was an incredible road leading up to Sunday's championship game versus the host, university of western Mustangs. The Bisons finished the regular season with an impressive 22-6 record, then proceeded to win the Canada West conference over their rivals, the Saskatchewan Huskies. Moving on to the universal-university sport championship weekend, the ladies persevered in a heroic overtime win over Concordia to earn their shot at the national title.

And led by the unwavering leadership of head coach, Jon Rempel, a dedicated individual who has guided the women's program for the past 14 years, the Bisons were triumphant in the university sport national championship in a 2-0 shootout win over Western University.

Demonstrating all of the traits of true champions—desire, dedication, determination and an unflinching will to win—we are immensely proud of the Bisons women's hockey team for their success this season. We encourage each of them to cherish this very historic achievement with their friends, teammates and family.

And, Madam Speaker, I invite all the members in the Chamber to join us in congratulating and acknowledging the outstanding efforts of both the University of Manitoba Bisons hockey team and head coach, Jon Rempel, on winning the 2018 University Women's Hockey Championship.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Tyndall Park.

Mr. Ted Marcelino (Tyndall Park): Thank you, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker: Oh, pardon me, the honourable Minister for Sport, Culture and Heritage.

Mrs. Cox: I would like to ask for leave to have the names of the entire team post in Hansard.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to have those names put into Hansard? *[Agreed]*

University of Manitoba Bisons Women's Hockey Team. Players: Alexandra Anderson, Jenai Buchanan, Nicole Carswell, Madison Cole, Brielle Dacquay-Neveux, Rachel Dyck, Mekaela Fisher, Caitlin Fyten, Venla Hovi, Devan Johnson, Lauryn Keen, Karissa Kirkup, Taryn Kokesch, Natasha Kostenko, Erin Kucheravy, Emilie Masse, Megan Neduzak, Sheridan Oswald, Courtlyn Oswald, Charity Price, Erica Rieder, Alana Serhan, Allison Sexton, Alanna Sharman, Lauren Taraschuk, Lauren Warkentin, Jordyn Zacharias. Staff: Jon Rempel, head coach; Addie Miles, assistant coach; Lisa Peters, assistant coach; Rob Voth, assistant coach; Gavin McHale, goaltender coach; Shawn Preston, strength and conditioning coach; Mandy Los, certified athletic therapist; Ashley Matthewman, athletic therapy certification candidate; Tayte Neill, athletic therapy certification candidate; Kiera Robertson, athletic therapy certification candidate; Cora Tsang, athletic therapy certification candidate.

Mr. Marcelino: I would like to commend, on behalf of the NDP caucus, the University of Manitoba Bisons women's hockey team for bringing home their first ever U SPORTS championship.

Winning at the university level is challenging. There is strong competition that continues to improve across the country. But this year the championship title for women's hockey had the Bisons name written all over it this year.

They were the No. 1 team in the country this year and the No. 1 seed heading into the championship tournament, and I am proud to say that these phenomenal athletes refused to crack under pressure and delivered an amazing performance, defeating the Western Mustangs 2-zip on Sunday in the tournament's final game.

Leading up to the finals, the Bisons eliminated Queen's Gaels 4-zip in the quarter-finals and then overpowered the Concordia Stringers 2-1 to reach the finals, where they took the lead and never looked back.

I want to congratulate all the members of the team for such an incredible season and an amazing performance. Through consistent and hard work, teamwork and talent you have achieved your goal, and we are all very proud. You are the champions.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Burrows): Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to speak in response to the minister's statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to respond to the statement? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Lamoureux: This past Sunday, the University of Manitoba women's hockey team made history.

The team conquered the U SPORTS Women's Hockey Championship for the first time in the team's 21 years of history.

Not only is this a major celebration for the women's hockey program at the U of M, but it's a huge celebration of female athletes here in our province.

I want to thank the women on the team for sending a clear message to all of us, the message being that if you want to play hockey, go and put on some skates. If you want to play football or ride a motorcycle, go and put on a helmet. And if you want to kick some butt in the realm of competitive sports, go for it.

Whatever the sport, whatever the level of competition, we encourage our youth to chase their dreams, and the University of Manitoba's women's hockey team is an excellent demonstration of this.

In closing, we'd like to extend our biggest congratulations to the U of M's women's hockey team.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Minister of Infrastructure, and I would indicate that the required 90 minutes notice prior to routine proceedings was provided in accordance with our rule 26(2).

Would the honourable minister please proceed with his statement.

Aviation Week

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize the fifth annual Manitoba Aviation Symposium, as well as the 17th annual Aviation Week in Manitoba, which begins on Monday, March 26th.

This symposium is a component of an entire week of activities related to aviation in Manitoba and a celebration of the importance of this sector to our province.

I would like to acknowledge and recognize the considerable contributions of the aviation sector to the well-being of the province. The impact of aviation has historic, current and future significance to the citizens and residents of Manitoba.

The air transportation system provides safe, dependable transport service for goods and passengers to points throughout the province, the country and the world, including vital services to remote communities of the province. The industry continues significantly to the economic prosperity of the province with substantial numbers of high-tech and dedicated people involved in the safe delivery of air transportation.

For many of Manitoba's northern communities, air travel is the only means of year-round transportation. It is critical for delivery of supplies, connection to health care and connection beyond their own area.

The air transportation sector is responsible for the creation and maintenance of a substantial amount of employment, generating over \$200 million in annual employment income. The air transportation industry is a vital contributor to Manitoba's quality of life, economic growth, health and prosperity.

Manitoba's legacy of leadership, innovation and the pioneering spirit has contributed to Canada's esteemed reputation in the global aviation sector.

I extend my sincerest congratulations to the Manitoba Aviation Council and Central Aircraft Maintenance Engineer Association for their excellent work and contribution to Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

* (13:50)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, in honour of national Aviation Week we acknowledge our advancements in aerospace research and reflect

on the role Manitoba has played worldwide. Manitoba's highly competitive aerospace sector is the third largest in the country providing world class aerospace products and services to customers on six different continents.

Our NDP team supports a strong aerospace sector. During our previous government, we invested millions of dollars to develop the province's aerospace and aviation capabilities. We invested \$2 billion in the Composites Innovation Centre, support over 2,000 good jobs and helped pave the way for research and innovation in aerospace industries.

We invested in Tec Voc High School, allowing more high school students to begin working with companies like StandardAero and Magellan Aerospace as they earn their high school diplomas, giving them a head start in their aerospace and aviation careers and opening up career possibilities for our young students in a robust and growing industry. We believe that every Manitoban should have the opportunity to find a career that they are passionate about.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to recognize the Manitoba Aerospace Association that provides leadership and assistance to the sector in becoming globally competitive.

This government has been all talk and no action when it comes to our aerospace industry. The Province claimed it would help bring a centre of excellence to Winnipeg that would create over 150 jobs and contribute to aerospace and aviation at home and abroad. Yet, two years later, jobs for Manitoba aerospace workers have not materialized. This government must stand up for our aerospace workers and continue to invest in their good work.

During this week, they—we celebrate the success and the future of Manitoba's aerospace industry. We call on the government to make sure its future is a bright one.

Thank you very much. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Judy Klassen (Kewatinook): I'd like to ask for leave to speak to the ministerial statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have leave to respond to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Klassen: First of all, I'd like to congratulate Raven Beardy—and forgive me if I butcher her name—Robert—Robyn Shlachetka, who are Manitoba's first female indigenous medevac team. I think they deserve a round of applause.

Aviation is critical to my communities in the North. I have 11 remote fly-in communities, 12 now that Churchill is remote and fly-in only in the North, and many others that have no access. Connecting our north has never been a priority for this government, especially since we have had no movement regarding further development of our east-side roads.

How ironic that this government talks about aviation in the North, because it's this government that is moving to privatize the province's air services and sell off its fleet of 22 aircraft. This essential service should be protected, but it's being sold off so that this government can make a quick buck, and this action threatens the lives of thousands of Manitobans.

I would have hoped that the government would have done its homework before making such a drastic, heavy-handed decision. No one in government seems to care that the last time our air ambulance services were contracted out to a private company the evidence showed the cost per mission would be up to 600 per cent more than in other provinces.

This government has also not implemented the Auditor General recommendations for the helicopter ambulance program, including the quality assurance process, the risk assessment and management framework which were recommended in 2014.

But—I could go on, but I think I'll leave it there.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, I'm wondering if you could canvass the House to see if we can revert back to tabling of reports.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to revert back to tabling of reports? *[Agreed]*

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Heather Stefanson (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table The Fatality Inquiries Act, section 43(1) for the Department of Justice for the fiscal year 2017.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mike Martyniuk

Mr. Scott Johnston (St. James): Located at 1867 Portage Avenue in sunny St. James, Mike Martyniuk, master barber, is retiring Mike's Place.

"Mike the Barber" has been serving our community for 47 years and his shop has become a mainstay in old St. James.

His highly specialized skills have been in great demand by St. James residents. Lieutenant-governors, provincial, civic and community leaders have all visited Mike. His clientele includes multi-generations of families, including my own. Mike has cut my father's hair, my hair and also my son's hair. Excellent coiffure, as you can see.

Mike attributes his success to the community and loyal customers.

Mike was a charter member of the St. James Kinsmen and annually organized the skate-a-thon at the St. James Civic Centre. This fundraiser was for hockey teams, Brownies, Girl Guides, Cubs, Boy Scouts, and was always a success.

In his spare time, Mike visited many private residences and personal-care homes to give haircuts to gentlemen suffering from long-term illnesses.

Mike raised his family in St. James, maintained his business in St. James and gave back to his community.

Mike is joined here today by his wife Liz and daughter Cindy.

As well, Madam Speaker, I wish to wish him a happy birthday as today is his 78th birthday.

Madam Speaker, please join me to recognize Mike Martyniuk for all his contributions.

Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): In August 2007, the body of 17-year-old Fonessa Bruyere was found in the northwest corner of Winnipeg.

In response to the murder of Fonessa, more than 30 stakeholders, including indigenous and social service organizations, policing and experiential persons, created the Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition with the goal of identifying

gaps in social services and an end to the sexual exploitation of children in Manitoba.

SEY provides expertise on child sexual exploitation; supports national, provincial and local initiatives; public awareness; and seeks to deconstruct myths often with powerful testimonies from experiential persons.

In 2007-2008, SEY participated in a PATH session where a comprehensive strategy was presented to then-minister Mackintosh, which informed the development of Tracia's Trust. It included the establishment of HOME, StreetReach and the annual Survivors Protecting Sacred Lives Forum in concert with the Stop Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Week.

