

Fourth Session - Fortieth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES

and

PROCEEDINGS

Official Report

(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Daryl Reid
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	NDP
ALLUM, James, Hon.	Fort Garry-Riverview	NDP
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	NDP
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	NDP
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	NDP
BLADY, Sharon, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	NDP
BRAUN, Erna, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
BRIESE, Stuart	Agassiz	PC
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
CHIEF, Kevin, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	NDP
CROTHERS, Deanne, Hon.	St. James	NDP
CULLEN, Cliff	Spruce Woods	PC
DEWAR, Greg, Hon.	Selkirk	NDP
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FRIESEN, Cameron	Morden-Winkler	PC
GAUDREAU, Dave	St. Norbert	NDP
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Liberal
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	PC
HELWER, Reg	Brandon West	PC
HOWARD, Jennifer	Fort Rouge	NDP
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Richmond	NDP
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	NDP
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Swan River	NDP
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	Dawson Trail	NDP
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Logan	NDP
MARCELINO, Ted	Tyndall Park	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	Morris	PC
MELNICK, Christine	Riel	NDP
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	PC
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	NDP
OSWALD, Theresa	Seine River	NDP
PALLISTER, Brian	Fort Whyte	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PETTERSEN, Clarence	Flin Flon	NDP
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Arthur-Virden	PC
REID, Daryl, Hon.	Transcona	NDP
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Kewatinook	NDP
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	NDP
ROWAT, Leanne	Riding Mountain	PC
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	St. Paul	PC
SELBY, Erin	Southdale	NDP
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Verendrye	PC
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	PC
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	NDP
SWAN, Andrew	Minto	NDP
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WIGHT, Melanie, Hon.	Burrows	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	The Pas	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. 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.

Good afternoon, everyone. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 11—The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments)

Hon. Deanne Crothers (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors): I move, seconded by the honourable minister of healthy—of health, excuse me, that Bill 11, The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments); Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique (utilisation interdite des appareils de bronzage par les enfants et autres modifications), be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Crothers: Mr. Speaker, these changes to the act will prohibit the use of commercial ultraviolet tanning equipment by minors. The bill replaces an earlier amendment that required minors to have parental consent in order to use such equipment. It will include an exception if the child has a prescription from a designated health professional to be determined in regulation. In addition, the new act will prohibit advertising or marketing of indoor tanning directed at youth and will also require commercial tanning operations to provide protective eyewear to all customers. The new act also enables authority to regulate or prohibit the use of specified types of tanning equipment such as user-operated equipment.

Indoor tanning equipment is known to significantly increase the risk of skin cancer,

especially for children, and these amendments build further on our strong record of protecting Manitoba children and youth from the risk of cancer.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [Agreed]

Bill 202—The Participation of Manitoba in the New West Partnership Act

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): I move, seconded by the member for Emerson (Mr. Graydon), that Bill 202, The Participation of Manitoba in the New West Partnership Act; Loi sur la participation du Manitoba au nouveau partenariat de l'Ouest, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Stefanson: This bill will call on the government of Manitoba to immediately enter into negotiations with our western Canadian provinces to join the New West Partnership.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [Agreed]

Bill 203—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety at New Schools)

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): I move, seconded by the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Ewasko), that Bill 203, The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety at New Schools); Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques (sécurité des piétons à proximité des nouvelles écoles), be now read the first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, last September, Carina Denisenko was struck by a vehicle on the road directly in front of her new school, Northlands Parkway Collegiate, in Winkler just weeks after the start of school.

I am introducing a bill that would go a long way toward improving pedestrian safety at new schools. NPC was allowed to open even though there were no cantilevered crosswalk signs, flashing lights or painted corridors to alert motorists to the presence of the—pedestrians on the roadway despite the fact that many had made appeals to the Province to urgency—urgently take those steps to ensure pedestrian safety.

This bill would require as part of the planning process for a new school both that a traffic safety analysis would take place to determine if new traffic control measures are needed and to assure that the necessary changes are made before a new school is allowed to open.

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

Any further introduction of bills?

PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, we'll move on to petitions.

Grace Hospital Emergency Room Upgrade and Expansion

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The provincial government promised to upgrade and expand the Grace Hospital emergency department in 2011 and to complete it by 2015.

The Grace Hospital was left as the last of all Winnipeg hospitals to be slated for an emergency room upgrade.

The provincial government has broken another promise to Manitobans by delaying the start of this upgrade by three years, as failure to begin construction in 2013 has left patients and hospital employees facing long wait times, overcrowding and the risk of unsafe conditions and care.

This provincial government has allowed ER wait times at the Grace Hospital to become the worst in Canada at triple the amount of time that emergency physicians recommend.

Ambulances in Winnipeg, including at the Grace Hospital, continue to face excessive patient off-load delays that are getting longer every year.

Last year the Grace Hospital in Winnipeg had over 23,000 patients seeking emergency care through the ER department and over 2,000 of those patients left the ER without being seen because they became too frustrated waiting to be seen.

Instead of fixing hallway medicine, there are now numbered hallway spaces.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government and the Minister of Health to keep their promise to the people of Manitoba and make the upgrade and expansion of the Grace ER an immediate priority.

And this is signed by A. Ocesek, G. Miller, R. Miller and many others.

* (13:40)

Mr. Speaker: In keeping with our rule 132(6), when petitions are read they are deemed to have been received by the House.

Further petitions?

Residential and Vocational Service Organizations—Standard Province-wide Funding Formula

Mrs. Leanne Rowat (Riding Mountain): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And the reasons—this is the background to the petition:

Funding provided to organizations that provide residential and vocational services to individuals with physical and developmental disabilities in rural areas is significantly lower than the funding levels provided to similar organizations in Winnipeg.

This discrepancy in funding levels has affected the recruitment and retention of skilled staff, as average wages do not reflect the complex duties that are similar to health-care aides.

Without increased funding, most organizations that provide residential and vocational services will be forced to close.

The closure of these organizations will severely impact the local economy, as these organizations are often larger employers and provide necessary services in the community.

The value and quality of life experienced by individuals with special needs residing in a familiar and consistent environment is immeasurable.

Closing these organizations and moving these individuals will be incredibly disruptive to their lives and detrimental to their health and well-being.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request that the Minister of Family Services consider implementing a standard funding formula across the province for organizations that provide

residential and vocational services for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities.

This petition signed by J. Chornawka, K. Zamryket, T. Bartels and many more concerned Manitobans.

Election Request

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Good afternoon. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And the background for this petition is as follows:

(1) In 2015 the current provincial government will be in the fourth year of its mandate.

(2) There is a crisis of leadership unfolding on the government side of the House.

(3) According to media reports, the member for Minto stated that the Premier is more concerned about remaining leader than doing the things in the best interests of the province.

(4) According to media reports, the member for Seine River stated, if you are in a position where you support the point of view of the Premier, your priorities and your projects move up the queue.

(5) According to media reports, the members for Southdale, Dauphin, Seine River, Minto and Fort Rouge stated that the Premier has stopped listening to our advice.

(6) According to media reports, the members for Southdale, Dauphin, Seine River, Minto and Fort Rouge stated, we can no longer work for a Premier who refuses to hear us; he refuses to hear us not just on the leadership issue but also on a wide range of issues in our portfolios.

(7) The concerns over the Premier's leadership have not been confined to just government members. NDP provincial council member Darlene Dziewit has been reported as saying, we have a crisis here in that I don't think the people of Manitoba trust our leadership anymore.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the Premier to immediately consider calling an election so that Manitobans can decide who is best placed to govern the best interests of Manitoba.

And this petition is signed by R. Klassen, H. Dueck, J.G. Dueck and many, many more fine Manitobans.

Beausejour District Hospital—Weekend and Holiday Physician Availability

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

(1) The Beausejour District Hospital is a 30-bed, acute-care facility that serves the communities of Beausejour and Brokenhead.

(2) The hospital and the primary-care centre have had no doctor available on weekends and holidays for many months, jeopardizing the health and livelihoods of those in the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority.

(3) During the 2011 election, the provincial government promised to provide every Manitoban with access to a family doctor by 2015.

(4) This promise is far from being realized, and Manitobans are witnessing many emergency rooms limiting services or closing temporarily, with the majority of these reductions taking place in rural Manitoba.

(5) According to the Health Council of Canada, only 25 per cent of doctors in Manitoba reported that their patients had access to care on evenings and weekends.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government and the Minister of Health to ensure that the Beausejour District Hospital and primary-care centre have a primary-care physician available on weekends and holidays to better provide area residents with this essential service.

This petition is signed by J. Wiebe, S. Sevage, R. Struss and many, many more angry Manitobans.

Election Request

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

The background of this petition is as follows:

(1) The 2015 current provincial government will be on its fourth year of its mandate. There is—

(2) There is a crisis of leadership unfolding on the government side of the House.

(3) According to the media reports, the member of Minto stated that the Premier is more concerned about remaining leader than doing things in the best interests of the province.

And (4) according to the media reports, the member of Seine River stated, if you are in the position where you are—support the point of view of the Premier, your priorities and your projects move up the queue.

(5) According to the media reports, the members of Southdale, Dauphin, Seine River, Minto and Fort Rouge state that the Premier's stopped listening to their—our advice.

(6) According to the media reports, the members of Southdale, Dauphin, Seine River, Minto, Fort Rouge stated, we no longer work with a Premier who refuses to hear us; he refuses to hear us not just on the leadership issues but also on the wide range of issues of our portfolios.

(7) The concerns over the Premier's leadership have not been confined to just government members. The NDP government council member Darlene Dziewit was being reported by saying, we have a crisis here and this is—I don't think that people of Manitoba trust our leadership anymore.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To urge the Premier to immediately consider calling an election so Manitobans can decide who best placed to govern the—for the best interests of Manitoba.

And this petition's signed by A. Reimer, D. Johnson and K. Hammond and many other Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker: Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I'm honoured today to table the 42nd annual report for Legal Aid Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports? Ministerial statements?

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I have a number of guests to introduce.

I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today officials from Western Cape province of South Africa, who are the guests of the honourable Minister for Municipal Government.

Also seated in the gallery today we have with us members of the St. Norbert Veterans Memorial Association, who are the guests of the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Gaudreau).

And on behalf of all honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

Also seated in the public gallery we have from Garden City Collegiate, we have 30 grade 11 students under the direction of Lindsay Turbett, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Chomiak).

And also seated in the public gallery, from Red River College language training program-training centre, we have 16 adult English language students under the direction of Linda Schroeder, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Multiculturalism.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

NDP Leadership Convention Political Parties—Public Financing

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): It seems that the New Democratic Party is unaware of the apparent conflict of interest—at least it's apparent, I think, to most Manitobans, Mr. Speaker—of a sitting premier using his office as a campaign headquarters. I would expect that the NDP would at least have the decency to use orange ribbon at all their announcements while this leadership race is going on.

* (13:50)

Now, Mr. Speaker, the spenDP executive, in their announcement last Saturday, took great pains to claim that taxpayers would not be stuck with the bill for this leadership contest. Of course, this is totally false. Taxpayer dollars both present and future are the source of all spenDP announcements.

Now, will the MLA for St. Boniface verify today that the taxpayer subsidy provided to the NDP of over a million dollars in vote tax will be used to assist in covering the costs of the NDP makeover leadership contest?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, that will not be the case.

Government Priorities

Mr. Pallister: Again, Mr. Speaker, not only I but many of his colleagues do not believe him in his response on that question or on many others. And, again, I am uncertain as to whether that reply came from a candidate for the NDP leadership or from the Premier of Manitoba, and I'm sure Manitobans are equally puzzled.

It's about priorities. If the candidate for the NDP leadership has to decide between two spending announcements in the next few weeks and months, one of which might boost his delegate support but is of little merit, another of great merit that has no relevance in getting delegates, which will the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) be choosing?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech articulated a vision for the future of Manitoba with respect to education and good opportunities for young people, no matter where they live in Manitoba, to get a good education.

Mr. Speaker, when we visited the regional high school in Steinbach, Manitoba, we saw one of the largest facilities in Manitoba that served a huge number of students from that region, and all of those students were getting an opportunity to get a high school academic education. They were getting trades training; they were doing specialized shops training to teach them how to do post and beam construction, and there are a number of companies in that region that specialized in that form of construction of housing and cottages, and young people were learning how to do those very specific skills.

Now, I know the member opposite is worried that that is a swing seat. We didn't even look at it that way. We looked at it as an opportunity to make sure young people get good jobs, good training for the future, and we will continue to do that no matter where we are in Manitoba, no matter who the people are. All Manitobans deserve good opportunities for the future.