This annual forum brought together hundreds of stakeholders, students, experiential persons, alongside keynote presentations by the likes of author Victor Malarek, Dr. Sherene Razack, Swedish expert Gunilla Ekberg and one of my heroes, Romeo Dallaire. The annual forum was a huge success and provided an invaluable service in combatting the sexual exploitation of our children.

Madam Speaker, you can imagine the disappointment of SEY when informed two years ago this government would not continue funding this important initiative.

The work of SEY is a key component in fighting the sexual exploitation of our children and in addressing the factors in which the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls is predicated upon.

I offer my gratitude and I say miigwech to all the members of SEY, past and present, for their dedication, compassion and love in protecting the sacred lives of our children.

Madam Speaker, I ask if my colleagues would help me in congratulating their work.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns.

Ms. Fontaine: Madam Speaker, I ask for leave to have the members of SEY included in Hansard.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to include the names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition. All Nations Coordinated Response Network: Linda Dorge, Kim Rowan, Sandie Stoker; Ka Ni Kanichihk: Leslie Spillett; Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre: Jackie Anderson, Jacquie Leader, Tanay Little, Alaya McIvor, Tammy Nelson, Rosie O'Connor, Diane Redsky, Melissa Stone; Ndinawe: Tammy Christensen, Debbie Cumby; Project Neecheewam: Cory Campbell; Resource Assistance for Youth: Kelly Holmes; Winnipeg Police Service: Chief Danny Smyth, Staff Sergeant Darryl Ramkissoon

German Choir of Winnipeg

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize the 60th anniversary of the German Choir of Winnipeg.

We Manitobans are privileged and proud to live in a province that is so rich in heritage and cultural diversity. Our vibrant arts and culture communities offer us the opportunity to explore and share each other's customs and traditions.

* (14:00)

One example is the German Choir of Winnipeg. They not only play an integral role in the Winnipeg arts community, but they also act as an ambassador of multiculturalism at Folklorama, Oktoberfest and many other concerts throughout Manitoba and Canada.

For the last 60 years of Manitoba's history, this German choir has enjoyed the talents and support of dedicated individuals who take great pride in the culture and traditions of their rich German heritage. Together, they seek to preserve and promote this legacy through song while thousands of audience members embrace the opportunity to experience over 1,000 years of German history, culture, folklore and traditions.

The German Choir of Winnipeg was established on February 28th, 1958, as a subgroup of the German Society of Winnipeg. After 60 years, this German choir is one of the oldest performing groups of its kind in North or South America.

I extend my sincerest congratulations to the German Choir of Winnipeg; their president, Reinhold Pauls; their conductor, Christine Knackstedt; and particularly to the members of both

past, present, for their excellent work and contribution over 60 years of performing in our community.

Please join me in recognizing members of the German Choir who are here in the gallery: Reinhold Pauls, Joyce Goertzen, Margret Hillius, Gisela Wichern and Christine Knackstedt, Theresa Birkholz, Werner Birkholz, Stefan Baumstark, Hubert Konsella.

Madam Speaker, if members would join me and—danke schön [*thank you very much*].

Canadian Mixed Doubles Trials

Hon. Ian Wishart (Minister of Education and Training): On January 2nd to 7th at Stride Place, Portage la Prairie hosted the Canadian mixed doubles trials, the event that determined Canada's first Olympic mixed doubles curling team.

Eighteen teams, including numerous Olympic, world and Canadian champions, gathered in Portage for a week-long competition. This nationally broadcast event showcased our amazing city and our community's curling and volunteering spirit.

Trial champions Kaitlyn Lawes and teammate John Morris went on to represent Canada at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, bringing home the first Olympic gold medal for mixed doubles curling.

Our community was selected to host the 2018 Olympic trials by Curling Canada because of our outstanding facilities and our past history of hosting similar events.

Host committee chair Al Dahl was instrumental to the success of the local event, along with representatives from the Portage Regional Recreation Authority and several other dedicated community members.

Over 240 volunteers worked tirelessly throughout the week ensuring the trials was a positive experience for the athletes and spectators. The final legacy from this event will assist the Portage Regional Recreation Authority and the Portage Curling Club to make facility improvements and provide seed funding for future large-scale events.

The organizing committee did an excellent job to make sure that the event was successful, paving the road for successful events in the community and placing national spotlight on Portage la Prairie and surrounding region.

I ask for leave to have the names of the volunteers added to Hansard, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to include those names in Hansard? *[Agreed]*

Canad Inns Mixed Doubles Curling Trials host committee: April Brown, Heather Bruce, Allen Dahl, Larry Dewis, Rob Gemmel, Val Jones, Kerri Keeler, Dave Koroscil, Monique Laramée, Randy Miller, Dawn Moxham, Dean Moxham, David Sattler, Andy Taylor, Tracy Taylor, Hartley Vanstone, Henry Veroeven, Trent Ward

Madam Speaker: Further members' statements?

International Institute for Sustainable Development

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I'm going to rise on World Water Day to pay tribute to the phenomenal work that has been done at the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Experimental Lakes Area.

Not long ago they put up the names of five women, on International Women's Day, who had been providing outstanding work and one of these women is Diane Malley, who has done some incredible work that contributed to a better understanding of the impact of acid rain on lakes and the need to address the problems with acid rain.

One of the people who was honoured, I want to say with pride, was my daughter Pauline, who got some of her early experience at the Experimental Lakes Area doing a project there that worked and dealt with methyl mercury and she has since then gone on to be a contributing worker, scientist and contributor at the International Institute for Sustainable Development in the Experimental Lakes Area.

So I thank all those who have worked on these two amazing projects at ISD and ELA for their contribution and I thank them particularly on today, World Water Day.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to oral questions we have some guests in the gallery that I would like to introduce to you.

Seated in the Speaker's Gallery and in the public gallery we have with us today visiting representatives from Germany, France, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Croatia and the Netherlands who are here discussing trade between the EU and Manitoba.

On behalf of all members here, we welcome you to the Manitoba Legislature.

And also seated in the public gallery from Henry G. Izaat Middle School we have 55 grade 9 students under the direction of Joe Martin, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable First Minister.

On behalf of all members here, we welcome all of you to the Manitoba Legislature.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Manitoba Hydro Board Resignations

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): Madam Speaker, the Premier's mismanagement has put Manitoba's crown jewel at risk. Manitoba Hydro is the most valuable public asset that we all own collectively here, right now, and it is without a board as we speak because of the Premier's inability to meet with his own hand-picked appointees for the past year.

Now, I don't always agree ideologically with the members of this outgoing board; however, I would say that they represent the brain trust of our business community here in Manitoba. However, the Premier has decided to go against the wishes of that brain trust. In the process he is adding risk, he is adding uncertainty and he is putting our crown jewel's future in a shadow of doubt. Now, all of this because of his inability to meet or to listen or to work with others.

Why is the Premier putting his own personal issues ahead of the well-being of Manitoba Hydro?

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): The past failure to align the goals and activities at Manitoba Hydro with the needs of Manitobans on a broader basis has resulted in a massive debt problem for Hydro. The board has pointed that out. Manitobans know it as they see impending hydro rate increases due to the NDP government that preceded ours.

The fact remains, Madam Speaker, that alignment of the goals of all Manitobans with their Manitoba Hydro is critical and we will make sure that that happens better than it has ever happened in the past.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Kinew: I can tell the Premier right now that alignment will not be possible if he refuses to meet with the board of Manitoba Hydro.

It's quite simple, you know. The government and the board of Manitoba Hydro should be co-operating together to represent the interests of Manitoba when it comes to our largest public asset, Manitoba Hydro. And yet, for more than a year, perhaps closer to 18 months, the First Minister refused to meet with his own hand-picked appointees. This is mismanagement, simply put, Madam Speaker. A fundamental trait of any manager's success would be communication with those that he works with, and yet there's been no meaningful dialogue, no meetings, and the result is that the future of our largest public utility here in Manitoba is now uncertain.

Why is the Premier putting his own whims, his own desire to brush off his own hand-picked appointees ahead of the well-being of our largest public corporation?

Mr. Pallister: The future security of Manitoba Hydro as an important Crown corporation for Manitobans has never been better, Madam Speaker.

*(14:10)

The fact remains that this government understands its responsibilities both to Manitobans and to Manitoba ratepayers, and so because of that we will make sure the project proposals, which proposed to put tens of millions if not hundreds of millions of additional dollars of debt on Manitoba Hydro ratepayers, are thoroughly perused, that they align with broader goals.

That we make sure that Manitoba Hydro ratepayers are protected is of imperative importance to us. Too often in the past that security was sacrificed because of the political whims of the previous government when they pursued the bipole waste line, or west line as they called it. Hundreds of millions of waste dollars extended with no good reason. The Keeyask project, which was not recommended to be proceeded with by the Clean Environment Commission, another example.

Madam Speaker, these examples of hundreds of millions of dollars of waste by the previous government will not be repeated by this government.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: It's a bizarre answer or non-answer, I guess I should say, from the Premier.

Manitoba Hydro has no board today and the Premier stands in this House and says, never better.

Things have never been better when it comes to Manitoba Hydro, even though Manitoba Hydro is without a board, is without the organism which is supposed to represent the interests of Manitoba to direct this, our largest public corporation.

Now, again, there are many important issues that relate to the future of Manitoba Hydro: financial management, governance issues, the relationship with indigenous people, the relationship with its labour force, but perhaps most importantly, the rates that Manitobans have to pay. These are among the many reasons that the board of Manitoba Hydro asked to meet with the Premier for over a year, and did he find the time to meet with them? No, he did not.

How can Manitobans take seriously that this Premier has their best interests at heart when he can't even find time to discuss the issues they care about with the board that he, himself, appointed?

Mr. Pallister: Well, we saw bizarre yesterday, Madam Speaker. The member uses a word which self-describes his actions yesterday when he called upon me to intervene in the Public Utilities Board hearings to interfere in a rate-setting mechanism that should be respected, a due process that no member, especially not the member of the opposition, should call upon me to interfere in.

Yet, Madam Speaker, that's exactly what he proposed. But he went further and said, when asked specifically about the \$70-million discussion document, that he would pay the \$70 million.

Madam Speaker, he committed to spending \$70 million of Manitobans' hard-earned money yesterday on a proposal he has not yet read.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Mr. Kinew: You know, it's really a shame that, when the Premier is called to account for his mismanagement, he wants to blow the dog whistle, he wants to cast blame. He will do anything except take responsibility for his own failures of management.

Again, what is at stake here? Perhaps the most important issue as it relates to the average person in our province are the rates that they will have to pay to Manitoba Hydro this year, next year and in many years going forward.

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: Now, what the Premier has done by interfering publicly in a negotiated agreement with a rights-bearing nation in our province is that he has added risk and he has added uncertainty to the future of our province. Who will be left paying the tab? It will be the people of Manitoba.