Mr. Pallister: The Premier thinks he deserves a great opportunity to find delegates to support him in

keeping his leadership too, Mr. Speaker, and if he confines his announcements over the next three months to Steinbach, I'm sure Manitobans will be persuaded. But I seriously doubt that that will happen.

Now, his own colleagues have said that his priorities are not the priorities of Manitobans. They have also, his former colleagues who know him best, have said that he puts his own priorities ahead of Manitobans and the priorities of his friends and supporters at the front of the line. Now, certainly in the process of getting delegates, that might be a tendency that would be even more pronounced.

Now, why would Manitobans believe him? Mr. Speaker, he's caught like a kid with his hand in the candy jar and he won't let go. He is stuck. He will not let go of his power, and so he doesn't understand what we understand here and what his opponents in his own party understand very well. The rebel five will vote to keep him trapped today. They will vote to do that.

Does he understand that his own people will use this arrogant decision that he is making to try to hang on to the premier's office for a few weeks longer against him every day until the leadership is resolved?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we all have an obligation, when we come to work every day in this Legislature, to put the priorities of Manitobans at the top of our list, and that's what we do—and that's what we do. That's why, when we brought forward the Throne Speech, we put a high priority on good opportunities for young people. We also put a high opportunity—priority on making sure we build infrastructure in Manitoba.

I went down to Morris, Manitoba, just a few weeks ago. We announced up to \$200 million to lift the road, the bridge, at Morris, Manitoba, so it wouldn't flood down there. That doesn't benefit any one region of Manitoba; it benefits all of Manitoba because that Highway 75 is a trade corridor. It carries \$19 billion of goods to our major marketplace, the United States. That benefits all Manitoba employees. That benefits all Manitoba companies. That benefits and allows us to have one of the strongest economies in Canada. That's why we come to work every day to do that.

The Leader of the Opposition, he doesn't want to do that. He votes against those priorities. He wants to make sure Manitoba has a weak economy.

We want a strong economy. We have a strong economy. The Conference Board of Canada said it'll be the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister's time on this question has elapsed.

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

Impact on Manitobans

Mr. Pallister: Well, I remain unconvinced, certainly, that adding three staff at about \$400,000 of additional payroll to protect his leadership to his own office in the last two weeks is acting on the priorities of Manitobans in any way, in any shape or in any form, but I remain also unconvinced as to why these rebellious people insist on being so supportive of this agenda. I think the Premier needs to think that through.

Now, all the NDP factions, Mr. Speaker, appear to be quite happy with the situation. The rebels have the unfocused Premier right where they want him. The replacements have their new, larger offices. And the MLA for St. Boniface gets to keep his hands in the cookie jar for a little while longer, but at what cost to Manitobans?

Wasteful spending that's characterized this government for years jeopardizes key front-line services. Dysfunctional government navel-gazes while opportunities are missed. While the NDP candidates use their time and their power and Manitobans' hard-earned money to court NDPers to support them in a leadership race, Manitoba's real priorities are being ignored.

Isn't this a classic example of putting NDP priorities at the front of the line and Manitoba priorities right at the back?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the cynicism displayed by the member opposite is astounding.

When we came into office, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite had created 13 regional health authorities, enormous amount of administration and bureaucracy. We have reduced that to five authorities. The \$11-million savings, where did we put that \$11-million savings? We put that \$11-million savings into free cancer-care drugs so that people did not have to be in hospitals. We put that \$11 million into cancer drugs so that people would not have to worry about whether they have to buy groceries or can afford their medications. Nobody in Manitoba knows whether or not they're

going to get cancer. That is a scourge no matter where people live in Manitoba. We have put a policy in place that benefits all Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite wanted bureaucracy. We want better health care for Manitobans and that's what we've created, better health care for Manitobans no matter where they live, and the members opposite consistently vote against that. They vote for bureaucracy. We vote for good front-line health care for all Manitobans.

NDP Caucus Government Promises

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Front-line health care jeopardized by wasteful NDP spending, Mr. Speaker, and \$400,000 of payroll in his office proves that.

The largest tax increases in Canada from a government that promised they wouldn't hike taxes proves it too. It proves they don't care less; they could care less about front-line Manitoba services for front-line Manitoba workers.

All NDP members misled Manitobans at the doors of their homes in the last election. They all made promises; they broke those promises. They promised to eliminate wasteful spending; they did not. And now they'll increase wasteful spending. They all made promises to respect Manitoba's right to vote, then they took it away. They promised—and this process disempowers 99.9 per cent of Manitobans as well.

And they all promised not to increase the PST and they all voted to do just that, and now they're standing together in unity, Kumbaya moment here, Mr. Speaker, opposed to the real priorities of Manitobans yet again.

Will the Premier admit that this chaotic sideshow of a government will continue to break its promises to Manitobans no matter who the leader is?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Let's talk about government efficiency. They had 13 RHAs; we have five. They had 57 school divisions; we have in the high 30s the number of school divisions. We reduced the number of municipalities from 48 down to 23; by a third, Mr. Speaker, we've reduced the number of municipalities. We've reduced the number of public servants in unnecessary positions while protecting front-line services. We consolidated the two Crown corporations of liquor and lotteries. We reduced administration. We found another 6 and a

half million dollars savings which goes right into front-line services to help Manitobans.

They are a political party that believes in making sure the people at the top are well looked after, not the people on the-in the communities at the neighbourhood level. We look after families. We look after neighbourhoods. We look after communities.

They look after the 1 per cent. We look after the 99 per cent.

* (14:00)

New West Partnership Agreement Manitoba Participation

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Doubled communications staff, doubled advertising budget, \$100 million wasted on a photo opportunity for a helicopter is hardly an example of standing up for Manitobans. The highest tax increases of any province: average family in Regina pays \$3,200 less in taxes than in the city of Winnipeg because this administration couldn't care less—couldn't care less—about working families in this province.

They are a wasteful government. They have doubled our provincial debt and they refuse to work in partnership with other provinces. Nine other Canadian provinces, all of them have entered into alliances to benefit their people. Only one Canadian province refuses to do that, and that's this NDP-led province.

The benefits are absolutely attractive to us. We would like to see greater co-operation on social policy, on advancing ideas to accommodate and benefit small business and working people, but this government doesn't understand teamwork. It has a problem with teamwork; its own members admit that.