It is clear that the Premier does not understand the business environment that Manitoba Hydro must operate in. Why is he interfering or at least refusing to meet with the board?

Mr. Pallister: The member opposite speaks of risk and uncertainty. There is no doubt of those things presently in respect of the rate increases that Manitobans await decisions on from the Public Utilities Board.

But if you want greater risk, do what the member opposite proposes and start having the politicians interfere in the process. That's exactly what he recommended I do yesterday to this Chamber, Madam Speaker. If you want—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: Madam Speaker, if you want to keep the rates down for Manitobans, why would you agree to sign a \$70-million cheque without knowing what you were agreeing to?

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Kinew: So, again, the board, the outgoing board of Manitoba Hydro wanted to discuss important issues such as the rates that Manitobans will have to pay to Manitoba Hydro this year and years going into the future. Could they get a meeting for the past 18 months? Could they get a meeting within the past year with the Premier? No, they could not.

Again, the right place for the Premier to have influence in the process is not at the Public Utilities Board, but rather in conversations with the board of Manitoba Hydro. However, he has abdicated his responsibility for that important relationship. In essence, he has abdicated his role in managing—or his input in managing our most important Crown utility.

Now, who will have to pay the tab—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —when these agreements are being torn up, agreements that could potentially end up in court at a much higher cost? Well, it will be the ratepayers of Manitoba.

So why should they accept an answer from this Premier, who can't even be bothered to sit down with the board that he himself appointed?

Mr. Pallister: Dozens upon dozens of points of contact with the ministers, myself, my office, with the board and the people at Hydro, Madam Speaker, but not a meeting during a rate-setting process of the Public Utilities Board.

What the member is advocating is that I should try to influence the rate-setting mechanism of what should be an independent arm's-length agency. What the member has also advocated, Madam Speaker, what he has committed to is to spend money that is not his—\$70 million of Manitobans' hard-earned money that he proposes he would sign on a proposal he has yet to read.

This is not how one secures the future of Manitoba Hydro. This is how one raids the pocketbooks, yet again, of hard-working Manitoba families. We won't do that. We have a choice and we've made that choice, to lead, to stand up and to defend the best interests of Manitoba families and Manitoba Hydro ratepayers and Manitoba taxpayers.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: There have been two instances of political inference with Manitoba Hydro this week; both of them have been perpetrated by the Premier.

The first instance of interference is in him bucking up an agreement that had already been arranged between the board and a rights-bearing nation in our province. The other instance of interference was a instance by not even showing up, was an instance of interference by him refusing to take a meeting with the board of the largest Crown in our province.

This is the resignation—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —letter signed by the chair and by every member—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —other than the member from Emerson, of the Manitoba Hydro board and what they say as the reason for them resigning is: the lack of engagement from the principal decision-maker in the province of Manitoba has made it impossible to fulfill our fiduciary obligations as Hydro board members.

How can the Premier stand in this House and defend his actions when for over 18 months he can't even be bothered to meet with the board of Hydro?

Mr. Pallister: I can explain it for the member, but I can't understand it for the member; he'll have to figure it out, Madam Speaker.

The fact remains that we're here, on this side of the House, concerned about the best interests of all Manitobans, and so when we express that concern we do so honestly, Madam Speaker.

When a proposal, not an agreement as the member describes falsely, but a proposal he has yet to read—when it comes to our attention that it is at least 40 times as large as any previous agreement ever made, okay—ever made—then it has the reasons to be considered in front of us that we take very, very seriously, Madam Speaker. It also has ramifications for other discussions we may have on other projects that are not germane solely to Hydro, such as an outlet, for example, that we propose to construct to help the people around the Lake Manitoba basin.

Now, if the member's prepared to spend \$70 million on a proposal he hasn't even seen yet, how much of a cheque is he prepared to cut to David Chartrand so we can get an outlet built out of Lake Manitoba?

* (14:20)

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Mr. Kinew: You know, when the Premier attacks me personally, I don't mind. I knew that that's what I was headed for when I signed up for this job.

But for him to try and make personal attacks against people who aren't even present in the Chamber today just to try and change the channel from his own mismanagement on Manitoba Hydro is really shameful, Madam Speaker, and I invite him to apologize not only to President Chartrand, but also to the Manitoba Metis Federation for his comments over the past 24 hours at the earlier possible opportunity.

Now, what the Premier does not understand is that, as a rights-holding nation, that the Metis need to be engaged with. In the absence of an engagement agreement there will be uncertainty and risk added to every single Manitoba Hydro project. If those things go to court the damages could be much larger than

any sum that has heretofore been contemplated. Who will be left holding the bag for all of those costs? It will be the ratepayers of Manitoba.

Why is the Premier adding unnecessary risk and uncertainty to the future of Manitoba Hydro with his damage control tactics this week?

Mr. Pallister: I'll invite the member to review Hansard, but I will do my best to repeat my question of earlier, Madam Speaker.

I asked the member opposite, if he is willing—
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: —to cut a cheque for \$70 million for a proposal he hasn't read, how big a cheque is he willing to cut to David Chartrand?

Now, that's not an insult to President Chartrand. That's a question for the member opposite.
[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Kinew: So, just to review the contents of Hansard over the past couple of days, with a blackout of leadership happening at Manitoba Hydro due to the resignation of the entire board, the Premier has chosen to personally attack me and others more than a dozen times. That's more than a dozen times more than he met with the board of Manitoba Hydro within the past year.

Now, the added risk and uncertainty to transmission projects in this province puts at risk export agreements—export agreements that are massive—to Wisconsin, an even bigger export deal—twice the size—to Minnesota, a potential agreement to Saskatchewan. If those export agreements fall through, who will be left holding the bag? It is the people of Manitoba who will have to pay with higher rates.

Why is the Premier adding risk and bringing down higher rates as a result of his mismanagement with Hydro over the past year and a half?

Mr. Pallister: You know, Madam Speaker, I accept that the member has more personal experience with personal attacks than I do, but the fact remains that if he thinks that a question—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: –honestly asked, around an important public issue is a personal attack, he has a thinner skin than he should have.

Madam Speaker, I simply asked him how much he'd be willing to pay—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister: –to get that outlet built. Because, clearly, the president of the Manitoba Metis Federation said yesterday that he would double or triple the costs of consultations and processes around the construction of an outlet on Lake Manitoba if he didn't get paid.

Now, that's not me threatening, Madam Speaker, and I am simply asking the member: he was willing to spend \$70 million on a little line that goes across less than 40 kilometres of Crown land—if he's willing to pay \$70 million for that without knowing what the proposal even says, how many millions of dollars of Manitobans' hard-earned money is he willing to spend so that we can build an outlet to protect the people around Lake Manitoba? *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: Actually, the agreement with the MMF contemplates all the damages for past hydroelectric projects within its scope, as well.

So, again, just to make this perfectly clear, in the absence of an engagement agreement with rights-holding nations such as First Nations, Metis and other indigenous groups, there is risk and uncertainty added to hydroelectric projects. Those projects that I just referred to—to Minnesota, to Wisconsin, to Saskatchewan—they are worth some \$10 billion in export sales. The Premier is now putting that \$10 billion in jeopardy through his public scuttling of these sorts of 'engagements' this week.

Now, in addition—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: –to that there is, potentially, damages which could be awarded as a result of this Premier clearly showing that there is bad faith in the negotiations undergoing with Manitoba Hydro this week.

What steps will he take to reverse this? Will he apologize to the Metis, first of all, and then will he then apologize to the people of Manitoba for adding so much uncertainty—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Pallister: Member speaks about risks, Madam Speaker. We've just expended, as people, over a billion dollars as a consequence, in the last few years, of floods around the Lake Manitoba basin—a billion dollars.

We're trying to get an outlet project so that we can stop the uncertainty and risk for the people around the basin, including a great number of Metis people. We want to make sure that they have a safer life for themselves, their children, for their small businesses, their farms, their communities, and we have been told now that the member supports delaying the project until we pay up.

Madam Speaker, we are willing and we will move forward on duty to consult as we have as a government, more than the NDP did in 17 years, in two. But we will not allow anyone to have a veto on public safety projects in this province. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order. Order. Order, please.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Manitoba Hydro Agreements First Nations Duty to Consult

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): So, again, the duty to consult, as defined by the Supreme Court of Canada requires a commitment to meaningful consultation. What the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled is that if you are not willing to change your mind about the predetermined outcomes that you set out with before negotiations, then that is not meaningful consultation.

Now, the reason why I argue that the Premier is currently engaging in a sign of bad faith to anyone who would want to engage with Manitoba Hydro is because he has clearly articulated just now that he is unwilling to change course on his ideas for how projects should proceed.

What is further—even more damning is the fact that not only will he not meaningfully consult with external right holders or stakeholders, but in the very letters and public statements indicated by the Manitoba Hydro board for their resignations they say that he won't even engage in meaningful dialogue with them.

If the Premier cannot engage with—in meaningful dialogue with Sandy Riley—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): We have tremendous respect for the rulings of the Supreme Court in respect of consultation, as well as we do in terms of the engagement that should proceed it, Madam Speaker. That's why, as a team of people on this side of the House, we have been so focused in reaching out to each and every indigenous and Metis community around the province.

We have done that work because we believe it is important to build those relationships. But there is nothing truthful, there is nothing in the advancement of truth to try to deprive future generations of their rights by trading them off, and that, before the member reads the proposal, he needs to understand is the nature of a big part of the proposal he is now defending.

* (14:30)

We on this side of the House will not defend the right of any father to sell the right of his child to vote. That is the nature of the proposal that we have had put towards us and we do not abide by that principle. We abide by legal principles well understood.

As the member is lawyering up, Madam Speaker, I invite him to consider the reality that real consultation is exactly what we're doing and exactly what the previous government failed to do on bipole, Keeyask, Wuskwatim and virtually every other Hydro project.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Kinew: You know, we've had a chance to hear the Premier's comments over the past 24 hours and, you know, I would just turn to the former board chair of Manitoba Hydro for his response to what the Premier has been peddling over the past day or so.

Now, he said simply that the Premier's claims are cynical and wrong.

So the Premier can stand in this House and spout off about whatever it is that he likes. However, we know that the business brain trust of our community has sided against him. Given the opportunity to choose between Mr. Riley and the Premier, every single member of that board, knowing full well the parameters of the situation, chose to leave the Premier and instead side with Mr. Riley.

Now again: cynical, offensive and wrong. These are the characterizations of a long-time Conservative of the current Premier.

Why is he putting the future of Manitoba Hydro at risk because of his own whims and his own inability to work well with others?

Mr. Pallister: Let's talk about our ability to work well with others for a second.