Now, many groups have called for us to enter the New West Partnership. While the Premier is busy with his leadership, I'd like him to answer this question: Could he give this House today one good reason why Manitoba isn't in the New West Partnership, one reason?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): That was a very long and rambling question. It was very difficult for the Leader of the Opposition to get back on his script.

He did mention affordability, Mr. Speaker. When the Leader of the Opposition was in Cabinet, every family in Manitoba paid \$3,800 more in taxes on an average family income of about \$70,000, \$3,800 more in taxes.

When the Leader of the Opposition was in office as a Cabinet minister, the small-business tax rate was 9 per cent. What is it today? Zero. Small businesses in Manitoba have the lowest tax rate in the country.

When the leader in the opposition was in Cabinet, they never raised the minimum wage except just on the eve of an election, once every four years. We have raised the minimum wage every single year that we were in office to support working families, to support young people to get jobs, to support people to have purchasing power, which grows the economy in Manitoba, and every single time we've done that they have voted against it.

They support the 1 per cent. We support the 99 per cent.

New West Partnership Agreement Manitoba Participation

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): Well, it seems that the Premier cannot come up with one good reason why Manitoba's not part of the New West Partnership.

Mr. Speaker, if members opposite, if members of this NDP government truly cared about more money for front-line services in health care, then they would support our bill to join the New West Partnership.

In BC, Premier Clark has given concrete examples of the savings that her province has made as a result of being a member of the New West Partnership. In fact, in BC they have realized a savings of \$5,000 for every pacemaker that is purchased by their province, and the Premier gives the direct result for being a part of the New West Partnership.

Can the Minister for Jobs and the Economy indicate how much more Manitobans are having to pay now as a result of their reluctance to join the New West Partnership?

Hon. Kevin Chief (Minister of Jobs and the Economy): I want to thank the member for the question.

Mr. Speaker, our government stays committed to making sure that we're taking full advantage of our

geographic location in the country. You know, we're called the heartbeat of the nation for a reason. We continue to work closely with the federal government as well as our western neighbours and our eastern neighbours to make sure that we're taking full advantage of that.

What the premiers in the country have agreed to, as well as other counterparts, is to have a strong national agreement, and we'll continue to work closely with our western partners. It accounts for 40 per cent of the trade that we do, but also to the east of us, Mr. Speaker, we also do 50 per cent of our trade to the east.

So we'll continue to work with our western neighbours, our eastern neighbours and make sure that we're taking full advantage of places like Churchill, our gateway to the North. Thank you.

Mrs. Stefanson: Well, Mr. Speaker, while other provinces are building bridges with one another, the NDP government is building a big silo over Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, when savings can be made as a direct result of being a member of the New West Partnership, it is beyond me why the NDP government is so reluctant to even enter into negotiations with our neighbours to the west.

Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP government so reluctant to enter into these negotiations, the results of which could be very beneficial for Manitoba?

Mr. Chief: Well, we—in fact, we are working closely with our neighbours to the west. In fact, first day on the job I was able to participate in a call with Premier Wall. We're going to continue to do that.

You know, members opposite talk about building. So I want to spend a bit of time talking about what we're building: \$100-million investment into Trans-Canada Highway; \$200 million to upgrade the southwest Perimeter Highway; another \$200 million to flood proof Highway 75; and a quarter of a billion for the CentrePort Canada Way. That's why we have one of the strongest total exports here in Manitoba than anywhere in the nation, because we are building.

We are working in a collaborative way and we are continuing to work with our western, eastern and the people in the North. Thank you.

Mrs. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, this is a prime example of NDP mismanagement and a tired and out-of-touch government.

There is a bill before the Legislature today that could help free up more money that could go towards reducing wait times in health care.

Will this NDP government support this bill, or will they continue along with their pay-more, get-less management strategy?

Mr. Chief: Well, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to work. We will continue to work with our neighbours in the West, of course. As I've said that we are in the centre of the country, we want to take full advantage of our geographical location.

And I do want to say that our total exports increased by nearly 12 per cent in 2013. That's the largest increase of any province and three times the Canadian average of 3 and a half per cent. This is why we have the third best economic performance in the past 10 years. That's why we have the second best economic performance this year, and that's why it's been projected and forecasted we'll continue to have the third best next year. Thank you.

Portage la Prairie Diversion Protest at Emergency Outlet

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): And yet, Mr. Speaker, we're still the child poverty capital of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transportation publicly denounced individuals participating in a 24-hour protest at the Portage Diversion in 2013 as, quote, reckless and irresponsible. The NDP used the RCMP, the courts and the media to deal with these protesters.

Why has the minister failed to take similar action against individuals participating in a five-month protest of flood infrastructure? Why the difference?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite may want to talk to his colleague from Portage who in a debate on the Throne Speech said that he makes no apologies for having stood there and actually said that my criticizing that was a good fundraiser for him in his constituency.

We take very seriously the operation of our flood infrastructure in this province. That's why, by the way, we built the emergency outlet. That's why in this Throne Speech we outlined our commitment to an investment of upwards of \$450 million in permanent outlets for Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin.

Mr. Speaker, the real question here is, why did the member opposite vote against our Throne Speech by supporting his amendment yesterday? That's the real question.

Operation of Emergency Outlet

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, the member's a little confused. The Throne Speech has not happened yet—vote.

So outraged at the actions of a 24-hour protest and vowing, quote, we must not allow this type of action to take place, end quote, the NDP brought in a law to make interfering flood—with flood infrastructure punishable by a \$10,000 fine and authorizing the police to arrest anyone that refused the order to vacate.

Can the minister confirm that not a single fine has been issued, not a single person arrested despite the presence of protesters for five months at the operation of flood infrastructure?

Mr. Ashton: First of all, maybe there's hope yet. There is another vote, indeed, today. It's actually on the main motion for the Throne Speech, and if the member wants to put his vote where his mouth is in terms of this issue, he has the opportunity at 4:30 today.

One thing I will say, Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that every single NDP MLA will be voting for \$450 million—\$450 million—of permanent flood protection. That's the real issue and, indeed, this is a government that's invested more than a billion dollars in terms of flood mitigation. We're committed to the people in Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin, and I look forward to member—the member opposite perhaps having the opportunity in a few hours to stand up and vote for that.

* (14:10)

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, the member might have built it, but he won't use it.

The minister warned five months ago that the failure to fully utilize that outlet would result in serious consequences upstream, his words, Mr. Speaker. The NDP seem intent on creating flood conditions this spring as opposed to mitigating them.

Can the minister advise how many ranchers, cottagers and landowners along the Assiniboine River basin will be flooded due to the 15 billions of litres of water that held back under his orders?

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, again, I'd like to remind the member opposite that it was this government that built the emergency outlet. That emergency outlet has been operating since July. It's reduced the level of both Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin, and it continues to provide the operation to proceed in terms of the Fairford a much higher level than it would otherwise.

So our investment, our foresight as a Province has made a difference then. So that again raises the question why the member opposite, after raising these questions, if he's so concerned about the level of Lake Manitoba and so concerned about the level of Lake St. Martin, where will he stand at 4:30 today? Will he stand up and support our Throne Speech, which is investing in those very same investments in mitigation?

Lake Manitoba Water Levels Fairford Outflow Restrictions

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): Mr. Speaker, I wish the minister would put accurate facts on the record. The emergency channel hasn't lowered Lake Manitoba one millimetre.

On June 25th, 2014, the Minister of MIT stated that the NDP government would be opening the emergency channel to draw Lake St. Martin levels down to allow the operation of Fairford at maximum capacity through the winter of '14-15. The NDP have since changed their mind and now are restricting the outflows at Fairford.

Why have the minister and this government broke their promise to the First Nations peoples, ranchers, farmers and property owners around Lake Manitoba?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): Mr. Speaker, talk about nitpicking.

The emergency outlet from Lake St. Martin drains water out of Lake St. Martin, not out of Lake Manitoba directly, but first of all it does lower the level of Lake St. Martin directly. But by having the emergency outlet operating since it was put in place back in July, in terms of its operation this year, we have also been able to operate the Fairford at a higher level.

So the member may be correct in a nitpicking sense, but in terms of flood protection, we're making a difference for Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin.

Mr. Briese: The operation of Fairford is only dependent on the level of Lake Manitoba, has nothing to do with whether they're opening the emergency channel or not.

The levels of Lake Manitoba are higher now than they were in the fall of 2010, prior to the flood of 2011. Lake Manitoba residents have witnessed two record floods in the last four years, and the NDP are now creating conditions for another flood in the spring of 2015.

There has not been a natural flood on Lake Manitoba since 1955. The recent artificial floods have been all NDP-induced.

Why does the NDP continue to revictimize the victims of the 2011 Lake Manitoba flood?

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have offered briefings to members opposite, and I know the member for Portage did attend—the member for Morris (Mr. Martin). I would note, by the way, that the Leader of the Opposition still hasn't attended a briefing, and I think it's obvious across the way that perhaps this member also needs a briefing.

He knows and perhaps he should acknowledge on the record that the advantage, again, of operating the emergency outlet is—provides us the ability to have greater flows from the Fairford outlet, particularly in the winter when there's frazil ice. And we did have a brief period of a couple of weeks where there was very significant frazil ice, some of the worst we've seen, that did restrict the flow. But the bottom line is when you drain more water out of Lake St. Martin, you can drain more water out of Lake Manitoba. That's why we're going to bring in permanent outlets.

The question, again, Mr. Speaker, is why won't they support the Throne Speech that is going to protect those lakes if they're really concerned about the flood victims?

New Lake Manitoba Outlet Construction Timeline

Mr. Stuart Briese (Agassiz): Mr. Speaker, that permanent outlet is promised somewhere between nine years and eternity. The NDP have promised an additional outlet for Lake Manitoba and have produced nothing. Instead they give excuses why it can't happen sooner.

The NDP say one of the reasons is the length of time it will take for negotiations with First Nations stakeholders. I remind the minister that there are at

least four First Nations on Lake Manitoba that are also experiencing flooding.

Why are the NDP blaming First Nations stakeholders for their 'lown'—for their own lack of action on this essential piece of infrastructure that is critical to the people of Lake Manitoba?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): Mr. Speaker, it would indeed be eternity before members opposite ever built anything, because when they were in government, fact, when the Leader of the Opposition was the minister for emergency measures—mind you, before he quit in preparation for the 1996 flood—1997 flood—I would ask the members opposite if they can name one significant investment in flood mitigation in the entire 12 years they were in government, 11, 12 years. It's a trick question; the answer is nothing.

It's this government's invested \$1 billion in flood mitigation, and we're going to do even more for Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin by working in co-operation with First Nations, with residents around there. That's the difference: the Tories talk about flood mitigation; we build it.

Flooding in Southwest Manitoba Compensation Claim Settlement

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, during the early morning of June 29th, Jody and Kelly Gottfried from Pierson, Manitoba, were evacuated from their home after three feet of water came rushing through their home, flooding their main floor and basement.

It's been five months and the Gottfrieds are still out of their home, and there's still no settlement with their DFA claim. Winter is upon us, the house has no hydro and there's over 10 inches of ice in their basement. Now this house is completely destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, why has this minister failed to help Manitoba flood victims in their time of need?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): We're all more than aware that the hardest hit area this year in the province of Manitoba, in terms of flooding, was southwest Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to meet with members of the southwest flood committee at the AMM convention, and I want to put on the record the degree to which the municipal leaders, the municipal staff did a tremendous job in terms of

dealing with a very difficult flood, a flood that follows significant flooding in 2011 and, really, if you look at the history of the southwest, it's been absolutely unprecedented.

One of the things we did do, Mr. Speaker, and it was, again, at the recommendation of the municipal leaders, is we put in place offices that were open. In fact, one of the clearest things we received in the way of feedback has been the rapid response in terms of DFA, in terms of getting claims administration, so we have been working very diligently on that very important issue for people in the southwest.

Mr. Piwniuk: Mr. Speaker, this flood disaster in southwest Manitoba has become our own Hurricane Katrina moment in this province. Too many flood victims have been ignored and abandoned by this NDP government.

The Gottfrieds had followed every request by getting quotes, assessments, letters of opinions, while dealing with three different adjusters, yet the EMO department says it still has more documentation before it can make a final decision on their claim. This is the same runaround that the NDP government used in the 2011 flood claimants.

Why does the minister put the flood victims through such a painful process instead of settling the claims?

Mr. Ashton: First of all, the disaster financial assistance program is an important program, Mr. Speaker. It operates under national guidelines as federal-provincial programming, and there are procedures that we do have to go through in terms of documenting any and all claims. If the—if individual claimants are unhappy with that process, there's also an appeal process.