Let's talk about a mineral exploration protocol nearing development that the previous government failed to reach and that saw mining decline in our province, and prospecting as well. Let's talk about it—the advancement of a meaningful duty-to-consult framework that has been working with dozens of communities in its development stages. Let's talk about getting people home after they've been flooded out of their homes and working together to prevent that from happening again. Let's talk about Shoal Lake, getting it done instead of theorizing about it. Let's talk about 70,000 acres of Treaty Land Entitlement settlement where the previous government did none in its final four years. Let's talk about consultations of a meaningful nature on Child and Family Services. Let's talk about working hard to get the federal government to support better health care on reserve.

Madam Speaker, these are just a few of the initiatives that we've advanced as a government because we know how to work with others.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: So, again, we're talking about Manitoba Hydro here today, and we see from a mile away that the Premier is trying to change the channel by making this all about the one agreement with the Metis.

However, in the resignation letter, which was signed by every outgoing board member of Manitoba Hydro, they signed numerous important, critical

financial and governance issues that were the reasons for their resignation. They did not even mention the Metis deal by name.

They did cite concerns over the financial situation. They did cite the concern over jobs at Manitoba Hydro. And, perhaps most importantly, they cited the importance of rates and the impact that rates under this government are going to have on the people of Manitoba. And they said it's important, and I quote here, to note that notwithstanding numerous requests, the chairman of Manitoba Hydro has not been granted a face-to-face meeting with the Premier since October of 2016. End quote.

Why can't the Premier find time to discuss the important issues, such as rates, with the chairman of Manitoba Hydro?

Mr. Pallister: I share many of the concerns expressed by the former members of the board that I know will be shared by the new board members appointed in the next 30 hours or so, and I know that the member should share those concerns. But the previous administration obviously did not, Madam Speaker, because what they did was they pushed through construction of a bipole west line, which is now over four and a half billion dollars of cost, which they assured Manitobans would cost a penny.

They're over budget by—in excess of 20 per cent on the Keeyask hydroelectric project, another one which they did not see fit to put through the Clean Environment Commission hearings and then chose to proceed with without approvals.

Madam Speaker, this is the record of the previous government. Now the member cries crocodile tears about rate hikes. They're NDP rate hikes and caused by the NDP. Manitobans have the NDP to thank for them. The NDP has mismanaged Hydro, Madam Speaker, and Manitobans are forced to pay higher rates, and now the member complains about the higher rates he and his colleagues caused.

Madam Speaker: Order.

The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

Manitoba Hydro Board Resignations

Mr. Wab Kinew (Leader of the Official Opposition): So, I'm sure Manitobans will remember who was in office when the rates begin to skyrocket. It was this government.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Kinew: That's right. Now—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Kinew: Again, the—

Madam Speaker: Order. Order. Order.

Mr. Kinew: I hope the clock's not running on my question time. Thank you.

So, again—[*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Kinew: —again, the resignation letter of the board of Manitoba Hydro does make mention of past challenges with Hydro; however, they say, and I quote here: Those who become aware of the problems and fail to deal with them are perhaps equally responsible. They go on to say: The ultimate responsibility for Hydro rests with the government. Again—end quoting there—the very same government that refused to meet with the chair of the board since October 2016.

Now, we've been asking over and over again for over a day why the Premier refuses to meet, but isn't it simply because he has no good reason why he wouldn't meet with the board of Manitoba Hydro? [*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): And, of course, Madam Speaker, what the member ignores when he references the mess is the mess created that we now have to clean up. The mess was created by a government, the previous government that pursued Hydro projects without listening by circumventing processes that should be respected.

Due process should require that all those— [*interjection*]

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Pallister:—who wish to express their concerns about such projects should be free to do so. Due process should not be circumvented by an attempt to purchase away that right.

Madam Speaker, the member has said he'd pay \$70 million for a proposal he hasn't read just because, well, I don't know. He'll have to explain his reasons. He said that he'd be fine with paying a lot more to David Chartrand so that we could build an outlet. He doesn't say how much he'd pay, but he'd have to buy off a lot more groups to actually

speed up the process, and what we object to is the very idea that a government would condone such a purchase of inalienable rights from anyone.

That we would buy off people's concerns with hush money is not on our agenda. It might be on his, but it is not on ours.

Madam Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Kinew: So, again, the Premier refused to meet with mayor of Churchill, mayor of Winnipeg, federal government, the board chair of Manitoba Hydro, the entire board of Manitoba Hydro itself, those who criticized his health-care changes, those who criticized his cuts in education.

So we as Manitobans are left to consider one of two scenarios. Which is the more likely scenario that is correct here, Madam Speaker? Is it scenario A, where apparently now the Supreme Court of Canada, the federal government, the mayor of Winnipeg, everyone in the health-care sector, everyone in the education sector, the board of Manitoba Hydro and the board chair of Manitoba Hydro are wrong, or is it scenario B, where it's simply the Premier who is wrong?

* (14:40)

Mr. Pallister: Well, the member should show more respect for the intelligence of Manitobans, Madam Speaker. Manitobans want results. They don't want optical illusions. They don't want brochures with pictures with nothing in them—on the brochure. That's not what they want.

The members opposite had dozens of meetings about health care and drove it into the ground, dozens of meetings about education and drove it into the ground, dozens of meetings about Hydro and built it up at the expense of future generations for no good reason. Madam Speaker, dozens of meetings, no results.

I think Manitobans prefer results. So that's what we're after over here. While we're having our meetings, we're getting results.

Madam Speaker: Just a reminder to all members that yesterday I did indicate that any undue amount of heckling will be tracked by me, and I am starting a list. I'm giving you all fair warning, and I have a few names on the list. I'm not using it at the moment, but

I will reach a point where I will start to identify those members that are unduly causing some disruption in this House.

The honourable member of the leader—the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Kinew: Now, we know that the former minister of Crowns, the current Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler), said of Mr. Riley: it would be so unbecoming, so disrespectful for the Minister of Crown Services (Mr. Cullen) to sit at a committee and start second-guessing the work that's being done by Mr. Riley. It would be the height of irresponsibility. End quote.

And yet for the past day, when Mr. Riley has stood up and said that this Premier's actions are cynical, offensive and wrong, when Mr. Riley has said that the Premier was not prepared to meet with us to discuss them—these important issues of finance and governance—as it relates to Manitoba Hydro, and in his resignation letter Mr. Riley says that there is a lack of an ability to engage with issues on the part of the principal decision-maker in the province of Manitoba.

What are we supposed to think? Are we supposed to think that all of a sudden Mr. Riley, the leader of the brain trust of the business community is wrong, or is it simply the easier answer, the Premier is wrong when it comes to Manitoba Hydro?

Mr. Pallister: I've watched politicians for a number of years, Madam Speaker, refuse to take leadership positions when they needed to on important issues. We won't refuse to take a leadership position on this issue. We are taking it.

We are saying that a deal to pay people not to participate in a democratic process that should be assured to them is not right. We are saying that a deal that gives \$70 million for 36 miles—or kilometres, I'm sorry, of Crown land isn't fair or right either. We're saying that inflating the cost of that project, the Hydro project, will inflate the cost of many other projects as well, such as the outlet on Lake Manitoba, an important project for the Metis people in this province and to many other non-indigenous and indigenous people as well.

If the member wishes to look at who's wrong, he need look no further than in the mirror, Madam Speaker.

Laboratory Services Clinic Closures

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I welcome the staff and patients from medical clinics who are here in the gallery today.

Because of the laboratory closures in medical clinics by Dynacare, many patients, having seen their doctor, are now having to journey some distance, sometimes for 45 minutes or more, to get the blood drawn for the tests that they need.

What measures will the government take to restore laboratory services for medical clinics and to reduce costs, travel times and delays for patients and to improve delivery of health care?

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living): Madam Speaker, I need to take this opportunity. Yesterday, the member opposite said that six additional beds, in-patient mental health beds, did not exist at the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

I will table for the House a letter signed by Réal Cloutier, the interim president and CEO of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, that says, in January 2018, WRHA opened up six additional beds in the in-patient mental health unit to accommodate those experiencing significant mental health concerns. Those beds are open and there has been no interruption of service in relation to those beds.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a supplementary question.

Mr. Gerrard: Yes, and why are people being turned away, then?

My question today deals with the closure of medical laboratories, which is causing a lot of delays and decreasing health-care delivery.

What is the government going to do about these laboratory closures in medical clinics?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, I don't want to underestimate the importance of this.

Yesterday the member opposite stood on the House and he said that important beds that are there to help those who are dealing with a mental health crisis did not exist. There may have been—the public were listening. Certainly, they could have been reported on that these beds weren't in existence, which would lead people who are looking for care to not access those beds. The member's a doctor; he knows how significant that is.

I'm going to ask him to apologize for what he said yesterday, clarify it, say that he's sorry so that members of the public don't have the wrong impression left by that member, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for River Heights, on a final supplementary.

Mr. Gerrard: Yes, and the minister has to tell us why people are being turned away when they should be served.

As part of the health-care changes happening in this province many laboratories in medical clinics are now being closed and this is causing a lot of problems for patients. It's causing a lot of problems for people operating in medical clinics.

I would ask the Minister of Health: What is he going to with regard to the closure of laboratory services in many medical clinics?

Mr. Goertzen: Madam Speaker, I'm more than happy to have a serious discussion about many of the serious issues that exist within health care in Manitoba and across the country, Madam Speaker. But it's impossible to have that serious discussion if the member opposite comes to this democratic House, the Legislature, and is not putting accurate information on the record.

Yesterday, he came here and he said that six particular beds were not in existence. That is a misleading, that is a dangerous and that is an irresponsible comment to put on the record. How am I supposed to believe anything that member has to—says after his display yesterday, Madam Speaker?

Madam Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

PETITIONS

Vimy Arena

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

(1) The residents of Assiniboia, St. James, greater Winnipeg area and Manitoba are concerned with the intention expressed by the City of Winnipeg to use the Vimy Arena site as an addictions treatment facility. *[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Fletcher: (2) The Vimy Arena site is in the middle of a residential area near many schools, churches, community clubs and senior homes, and the City has not considered better suited locations in rural, semi-rural or industrial locations such as St. Boniface industrial park or the 20,000 acres at CentrePort.

(3) The City of Winnipeg has indicated that the Vimy Arena site will be rezoned from park to commercial use to accommodate the addiction treatment facility and has not sought public input from the community to consider better uses for this facility consistent with a residential area.

(4) The provincial licensing system is akin to that of a dentist's office and is clearly insufficient for the planned use of the site by the City and the Province.

* (14:50)

(5) The proposed rezoning changes the fundamental nature of the community, zoned as a park area, and the concerns of the residents of St. James regarding safety, property value and their way of life are not being properly addressed.