I would point out, though, that we've had significant initial payouts, both to individuals, to farmers and to municipalities. Our staff has been working 24-7 in terms of responding to those needs.

So, Mr. Speaker, if there are any issues in terms of this particular 'claim'—claim, I would urge the member to ask them to proceed and deal with the requirement in terms of documentation, to appeal it if there's any disagreement.

But, Mr. Speaker, the reality is there have been very significant supports put into the southwest in the range of 70 to 80 million dollars that we've calculated in terms of damage from this flood.

Mr. Piwniuk: Mr. Speaker, despite the—what the minister says, in fact, this is the NDP's—still has over 276 claims still to be settled from 2011 flood.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because of the 2014 flood, over 1,083 claims have been filed and about 1,019 of those claims are still open, including the Gottfrieds'. Mr. Speaker, Jody Gottfried is sitting here in this gallery today, if he can—want to stand up.

Mr. Speaker, can this minister assure the Gottfrieds that their claim is going to be settled immediately, not waiting for over three years for—like claimants from the 2011 flood?

* (14:20)

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite should know that ministers don't intervene politically in the affairs of EMO and DFA. That would be highly inappropriate.

I want to indicate that it's also important that we work with individual Manitobans, and we, in fact, do that. I know our staff have been working with many claimants and there have been many initial programs.

And members opposite may wish to see political interference; what we want to ensure is that we have DFA that is appropriate, and I point out that in 19—in fact, if you go back—*[interjection]* If members opposite want to ask the questions, I thought they might want to listen to the answer respectfully, people in the gallery, Mr. Speaker.

But the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, we have diligently worked on those claims and we continue to do that. We put unprecedented support in 2011 and 2014. We are there for flood victims.

And members opposite can complain all they want and howl us down, but—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister's time on this question has elapsed.

The honourable member for River Heights has the floor.

Flood Expenditures Balanced Budget Plan

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the major flooding this year, the government had to spend about \$200 million more than it had budgeted for.

I asked at the Public Accounts Committee on September the 3rd what plan the government had to adjust the budget and to make sure that it would be

back on track for the expenditures budgeted this year. The government response at that time was there was no plan.

I ask the Premier today: Will the government present a plan today to make sure the expenditures for this fiscal year are back on budget?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): It's an ongoing process with the Treasury Board to manage the overall government expenditure.

We do have emergency situations that require additional support during a flood. It is true that over \$220 million was spent on the flood of this summer, an unprecedented event for July, and it is also true that there will be a certain recovery from the federal government with respect to that once the claims are finalized and settled.

In the meantime, we will continue to manage the overall government envelope while protecting and ensuring that we present—that we provide this core services that Manitobans expect in health care, in education, supports to families.

But, again, the Treasury Board will do its job and, overall, provide overall management to the budget envelope in the government of Manitoba.

Quarterly Financial Reports Presentation Timeline

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, right now the second-quarter financial report is past due. The Auditor General has already earlier this year been very critical of this government because it has been in delay again and again over presenting quarterly reports.

This year it is particularly important that the report be presented on time because this year we have an overexpenditure already and we need to know exactly where we stand, and this Premier perhaps has been tied up with other internal matters, but he should be focusing on what's happening in Manitoba.

When will this report be presented?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): It's through the normal course of events. The second-quarter report is compiled and made available to the public usually in December. The week varies from year to year, but it's usually provided and compiled in December. Unlike other provinces, it's not just a question of estimates. Usually, they compile real expenditure

and accrued expenditure that has been put on the books as a result of events like floods.

So there's nothing uncommon about the way we're proceeding this year, and I can assure the—Manitobans that when people need disaster financial assistance, we provide it to them. And we will continue to do that because Manitobans that are affected by untoward weather events that put them at risk, that put their communities at risk, we go there to make sure that those communities get rebuilt and we do it with as much dedication and purpose as possible.

In southwestern Manitoba, for example, there was a very rapid deployment of DFA offices. They were opened within a matter of days in communities like Virden. We moved very quickly to open up the bridges. We worked closely with municipalities to get their road projects back on track, and we will work with the disaster financial assistance program to ensure that they move their cases forward as rapidly as possible.

Mr. Gerrard: Comme dit le vérificateur financial, le rapport est en retard.

Monsieur le Président, au moment, il y a pas de confiance dans cet gouvernement NPD au part des gens du Manitoba. Si la déclaration du premier ministre qui se concentre sur les besoins des Manitobains et Manitobains est d'avoir aucune crédibilité, il est impératif que le gouvernement a un rapport financier du deuxième trimestre à temps et que le gouvernement apporte les preuves d'un plan financier pour régler les problèmes des dépenses.

Je demande au premier ministre—pourquoi il hésite à présenter ce rapport?

Translation

As the auditor said, the report is late.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba currently have no confidence in this NDP government. If the statement from the Premier that he focuses on the priorities of Manitobans is to be given any credibility, it is imperative that the government submit the second-quarter report on time and that the government bring evidence that it has a financial strategy to solve the expenditure problems.

I am asking the Premier: Why is he hesitating to submit this report?

Mr. Selinger: Monsieur le Président, quand il y une crise naturelle dans la province du Manitoba, notre

gouvernement est là à protéger les citoyens et citoyennes. On est là à protéger les communautés, les voisinages. On fait les dépenses nécessaires d'aider les communautés à rebâtir leur infrastructure, d'aider avec les familles d'avoir les réparations pour la perte de l'utilisation de leurs maisons et cetera. On travaille avec les municipalités de reconstruire leurs routes nécessaires, et puis on gère les dépenses nécessaires dans le budget global, et on fait les choses nécessaires premièrement d'aider nos communautés parce que notre première responsabilité, c'est d'être là pour les citoyens et citoyennes du Manitoba. On est là pour les citoyens du Manitoba. C'est nécessaire.

Le membre de River Heights, il demande les questions, mais il n'est pas là quand il est nécessaire de voter pour les ressources nécessaires d'aider les familles. Il vote contre les ressources pour les familles du Manitoba, Monsieur le Président.

Translation

Mr. Speaker, when there is a natural disaster in Manitoba, our government is there to protect the citizens. We are here to protect the communities and the neighbourhoods. We spend what is necessary to help the communities rebuild their infrastructure, and help families with repairs when they have lost the use of their home. We work with the municipalities to rebuild the roads they need and we also manage the expenditures that are required as part of the overall budget. And we do what is required, first, to help our communities because our first responsibility is to be there for the citizens of Manitoba. We are here for the citizens of Manitoba. It is necessary.