(6) The people of St. James are largely hard-working, blue-collar and middle-class citizens who are family-oriented toward children's and seniors and do not have the financial resources of other neighbourhoods.

(7) This type of facility would never have been considered for the popular Assiniboine Park nor Heubach Park, the park between Park Boulevard East and west, even though it shares the same zoning designation as the Vimy Arena site.

(8) The City and the Province would be setting a dangerous precedent with this process that could put other neighbourhoods at risk for future unwanted development without proper consultation.

(9) The Province needs to be inclusive in the decision-making process and improve its programs to prevent drug abuse and better supervise the provisions of drug prescriptions that could lead to addictive behaviour.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Vimy Arena site is not used as—or, for an addiction treatment facility.

This has been signed by Debra Hansman [*phonetic*], Grant Hansman [*phonetic*], Peter Chukbenek [*phonetic*] and many others.

Madam Speaker: In accordance with our rule 133(6), when petitions are read, they are deemed to be received by the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you call debate on the budget motion, please?

BUDGET DEBATE (Sixth Day of Debate)

Madam Speaker: Resuming debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen) and the amendment and subamendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for La Verendrye, who has nine minutes remaining.

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Verendrye): Any time that I can get up in this House and speak, it's an honour to be representing the people of La Verendrye. And I can see that I should have a good crowd, because even the opposition is cheering for me today. So, I will continue where I left off the other day.

Budget 2018 is important to Manitoba's future. Government's role is to provide services to Manitobans in both a compassionate and fiscally responsible way. There needs to be a balance between spending and the tax dollars that are coming in. Manitobans deserve to receive results from government spending, which is something the previous government really did not care for, that they would just spend and not really care about results, whether it be our education system, our health-care system.

The previous NDP government made promises, then broke them. Budget 2018 addresses a lot of these issues. Some of these issues may not seem as important as others to the opposition, but they're all important to our government. One of these was the—Manitoba's public safety communication network, or better known as FleetNet. This is the communications system used by fire departments and other emergency service personnel. FleetNet is especially important in parts of Manitoba where cellphone service is not available.

Communication is key in time of emergencies, and I can speak personally to this.

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

A number of years ago, back in 2012 and earlier, there was a number of wildfires that ripped through southeastern Manitoba. The previous government—NDP government knew this obsolete system needed to be replaced for many years, said they were going to and yet did nothing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they did absolutely nothing. Did they not care about the safety of Manitobans, the safety of the fire fighters, the safety of all the personnel working on these areas? Budget 2018 will make a record investment to replace FleetNet. We do care about safety of Manitobans on our side of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Budget 2018 increases the basic personal exemption by \$1,010 starting January 1st, 2019, and a further increase in 2020 for a total of \$2,020. This will remove more than 30,000 Manitobans from the tax roll.

Madam Speaker—sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, more child-care spaces. Budget 2018 adds more than 700 new spaces in addition to the more than 500 in the 2017 budget. Health care is the No. 1 priority for Manitobans and for our PC government. Budget 2018 increases funding for the Department of Health, Seniors and Active Living to almost \$6.2 billion. This is the highest level of health funding in Manitoba history. And wait times at our ERs are going down.

Sixty new full-time paramedics will be hired. I'm sure the students that are taking up paramedics in—as a career will be happy to hear that. Ambulance fees: Budget 2018 further reduces ambulance fees by another \$85 to \$340. We are on track to reach our target fee of \$250 by 2020. Another promise kept, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There are many things in this budget that I have not touched on. This budget is about keeping the promises we have made and about making Manitoba a better province. The one thing that puzzles me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the opposition constantly stands up and demands that we do something about the number of kids in care, the shortage of low-income housing, the shortage of child-care spaces and the increase in hydro rates, basically admitting that their 16 years in government is the cause of all these problems.

Just earlier this afternoon, the opposition leader said that people should be responsible for their actions. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a number of opposition members who were here the last number of years while they were in power, and yet they're the ones who created the mess that Manitoba is in. And they expect us to clean up this mess. And we will clean it up. The mess they made, we will clean it up.

When we offer solutions, they vote against us. Why don't they want to be part of a team to make Manitoba the most improved province in Canada? But I guess being part of the team is not their strong suit. They have to learn what a team is first.

Earlier, when the budget was first introduced, the opposition brought forward a number of amendments. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not be voting for any of those amendments. But I will be voting for our budget. And I would ask all the members opposite in opposition that they should vote for the budget. I mean, if they just listened to their leader, he's the one who says they should be taking responsibility for their actions. Take responsibility for your actions and vote for this budget.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Well, thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's always a pleasure to get up in this House and speak on Budget 2018. And the one question really before us as Manitobans, as MLAs, when it comes to Budget '18 is: great budget? Greatest budget. You know what, it's—that is really the matter of the debate before us here. I understand and I've listened to the speeches by members opposite, and it's quite interesting the things that they touch on and don't touch on within the context of their own speeches.

* (15:00)

I don't mean to belabour the point. I won't monopolize the time. I know there's a great deal of business that we want to attend to in the House. So, you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll just—a general, high-level overview of some of the components about the 2018 budget that I think are good for Manitobans, I think are good for the citizens of Morris, whom I have the great privilege of representing.

So we'll start in the issue of taxes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Budget 2018, the single largest tax

reduction in Manitoba's history. The crux of this tax increase—or tax decrease—is the fact that we are increasing the basic personal exemption. And, unlike members opposite, who would raise it maybe \$100, we are raising the basic personal exemption by over \$2,000 over the next two years—\$2,000 by 2020—\$2,000.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a result, probably 35,000 taxpayers—low-income, fixed-income individuals—will be simply taken off the tax rolls, people that shouldn't be on the tax rolls in the first place, people the members opposite—the NDP—had no problem taxing. But we on this side of the House say, you know what, you need that money more than we as a government need that money. And it's important that we take you off those tax rolls.

Another key component of our tax reform, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the indexation of taxation of those tax brackets. Members opposite—it's always interesting. Tim Sale, once upon a time, was their Finance critic. And, when Tim Sale was Finance critic, he would rail the Filmon government over the issue of bracket creep. He would talk about that bracket creep was the equivalent of pickpocketing Manitobans. But, of course, the NDP got into office. And what did they do in year 1 about bracket creep? Nothing. Year 2? Nothing. Three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16? Nothing. They did nothing on bracket creep.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I recall sitting in a meeting with the then-Finance minister, Greg Selinger, when he was still a member of this House before he unfortunately was turfed out by members opposite. But he told me in relation to the issue of bracket creep that their government was more interested in political credit than tax credits because if you started automatically indexing the tax system to inflation, taxpayers wouldn't give you the appropriate applause. And that, unfortunately, is the NDP legacy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also recall that—and members opposite are free to talk to the former Finance minister, whether it be, you know, Mr. Greg Doer—Mr. Selinger—they're welcome—Ms. Howard. They can talk to any of them and they can confirm this. There was a briefing note produced by the NDP government in relation to the non-indexation of tax brackets. And at that time, within about the first seven years—and they're welcome to ask for an update, and they may have the numbers and they can put those on the record—but they had fleeced from

Manitobans about a quarter-billion dollars by not indexing the tax system.

You know—and the issue about indexation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that this is not a Progressive Conservative issue. This is not a Liberal issue. This is not even an NDP issue. This is just good public policy. In fact, you know, I have no problem quoting the NDP when it comes to the issue of indexation of taxes. And I'll paraphrase the NDP on the issue of indexation and the idea of linking those tax brackets to inflation to protect people from inflation, that there was no single tax policy that would have a greater benefit to people on low and fixed income.

Now, the problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is when I say that the NDP is the author of that quote, is that it was actually the Saskatchewan NDP. And I will give the Saskatchewan NDP credit. They're the ones in that province that brought in indexation. Indexation also exists in NDP Alberta, NDP British Columbia, Liberal federally, Liberal Ontario. It exists because it is good public policy.

You know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The—on the—also on the issue of taxation, we realize how important small businesses are to our economy. In fact, just this morning I was meeting with Wildwood Transport and we were talking about their concerns and their willingness to be a partner when it comes to enhancing the safety of all traffic along that south perimeter. I was proud to join my minister and our Minister of Infrastructure (Mr. Schuler) to announce the first roundabout on a provincial highway at intersections 2 and 3, something that had been called for, for years.

I had talked to the reeve of the RM of Macdonald. They said they had talked to the previous administration about this and they simply couldn't get them to agree to it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, despite 10,000 vehicles a day going through that intersection, despite multiple accidents, probably despite the STARS air ambulance being on scene probably on average of once a month. The NDP refused to take actions on that, and I am proud that our government, our Minister of Infrastructure, announced that the public tendering of a 2-3 intersection roundabout will proceed within the next few weeks and, as well, we have looked at the larger issue of taking action on the number of uncontrolled intersections along that south perimeter.

Today we have some 26 uncontrolled intersections, Mr. Deputy Speaker, something that

only adds to the number of accidents and to the number of near-misses that occur on a daily basis.

But, again, these are files that are not expensive, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These are files that simply require a willingness to take action, but we have seen, under the former NDP, where were their priorities?

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, their priorities—you know, one of my colleagues indicates Tiger Dams—absolutely. You know, untendered contracts and kickbacks to their friends was part of that—*[interjection]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Martin: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I remember one time when the entire NDP caucus all got in their vehicles and they all drove outside of the city of Winnipeg and they went and they had themselves a mediation. They had an all-day mediation. So, instead of doing any government business, instead of, say, lowering ambulance fees like this budget does from that national high that we inherited of \$500 per ride and down to \$340—*[interjection]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I'm having a hard time listening to the member on his speech, so if everyone can lower their conversations or take it to the loge.

Mr. Martin: —from taking that ambulance fee, which was at a national high of \$500 inherited by the former NDP government, who simply didn't care, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and Budget 2018 continues that downward trajectory, fulfilling our commitment to reduce them by half, and I congratulate our Minister of Health who has taken it from \$500 down to \$340, and I have no doubt that he will achieve that goal of \$250.

But that reduction in ambulance fees, that wasn't a priority for the NDP. No; that was—their priority was let's all get together and let's see if we can even get along. Let's see if we can even talk civilly to each other.

So how much government business went on during the mediation? None, Mr. Deputy Speaker, absolutely none. So then they think, well, what other priorities would the NDP have had? What would have prevented them from lowering ambulance fees, investing in scholarships, indexing the tax system?

Well, apparently, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they spent an inordinate amount of time suppressing

women who had issues of harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual assault while they were in government. In fact, if I believe—I believe the terminology in the policy of the NDP that was suggested by one of the victims of that government was that they were told to, and I quote, to suck it up. That was the NDP policy towards women, and an unfortunate policy.

Now we hear the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) says, you know, he wouldn't want any, you know, any daughters and sisters and women working for their caucus unless they felt safe.

* (15:10)

Well, I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, given the ongoings that have come out in the news during their 16-year tenor—tenure, where women who brought forward issues of sexual harassment, where women brought issues of sexual assault, they were constructively dismissed. They were put down in the basement.

It was so bad, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that one individual reported that she simply stopped showing up for work for four months and no one even noticed. No one even bothered to check on this woman, this woman who was sexually assaulted by an NDP Cabinet minister. It had gotten so bad under the NDP that civil servants wouldn't even meet with some of them—some of those Cabinet ministers across the way, unless doors were left open.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a lot of problems and a lot of rot across the way. And yet not one of those members got up and talked in their budget speech about the important investments that we are making, in terms of not only reinvigorating a policy and telling all employees, men and women, that there are no wrong doors. But we are making critical investments and enhancements when it comes to issues of women, violence against women. We are partnering with groups.

I had the good fortune to be with my colleague, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we made an announcement about some additional investment to help women who are victims of domestic abuse. It was a breakfast in which our government partnered with the Blue Bombers as they continue their efforts to be ambassadors against domestic violence.

And it was, you know what, it was interesting observing some of my colleagues across the way,

Mr. Deputy Speaker. A couple of the NDP MLAs were there, and I remember the minister for the Status of Women said the most important thing we can do as individuals is believe her, believe the woman when she comes forward. And so the members opposite, the NDP MLAs that were in attendance, they clapped, they clapped and they nodded their head. And, yet when it comes to believing women, that is the last thing that they do.

I mean, they clearly showed that in their 17 years to the young women that worked for them, the young women that they harassed and that they assaulted, it would appear on a regular basis, the civil servants said that worked for them, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We see that in relation to the—how they handle Ms. Hart. I know the member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine) has referred to that incident of violent domestic abuse and even threats of death, as a unfortunate incident. And so I'm not completely surprised that members opposite, when they had that opportunity to stand in the House and talk about our government's investment, and their support of that investment, to protect women, that, indeed, they weren't silent.

One of the other things that Budget 2018 does, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is it increases that small business threshold from \$450,000 to \$500,000. Now I had said when our Finance Minister first, you know, announced our proposal to do this, I thought, well, I thought the former NDP had done this.

And so I took a look, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In September 11, 2011, there's Greg Selinger and Drew Caldwell, you know, and there they are at a restaurant in Brandon and the provincial NDP promised today, on September 11, 2011, to take another 3,000 Manitoba small businesses off the tax roll by increasing the income threshold to \$500,000.

Now, so I took a look, I thought, you know, mistakes happen; so I took a look at the 2011 NDP budget and, nope, they didn't increase it then. Maybe the 2012 budget, maybe they increased the threshold there and I missed it. No. The 2013 budget, must have missed it. No. The 2014 budget, still not. The 2015 budget. No. Even their 2016, quote, unquote, financial update, Mr. Deputy Speaker, still nothing.

So here is the NDP telling small businesses you can count on us, you can count on us to take you off the tax rolls. *[interjection]* You can believe in us

because a promise made is a promise kept, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Martin: And despite that, budget after budget, opportunity after opportunity, to actually fulfill that promise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, made on September 11, 2011, they never did.

And, in fact, it took the election of PC government to make sure that that small business threshold here in Manitoba was the same as any other jurisdiction, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I, for one, am proud that we have been able to achieve that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have talked about infrastructure and how infrastructure can tie in with education. Our government is not ideologically bent so that we are not willing to consider all opportunities. I know our opportunity to take a look at P3s, but again we looked, we investigated and we made the determination that by a slight tweaking and a reform of the traditional method we can actually get more bang for a buck. And our Minister of Education has recently announced the construction of five new schools.

And just this Friday coming up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will have a sod-turning in the town of Niverville for their new high school, a high school that has been needed for years. And yet the former NDP again, because they were too busy with mediation, they were too busy suppressing the rights of women, too busy fighting each other, couldn't have been bothered with.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, three and a half minutes is not simply enough time. If the House is willing to give me unlimited leave I'm more than willing to talk at great length about 2018 budget, about the wonderful things in it that will help Manitobans not just today but for generations to come.

I urge all MLAs to look at this budget and recognize the importance it has for continuing to build that foundation to financial stability so that the budget today can make sure that we have the services for tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Brian Pallister (Premier): I am honoured to rise in my place to add my comments to the record in respect of this amazing budget.

I want to congratulate our Finance Minister, our Treasury Board members, the members of our fiscal stabilization committee and all caucus members on this side of the House for their contributions. But I must go further than that, if I could, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and say a thank you, a special thank you and a sincere thank you to all Manitobans who participated in record numbers in our prebudget consultative process, who came out to the meetings that our members on this side of the House hosted that decided to let their voice be heard and were encouraged by us to make sure that they do that and do it many, many times in the future because this is truly a budget made by Manitobans and for Manitobans.

I wanted to, before I begin my comments pertinent to the budget, if I could, wish very best to the member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer). I understand earlier this week announced his intention leave this place after his term this time. This is not an easy decision. Others here, myself included, have had to go through that process of making that determination. I want to wish him the very best, he and his family. I know that he'll take every experience he's gained here over the number of years of service he's given in his life ahead, and I know that he'll focus, as he always has, on the best interests of the people he wants to serve.

So I wish him all the very best. And, Madam Speaker, I do look forward to wishing other members opposite similar best wishes.

Madam Speaker, I can't help but reminisce a little bit as we speak about this budget. It is an accomplishment in just less than two years of government. But it does give me cause to reminisce a little bit knowing that the member for Wolseley is departing. I reminisced on my time with my wife deciding whether or not to get into politics in the first place, another difficult decision-making process that each member here has had to make in their own lives. And to say that what gives me particular satisfaction today is the fact that the very reason that Esther and I decided to enter public life was to try to make a positive difference.

* (15:20)

I know that sounds perhaps as a general wish, but I think it's a wish we all share here, a wish to do something good for the people of Manitoba, to accomplish something that matters, that helps people, that helps them in their homes, that helps

them in their businesses, that helps them live a better life and that leaves this province better than we found it.

These are all goals I think every one of us share, and I do believe very strongly that this budget puts us in a positive direction to achieve those goals. I think it is a great accomplishment, and I say, again, Madam Speaker—or Mr. Deputy Speaker, I apologize—that it is—in my 20-plus years of service, this is frankly one of the proudest periods of my service because it is a culmination of so much work, so much effort, so much listening and so much genuine preparedness for a better future for this province.

I reminisce also because—I think I've shared with some of you but I will share again—our first election night. Esther and I made the decision to enter public life because Portage la Prairie was in the process of—some said dying—losing two of our major employers within a very short time. Our Campbell Soup plant, our air force base was announced as closing. These are—maybe it doesn't mean much to people from Toronto, but to people—and I know many members can relate to this—to people from a mid-sized community, when you lose two major employers and hundreds of jobs, that's a major thing.

So for us this was a difficult decision, but we made the decision. There was a by-election in Portage la Prairie. We entered the nomination contest—those are interesting and I've had a few of those—and then entered the subsequent election race, and it was a by-election—I think the old riding Crescentwood, if you remember Avis Gray, a Liberal member. Her colleagues aren't, unfortunately, congratulating her right now, but the fact remains that those were the two by-elections held that same night.

Now the premier and Janice Filmon were in the room. The—as all of you can relate, I think, who've been in a campaign, perhaps not most recently but in earlier days we used to put up papers on the wall with the numbers and phones would be ringing and poll results would be entered on these papers and the drama continued through the night. Your volunteers were there and it was exciting for them, and for me it was a first-time experience. A scary thing mixed with excitement, and as the evening went on it became apparent that we were moving ahead a little bit and I think we ended up with 52 per cent of the vote or something that night.

Just before they announced I had won, I felt a tap on my shoulder and I turned and it was my father, and he looked at me and he took my hand and he said, son, congratulations. If you leave politics with your integrity and your family intact, you'll be a wealthy man for the experience. That probably took him two weeks to write on the tractor seat. That's beautiful, beautiful advice for all of us here to remember. Tell the truth. Fight hard, but tell the truth, and that integrity, I think, is inherent in this budget. It is so present in the intent, but in the execution we will prove the integrity of this government. What is integrity but keeping your word?

I want to say a thank you. This past year has been a special and challenging year in our family. A thank you to my wife, Esther, our children, Quinn and Shawn, for their support and love. Each of us knows how important family is and we understand that without that family support it's not only difficult, but I believe impossible, to find fulfillment in this work. There are great challenges for families. It's important that we remember to keep the family intact. For us, in this past year, with palliative care extended to Esther's mom for many months, a lost hiker in the family, repairs undertaken, it has been a challenging time. I have found new ways to love my wife and children. I am happy about that, but I am so happy for the people of Manitoba that we are proceeding to keep our word in respect of the three things we promised to do: fix the finances, repair the services, rebuild the economy.

Madam Speaker in the Chair

The only thing bigger—my grandmother used to tell all her grandchildren repeatedly, the only thing bigger than love is trust. And I was disappointed—and, I must say, I was very disappointed to read on the front page of a local newspaper that the—one of the members of Parliament was being interviewed at a Chamber of Commerce gathering and he said that what the federal government was doing in respect of running deficits and having no projections on how to balance the books—after promising it would balance the books—that that was—he described it as courageous. If that's courage, then the previous NDP government's the bravest government in the history of Manitoba.

There is no doubt that it would be wrong for us to throw a big party and celebrate things and then take the bill at the end of a wonderful night together and put it on the high chair and give it to the baby.

That is exactly what the previous government did when it came to the finances of this province. They doubled our debt in just six years. Doubled our debt in good times, Madam Speaker. Doubled our debt when interest rates were at their lowest level in the history of interest rates.

There is nothing less courageous than that, Madam Speaker. And the fact remains that this year, for the first time, with all the good news is mixed some reality. And that reality is that we will, as people in this province, be responsible for paying more than \$1 billion of debt-service costs. And that is not a legacy we want to leave our children. Not on this side of the House, not ever. No bill to the baby in the high chair.

Two years ago, we inherited a mighty mess and a mighty challenge, but there are a great many people on this side of the House, Madam Speaker—and opposite, now—who are ready to face that challenge, who are up for the challenge of cleaning up that mess. You don't often get credit for cleaning up a mess, but I've used the analogy before so I won't torture it, of the Manitoba social. You all know it. People stay, they stay after the fun's been had, with the cheese on the floor and the salami on the shoulder and the chips are laying around, and they clean it all up. And they do it because it's the right thing to do and because they want to leave that hall better than they found it. That's how we're going to leave Manitoba as a government; better than we found it.

There are always mythologies, Madam Speaker. And certainly, in opposition—the members opposite are experiencing the challenges now of being in opposition. They have to resort to mythology because they don't have enough facts to criticize us. So they use the myths. They use the myths. For example, the myth of cuts. So the budget in Health is up by over 10 per cent in the last two years. It's, I believe, approaching \$600 million more than the NDP government ever invested in Health. Yet, the myth persists.

And, Madam Speaker, it is a myth because, of course, as we know a greater investment in dollar terms are being made. But the important thing is to understand greater value is being derived from those investments. That is the key thing Manitobans understand. Manitobans have to do more with less. They understand that just spending more doesn't solve a problem, it often makes it worse.

More paramedics—60 full-time positions for paramedics to move from an on-call model of care to full-time staffed model of paramedic care. Congratulations to our Health Minister.

Lower ambulance fees. An ambulance fee that has been the highest in the country is moving down, down and down. We will make it half of what it was under the NDP, and seniors and those who need ambulance services all over this province are thanking us already. But wait 'til we get it down even further.

Expanded access for renal dialysis. We've got more capital projects going on. Newborn screening program—Madam Speaker, I know that you were a promoter of that program, as was—can I say Leanne Rowat? I can say that now? Leanne Rowat, an ardent promoter of that—and advanced a private member's bill, I believe, through this place. And that should serve as an example for all members that—even the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway)—that even private members' bills have a chance to succeed, regardless of whether you put NDP on your signs or not.

* (15:30)

Over—Madam Speaker, these are critical advances in health care. I just touch on a few, but I think it is important to understand because it is the No. 1 priority of Canadians and of Manitobans that we must continue our efforts—our fight with the federal government on the issue of declining health-care support. As a percentage of our budget now, a federal government that once committed to 50 per cent, dropped to 25, is now below—or around 19 per cent. But it will drop further as a consequence of those declining investments by the federal government.

This is the wrong way to go about things, Madam Speaker, and we need to continue to advance the right way of doing things. I encourage members opposite, I encourage the Liberal members in particular, to please join with us and urge the federal government not to continue to do what they did in the '90s when the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) participated in those deliberate and drastic cuts to health care. Don't let it happen again. You don't want that to be your legacy. That is not something you want to stand up against; it is something you want to support. A return to a reasonable percentage of contribution on health care by the federal government is logical and reasonable.

I look forward to the election of non-Liberal and -NDP governments in other provinces so we can get allies who will stand up against the wrong practices of the federal government in this respect, Madam Speaker.

You know, Madam Speaker, much has been said by the members opposite, and some of it of little substance. One of the things that is of little substance is the myth of layoffs—the myth of layoffs. We have used retirement—there is no doubt about that—to try to bring down the size, the overall size, of the civil service. And the reality is that we inherited the largest structural deficits of any province as a per capita expenditure for our province.

And so the reality that must be faced, Madam Speaker, that we cannot sustain our government when a billion-dollar deficit is the norm and when we're on a course, according to the Treasury Board officials who briefed me just two years ago, to \$1.6 billion of deficit next year if we don't keep any of the NDP promises. That was the advice we received from Treasury Board officials.

To now see where we have come, to have reduced the level of the deficit almost by half in two years—less than two years—I think that's an incredible accomplishment. It speaks to the achievements of our team on this side of the House mightily, Madam Speaker.

We also have announced the largest tax reductions in the history of the province of Manitoba, and this, is—mister—oh, Madam Speaker, you're back—is a major accomplishment that the people of Manitoba, I know, appreciate.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, that we will raise the basic personal exemption in just our first term by a full 20 per cent more than the NDP did in four terms. To put that in perspective, that's an increase of \$2,020 by 2020, our sesquicentennial, and that's something worth celebrating in addition to all the other wonderful blessings we will be celebrating that year.

You know, \$2,020 may not sound like much to some people, but where I come from, and the life I've been blessed to have, I've had many experiences with running out of money before the end of the month. And I understand what that's like. And leaving money on the kitchen tables of Manitobans is not a small thing; it's a big thing. You know, we have over half our households in Canada that have less than

\$200 of disposable income at the end of the month. Consider that. Really consider that, and consider how important it is to help them in the face of other real challenges that they must endure.

Now, there's a triple threat right now to households across Canada—a triple threat. You've got higher NDP hydro bills that are hitting here harder than most provinces, and that is a big issue for Manitobans. You've got higher taxes federally and locally that are going to take more money off that kitchen table, and that \$200 at the end of the month becomes \$175 or \$150 or \$125. But add to the mix, if you're leveraging, if you're borrowing money, if you're—you've got loans for your house, your home mortgage—and think about how that's going to impact when that mortgage comes up for renewal. And those interest rates aren't going down; they're going up. Projections are they'll continue to rise.

And ask yourself, who needs help here? And I say it's low- and middle-income Manitobans that need help. And that's why we're doing the right thing by doing the broad-based tax breaks for our families across this province, because everybody's going to have to pay more but, especially, as a percentage basis, it'll be middle and lower income Manitobans that need the help. This budget helps those families, and I'm proud of that because a strong family is the basis of a strong society.

Madam Speaker, I am very proud of the team of people that I get the chance to work with and I feel truly blessed to work with the members of this caucus, and I want to say a special thank you to them for their support for my family and I in our last trials and tribulations, for their support on an ongoing basis, for their ideas, for their friendship. It means a tremendous amount to me and I never take it lightly. But I also want to say to all members of this House, I respect what you do and I respect the fact that you are here and you care, and that is important because we all have a role here and I encourage all members to work together as much as we can. I know there is a tendency—and I have been in opposition much of my public life—and I know there is a tendency to resort to grievance. I know there's a tendency to work towards pessimism. I know there's a tendency sometimes to see the glass, well, as half empty. But this is such a beautiful province with so much potential. There are so many things we can accomplish together and I sincerely invite members to work with us on this side of the House to achieve these things. We can achieve them together better than we can separately. This is the best country in the

world. It's the best province in the best country in the world. It's the best time to be alive, and let's celebrate that together.

My brother and I used to fight a lot, and that hasn't changed much over the years. We're less than two years apart and sibling rivalry running amok is probably a good way to describe our relationship some of the time, but he is a person who cares in his own way. And I was arguing him when I was a young man on the farm as was our custom. I think we were—I think we were throwing bales together at the time, actually, and singing Beatles tunes, and then we decided to argue instead. And my grandfather heard us and he came over to us, and he said it's okay, fellas, it's okay. And I said, how's it okay, Grandpa? He said, it's okay because if two fellas are always in agreement, one of them ain't thinking.

We're going to have our disagreements. We have, we will continue to. But I hope we always temper that with a balance of respect. I think that's an important thing going forward and always. There are times when all of us ask whether it matters. There are times when we question our own ability to change things. I found a piece of prose from a book that my grandmother gave me that inspired me. So I thought I'd share it with all of you and I think it's important not just for us here, of course, but also for people in our communities who ask themselves whether they matter and whether they make a difference too. You know, in my life I've seen so many times how citizens have made a difference, how banding together in a community has changed that community for the better. I saw it in Portage la Prairie when we saved the base, you know. I saw it, as well in The Pas. It's tremendous what people can do to make a difference.

You say the little things that I—the little efforts that I make will do no good, they never will prevail to tip the hovering scale where justice hangs in balance. I don't think I ever thought they would, but I am prejudiced beyond debate in favour of my right to choose which side shall feel the stubborn ounces of my weight.

Here in this Chamber are people who have made the decision to use their weight to advantage, to do their best to influence the outcomes of issues. I think going from this place we must also try to instill in the people we come into contact with that same faith, that same confidence that they matter, that their voice is being heard.

The member for Burrows (Ms. Lamoureux) has a father who I admire for that very thing. He goes to his community and he finds ways to empower his people. He's a hard-working Member of Parliament and we are here surrounded by hard-working members of the Legislative Assembly, but perhaps sometimes we doubt whether the people in our communities can really make a difference. I do not doubt that. I know members on this side of the House do not doubt that. I expect members all around this House must not doubt that.

Manitobans are the most caring people in the country of Canada. They are the most charitable. They are the most likely to volunteer for a worthy cause. They are people who love and care deeply. This is the best province in the country of Canada, bar none.

* (15:40)

We have done our work thus far to make progress on fixing the finances. We have focused on improving the services and we are making every effort to rebuild the economy. I am so proud of the work of many of our colleagues, but I want to single out for a commendation today our Ag minister.

Our Ag minister has worked diligently to attract opportunity in this province and he's found success. He's been able to—quit it—he's been able to coordinate the achievement of investments in value-added agriculture in two major projects in Manitoba: a new pea-processing plant, a new potato-processing plant. These are two things which, if you say them fast, don't seem like much, but you shouldn't say them fast because we're talking about close to a billion dollars of overall investment. That's tremendous.

What was a bit of a problem for Manitoba in the past was the overbilled and overdependence on the public sector as the measure of economic progress, and so it has been something of a change to see a government focus on enhancing private sector investment, but it is critical. We can only get so big on the public side and people can only afford so much in taxes.

And so the private sector's partnership is critical. The private sector capital investment growth in Manitoba in the past year was second in Canada, and in 2018 it is expected to be the highest in Canada, according to Statistics Canada.

There's no better definition, in my mind, of a job than three words: capital at risk. I am not going to

stand here and take credit for a wonderful year on the farm, but I am really pleased because I believe when farmers do well in this province, a lot of other people do darn well, too. And last year was the total—the total farm cash receipts last year grew by 8.8 per cent, and that was the highest year-over-year increase in Canada.

And there's a lot more capital out there that's going to be put at risk with the initiatives we're undertaking—reducing red tape, getting barriers to investment out of the way, making sure we protect the environment but don't do it with seven different pieces of legislation that say the same thing. Do it with one people can read and abide by. That's how we build a stronger private sector in this province. These are the kinds of results we need to achieve.

Retail vehicle sales—best in Canada. Truck and SUV sales—up 61 per cent in January of '18 compared to January of '17—best in Canada. Past year motor vehicle sales—31 per cent in January '18 compared to January '17—best in Canada. Second among provinces in international exports, second highest in Canada on international exports.

Now, let's talk about that for a second. You know, the NDP has a position on trade. It's called the Leap Manifesto. You know what it says? We're against trade agreements. I don't—I hope I don't hear the NDP leader get up and talk about his concerns about NAFTA. The only concern he has about NAFTA is that there is a NAFTA. He doesn't want a trade agreement because he doesn't support agreement. He's a 'signator' to the Leap Manifesto.

The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Lindsey) should be more concerned about that because if he's read the Leap Manifesto, and I encourage him to google it, he'll find it also says that resources should stay right in the ground.

I'd be concerned if I was him, but he shouldn't be concerned too much because this government doesn't believe resources should be left in the ground, so we're developing a mineral protocol, mineral exploration protocol, and I encourage the member for Flin Flon to get on side with that. It's going to help, it's going to build—it's going to help build the North. It's going to create jobs.

Capital spending in new residential properties increased by 33 per cent last year, Madam Speaker. That's the second highest among provinces; capital investment in industrial properties by 29 per cent, second highest.

Residential investments: I don't mind us being second, Madam Speaker. It just makes you try harder. I mean, I'm as motivated by us being second as I was when we were 10th under the NDP. I am and I think our government is too. We strive for excellence. We can improve and we are improving every single day.

But my favourite stat, Madam Speaker, of all of these—and they are good—is personal income, because Manitobans had the highest increase in average weekly earnings among all the provinces and the highest in Manitoba since 2014. That's excellent.

Now, some will say, well, if it's so darn good, why would you lower taxes? I know the NDP's thinking that right now. Why don't you spend it all? Why give it back to the people of Manitoba? You could just spend it. You could just spend it.

Well, actually, see, Manitobans understand what the NDP never has understood: balanced budgets matter. And that's why I'm so proud of our Finance Minister for achieving that reduction in our deficit, but I am also proud of the fact that we are ahead of schedule to achieve a balanced budget a full two years sooner than we had thought two years ago. That is a tremendous accomplishment that will allow us to then begin to whittle away at the massive NDP debt before interest rates go up, so we can get down below \$1 billion of debt service costs. Because right now we have a billion dollars we can't spend on roads and health care, the things that matter most to Manitobans, because, well, the NDP must have a lot of friends in the money-lending companies in Toronto and New York City, because they're sure happy with the NDP.

I want to tell you that the bond-rating companies that the member for Fort Garry-Riverview (Mr. Allum) says are a myth and that don't exist, do exist and they did give a credit-rating downgrade to the previous government—three, in fact.

Now, I heard from the NDP leader earlier today, he said he didn't care that the Hydro rates go up because he could blame us for it. That's what I heard him say. Well, by gosh, I don't think that's a responsible position to take at all. I really don't think so. I think that's irresponsible. I think the member should be accountable and he should accept responsibility.

Although he and the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) may not want to put the NDP on

their signs or literature, it doesn't mean they should totally ignore the record of the previous government, because if they do that it means they don't learn and if they don't learn from their mistakes, Madam Speaker, Manitobans should be scared of them because they'll repeat them, won't they? Given the opportunity they'll do the same thing again. Spend us into debt, tax us—or you know, basically just mismanage the affairs of Manitobans so we're 10th out of 10 in every category. That's not what Manitobans deserve. It's not what they want, it's not what they need and it's not what they're getting from this group of people right here.

Madam Speaker, I know that the members opposite would like me to conclude and so I will.

I would say, finally, that it has been a full 25 years and 10 days since my father passed, and as I reflect I am fortunate to have known him. In seven years—if I live that long—I will have lived half my life without him, but I will never forget him. And as long as I live I will be his legacy, and as long as our children live they will be ours.

And so we should concern ourselves with what we leave behind, should we not? We should concern ourselves with what we build here today because what we do today—or do not do—has consequences as we move forward.

It is an honour to serve the people of Manitoba and to serve them well is the goal that we share here on this side of the House.

And so I say to Manitobans: thank you. Thank you for their example. Thank you for their support. Thank you for their donations of time and of money, because this matters in political organizations, especially in those that don't take a vote-tax subsidy.

And the fact remains, Madam Speaker, that our greatest inspiration is Manitobans themselves. Their work ethic, their willingness to sacrifice, their willingness to do the right things not just for today, but for always to support the concept of giving back and to demonstrate their belief in it. Manitobans, you are our inspiration here.

Thank you.

* (15:50)

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is a proposed subamendment of the honourable member for River Heights.

Do members wish to have the subamendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the subamendment?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the subamendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

I declare the subamendment lost.

Recorded Vote

Madam Speaker: The honourable leader of the—honourable member for River Heights.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): A recorded vote, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Does the member have support of three other members for a recorded vote?

A recorded vote having being called, call in the members.

Order, please.

The question before the House is the proposed subamendment of the honourable member for River Heights.

Division

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

Yeas

Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Smith (Point Douglas), Swan.

Nays

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Yakimoski.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 15, Nays 38.

Madam Speaker: I declare the subamendment lost.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The question now before the House is the proposed amendment moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Do members wish to have the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: I hear a yes.

The proposed motion of the honourable member—of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition and amendment thereto as follows:

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after "House" and substituting:

therefore regrets that this budget neglects the priorities of Manitobans by:

- (a) breaking the Premier's promise to protect front-line services by making deep cuts to health and education despite unprecedented new revenues from the Premier's gas tax; and
- (b) continuing the Premier's attack on the health-care system by underspending the health-care budget by \$175 million, freezing acute-care services, cutting long-term-care supports, doctor recruitment programs, mental health and addictions services while wasting millions on endless reports by high priced consultants; and

- (c) cutting funds for Pharmacare, even though there is a unique opportunity right now to pressure the federal government to invest in a true universal national pharmacare program; and
- (d) underspending the education capital budget for K-to-12 by \$81 million and failing to keep school spending at least up to the rate of inflation; and

* (16:00)

- (e) cutting post-secondary education by millions while increasing tuition rates for parents and students and planning critical changes to Student Aid that could limit access for thousands of students; and
- (f) failing to provide a comprehensive jobs plan that gives more families access to good paying, non-precarious jobs, cutting supports for apprenticeships and training while standing idly by as Manitoba's unemployment rate rose to become higher than the Canadian average for the first time in a generation; and
- (g) cutting over \$150 million in infrastructure spending, 25 per cent of the flood protection budget with no mention of the town of Churchill or supports for mining jobs in the North; and
- (h) forcing regular Manitoba families to pay hundreds of dollars more this year in the Premier's gas tax with no tax relief in 2018 while letting big corporate polluters off the hook.

As a consequence, the provincial government has thereby lost the confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Recorded Vote

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, a recorded vote, please.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

The question before the House now is the proposed amendment moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Kinew) to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen), that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Division

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

Yeas

Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Smith (Point Douglas), Swan.

Nays

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fletcher, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Pivniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Yakimoski.

Clerk: Yeas 15, Nays 38.

Madam Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

Madam Speaker: The question now before the House is a proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

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

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Recorded Vote

Ms. Fontaine: Madam Speaker, a recorded vote, please.

Madam Speaker: A recorded vote having been called, call in the members.

The question before the House is the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Division

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

Yeas

Bindle, Clarke, Cox, Cullen, Curry, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Friesen, Goertzen, Graydon, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Martin, Mayer, Michaleski, Micklefield, Morley-Lecomte, Nesbitt, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Schuler, Smith (Southdale), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wharton, Wishart, Yakimoski.

Nays

Allum, Altemeyer, Fontaine, Gerrard, Kinew, Klassen, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Lindsey, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Saran, Smith (Point Douglas), Swan.

Clerk: Yeas 37, Nays 15.

Madam Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): For the House's information, I'd like to table the Estimates Order.

And, if you would, Madam Speaker, if you would call Interim Supply.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced by the honourable Government House Leader that the sequence for Estimates will be distributed, and also the House will now resume consideration of Interim Supply.

* (16:10)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018**

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Growth, Enterprise and Trade (Mr. Pedersen), that Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018; Loi de 2018 portant affectation anticipée de crédits, be now read a first time and ordered for a second reading immediately.

Motion agreed to.

SECOND READINGS**Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018**

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister for Sustainable Development (Ms. Squires), that Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018; Loi de 2018 portant affectation anticipée de crédits, be now read a second time and be referred to Committee of the Whole.

Motion presented.

Madam Speaker: Was the honourable Minister of Finance intending to make any comments?

Mr. Friesen: No.

Madam Speaker: Do members have any questions on the bill?

Do members have any questions on the bill? No.

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

The House will now resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018, for concurrence and third reading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018**

Mr. Chairperson (Doyle Pivniuk): Will the Committee of the Whole please come to order.

We will now consider the Bill 21, the interim appropriation act of 2018.

Does the honourable Minister of Finance have any opening statements?

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I do not.

Mr. Chairperson: Does the official opposition Finance critic have any statements? No.

Okay, we shall now proceed with the—consider the bill clause by clause. The title and enacting clauses are postponed until other clauses have been considered.

Clause 1—pass; clause 2—pass; clause 3—pass; clause 4—pass; clause 5—pass; enacting clause—pass; title—pass. And the bill shall be reported as amended—no, sorry, yes, okay, agreed—and the bill shall be reported.

That concludes the business before the committee.

The committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

* (16:20)

IN SESSION**Committee Report**

Mr. Doyle Pivniuk (Chairperson): Madam Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018, and reports the same without amendments.

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

Motion presented.

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

CONCURRENCE AND THIRD READINGS**Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018**

Hon. Cameron Friesen (Minister of Finance): I move, seconded by the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Wishart), that Bill 21, The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018; Loi de 2018 portant affectation anticipée de crédits, reported from the Committee of the Whole be concurred in and be now read for a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Mr. Andrew Swan (Minto): On division, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: On division, the motion is carried on division.

* * *

Hon. Steven Fletcher (Assiniboia): On a point of order.

Point of Order

Madam Speaker: On a point of order.

Mr. Fletcher: On division, that works for the political parties, but how does that apply to independent members?

Madam Speaker: I would indicate to the member for Assiniboia that it is inappropriate to put a question to the Speaker. And what I would indicate is that on division means that the motion will pass without members having to have a vote on it, but with opposition to it.

* * *

Madam Speaker: I'm advised that Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor is about to arrive to grant royal assent to Bill 21. I am therefore interrupting the proceedings of the House for the royal assent.

ROYAL ASSENT

Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Ray Gislason): Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

Her Honour Janice C. Filmon, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House and being seated on the throne, Madam Speaker addressed Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor in the following words:

Madam Speaker: Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba asks Your Honour to accept the following bill:

Clerk Assistant (Ms. Monique Grenier): Bill 21—The Interim Appropriation Act, 2018; Loi de 2018 portant affectation anticipée de crédits.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): In Her Majesty's name, the Lieutenant Governor thanks the Legislative Assembly and assents to this bill.

* (16:30)

Her Honour was then pleased to retire.

God Save the Queen was sung.

O Canada was sung.

Hon. Cliff Cullen (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, would you canvass the House to see if there's a willingness to call it 5 o'clock?

Madam Speaker: Is there leave to call it 5?
[Agreed]

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until Tuesday, April 3rd, at 10 a.m.

Have a good break, and happy Easter, everybody.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 22, 2018

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are also available on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>