The member for River Heights asks the questions, but he's not there when it comes to voting for the resources needed to help families. He votes against the resources for the families of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

Tanning Bed Regulations Use Ban for Minors

Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, in 2010, my mother lost her battle with cancer, and I'm very proud of our government that we put in place free cancer-care drugs for every Manitoban.

Today the government took another giant step forward in its—in battling cancer. The recent Manitoba youth health survey tells us that a significant—young members of Manitoba, young teenagers, have used indoor tanning equipment at

least once in their life, putting themselves at risk for developing skin cancer in the future.

Can the minister please inform the House about the initiative taken today by our government to help prevent cancer in young people?

Hon. Deanne Crothers (Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors): I thank the member for the question. I can't tell you how delighted I am to have actually been asked one.

As a mother, I know I can't protect my children from every form of danger and every risk to their health and well-being, but I do my best, as all parents do. And as a government, there are significant measures that we can take to improve protection for all Manitoba children from certain risks, and our government has made great strides in 'reduceking'—reducing the risk of cancer for both kids and adults.

Today we take another positive step, Mr. Speaker. Indoor tanning equipment is known to significantly increase the risk of skin cancer, especially for children. Using indoor tanning equipment even once before the age of 35 increases the risk of melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer, by 75 per cent, which is a frightening percentage. We know that kids are still needlessly putting themselves at risk of skin cancer for the sake of a tan, and we think this is unacceptable.

It's time to build on previous legislation requiring—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister's time for this question has elapsed.

Big Game Hunting Aerial Survey Results

Mr. Shannon Martin (Morris): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Conservation issued a release in August regarding the closure of another game hunting area to moose hunting. The irony, of course, was its headline that, quote, the population needs time to rebuild.

Mr. Speaker, big game hunting has been in crisis for 15 years, and this government is still not woken up to that fact.

My question is simple: Will the minister release the results of aerial surveys he's been withholding, or is he too embarrassed with the level of ineptitude they'll reveal?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): Mr. Speaker, I—gee, I

think the member kind of blew it there. We were hanging on every word, and he's going to leave us hanging, I guess, until at least tomorrow or at least at 4:30. I didn't hear him give that big shout-out for that investment, \$200 million in that bridge in Morris, [inaudible] highway. And I thought he signalled that he was going to vote for the Throne Speech today, so for sure everyone's going to be here. It's going to be a really, really big day here in the House.

* (14:30)

But, Mr. Speaker, we're starting to get some suspicion that the member opposite actually is not in favour of that new bridge, and we are very suspicious that members opposite, if they ever had government, would cancel that project. I think that's the message we're getting.

When it comes time, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to big game surveys, this government has tripled the investment in big game surveys over when they—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: It is now time for members' statements.

St. Norbert Veterans Memorial Association

Mr. Dave Gaudreau (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, on November 11th I had the pleasure of attending the Remembrance Day service with the members of military, veterans, city councillors, federal politicians and others from St. Norbert community.

The service, organized by St. Norbert Veterans Memorial Association, was held at the St. Norbert Cemetery where there's a cenotaph with the names of 13 men from the St. Norbert community who died during the First World War. Over the past five years the St. Norbert Veterans Memorial Association has done a wonderful job restoring the previously forgotten cenotaph. Students from the St. Norbert college jazz choir helped lead the service with the help from their choir and band director, Bev Betz. The students began the service by reading the names of the men on the cenotaph, their regiment and the date on which they died. The jazz choir then performed a song entitled MLK. This song was originally written to—as a tribute to Martin Luther King Jr., but the words were also very relevant to the 13 soldiers who sacrificed their lives.

Later, a student performed the Last Post and Rouse on the trumpet. I found the ceremony very moving and I'm sure others felt the same. We were reminded of the tremendous debt of gratitude that we owe to our veterans and military personal for their many sacrifices they make on our behalf.

Thank you very much to all the students from St. Norbert Collegiate and their teacher, Bev Betz, who are with us in the gallery today for volunteering their time and thank you for the St. Norbert Veterans Memorial Association for organizing such a powerful Remembrance Day service.

I also would like to ask leave to have all their names be recorded in Hansard. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to include the names of the individuals the honourable member from St. Norbert mentioned? *[Agreed]*

St. Norbert Collegiate Students: Riley Dillabough, Rachel Junghans, Claire Huberdeau, Melissa Kleinsasser, Joel Enns, Scott Dick, Logan Rostecki, Tyson Schneider, TJay Staruch, Bryan Young, Reiss Turnbull, Caleb Fenez, Kelly Staruch, Brianna Palendat, Rachelle Collette, Marissa Dheilly, Carter Sisson and teacher Bev Betz

St. Norbert Veterans Memorial Association: Brian and Vivian Cyr, Art Bloomfield, Jason Bloomfield, Kevin Haag, Patrick Haag, Katherine Pettipas, Babette Allarie, Carolyn McIntyre, Karen Moffat, Ann Braiser

Project Echo—Lighthouse Missions

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): I'm pleased to rise in the House today to congratulate and bring recognition to an organization that assists so many of our disadvantaged Manitobans throughout the year, Project Echo. With the holiday season approaching, their current initiative requires assistance from all members of this House and our constituents.

Project Echo is a Winnipeg-based charity whose goal is to improve the lives of Winnipeggers through programming based upon a collective of empathetic and action-oriented citizens committed to making a difference for those who do not have the means to do so for themselves. Founder, Jeff Fisher, and his amazing team of volunteers truly embody the spirit of compassion for their trials of those most needy. Their mission is, and I quote, whether due to illness, poor life choices, abuse, addiction or the harmful acts of others, anyone can find themselves homeless

and everyone deserves the essentials of life: food, clothing, shelter and dignity, end quote.

Project Echo was—has supported the efforts of the Lighthouse Mission in Winnipeg with their contributions over many years. This year Project Echo has already committed to and has goods in place to provide 200 clothing hampers including winter coats, boots, clothing for an entire family; 200 dinners at the Lighthouse Mission; and 200 emergency hampers including toiletries, socks, underwear, high-nutrient foods for patrons at the Lighthouse Mission. This being accomplished, Project Echo is looking to add to their team of volunteers in the order—in order to deliver their hampers and to provide food services starting on December 3rd. As well, a further initiative going into 2015 is to raise funds to provide infrastructure within the newly developed food prep area within the Lighthouse Mission.

Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of the upcoming holiday season and the goodwill that we should always as members of this Legislative Assembly extend, I ask we all make an effort to assist these most worthy organizations whether it be personally or reaching out to our constituents to do so in any fashion they are capable of.

I ask all members to join me in thanking Mr. Fisher, who is the gallery with us today, and his group of volunteers for making a tremendous difference in the lives of so many people here in Manitoba. Thank you.

Bethania Personal Care Home Ladies Auxiliary

Mr. Matt Wiebe (Concordia): Today I would like to recognize the ladies auxiliary from the Bethania Mennonite Personal Care Home. Since Bethania's beginning in 1945, the ladies auxiliary group has served as a cornerstone in shaping and preserving Bethania's values. The women who volunteer their time for the ladies auxiliary are committed to the Bethania tradition of caring through dedicated serving. Some of the women have been volunteering with the group for over 40 years.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this fall, the Bethania Ladies Auxiliary was one of nine groups to receive a Recognition Award from the Manitoba Council on Aging. Since 1996, the Manitoba Council on Aging has given out these awards in an effort to remind us of the important role older adults play in our communities. The council recognized the Bethania Ladies Auxiliary for making an outstanding

contribution to their community. These women have gone above and beyond the call of duty to help Bethania care home residents.

The ladies auxiliary supports the seniors at Bethania through the many events they host every year, including Christmas programs, a Thanksgiving celebration and a spring tea. These events are full of engaging conversations and often have fantastic homemade baking and crafts for sale as well. The events also serve as an opportunity for all community members to fellowship together, meet with Bethania residents, as well as raise funds for the spiritual care program.

As the Bethania personal-care home looks forward to celebrating their 70th anniversary next year, the ladies auxiliary can as well. Their many years of dedicated service have been a blessing to Bethania and its residents. In their service to their community, the women have demonstrated an exemplary level of commitment and serve as role models for everyone.

Thank you to the Bethania Ladies Auxiliary for coming back year after year to brighten the lives of our parents, grandparents and friends.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good Neighbours Active Living Centre

Mr. Cliff Graydon (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the Assembly today on a pressing matter. Elder abuse is a real and tragic occurrence and needs to be meaningfully addressed. Today I would like to highlight a few notable mentions.

On November 28th, the Honourable Alice Wong, Minister of State for Seniors, made an announcement in Winnipeg confirming the federal government's commitment to strengthening financial literacy of seniors. In tandem with introducing legislation enshrining tougher penalties for those who take advantage of seniors, it is clear that the Canadian Government is taking action.

Additionally, there are many local organizations doing amazing work here in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. Through the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program, the Good Neighbours Active Living Centre is responsible for providing funds to local organizations and programs to prevent instances of elder abuse and improve financial literacy.

Mr. Speaker, the Good Neighbours Active Living Centre is also the steward of the Manitoba Network for the Prevention of Abuse of Older Adults, an interdisciplinary network of service providers committed to increasing awareness of elder abuse. As advocates, the Good Neighbours Active Living Centre must be commended.

However, Mr. Speaker, at the same time that the federal government and community organizations are doing great work, Manitoba's NDP government continues with their disrespectful attitudes towards seniors.

The NDP have broken their word multiple times about removing educational property tax from seniors aged 65-plus. They raised the PST after claiming the notion was nonsense, and they only half committed to raising the EIA housing allowance after the Progressive Conservative opposition fully committed to do so.

Progressive Conservatives are dedicated to protecting seniors and meaningfully addressing instances of elder abuse. We are committed to ensuring that the life in Manitoba for those on low and fixed incomes is made more affordable.

Mr. Speaker, the efforts of the federal government and community-based providers such as the Good Neighbours Active Living Centre deserve to be commended. At the same time, the NDP need to start showing some respect to seniors who have given their lives to make Manitoba a better place for all to call home.

Thank you.

Brad Mikoluff

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to the 2014 Canadian Junior Football League all-Canadian punter Brad Mikoluff. Not only is Brad from my hometown of Beausejour, I have had the pleasure of knowing Brad as a student and his mother, Josephine Mikoluff, as a colleague during my previous years as a teacher and student counsellor at École Edward Schreyer School in the Sunrise School Division.

Brad Mikoluff is a fourth year punter with the Prairie Football Conference junior club, the Winnipeg Rifles. The 21-year-old started his football career as a member of the Eastside Eagles football program, and during his first year of eligibility he successfully tried out for the Winnipeg Rifles.

Brad was named to the all-star team for the Prairie Football Conference, and this season was twice named the conference special teams player of the week and ended the year with a 33-and-a-half yard average, earning the all-Canadian award recognition.

* (14:40)

Brad initially wanted to play defensive line but soon realized he just really wanted to kick footballs. This motivated him to attend US kicking camps during the off-season to hone his skills. Brad has one more year with the Winnipeg Rifles and has aspirations of playing in the CFL. He is hoping he can get into a rookie camp with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers and generate enough interest for them to come and see him play.

Brad is a level 1 carpenter by trade and plans to attend Red River College to complete all four levels and receive his ticket. Whether it is football or carpentry, it is obvious to me that Brad Mikoluff is an ambitious individual who, through dedication and determination, has already achieved what most 21-year-olds only dream of.

I am certain that Brad will continue to succeed in whatever he sets out to do and being named the 2014 CJFL all-Canadian punter is only the beginning. I predict we can all look forward to seeing Brad Mikoluff's name in a CFL lineup and quite possibly as a Winnipeg Blue Bomber.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations, Brad.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

**THRONE SPEECH
(Eighth Day of Debate)**

Mr. Speaker: To resume the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), and the debate is open.

The honourable member for St. Paul (Mr. Schuler).

I believe there is a practice in this House, where members having spoken on both-on the amendment would normally be considered to have been part of their speaking time for the main motion as well.

Is there leave of the House to allow the honourable member for St. Paul to continue with his comments? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for St. Paul, I believe, has 26 minutes remaining.

Mr. Ron Schuler (St. Paul): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the unanimous support of the House to be continuing on my speaking points. I know the House is sitting with rapt attention and wants to hear the rest of my speech. In fact, yesterday, I was speaking to the amendment—the sage, wise amendment put forward by my leader, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Pallister), and we appreciate very much the fact that he put forward that amendment and I had the opportunity to address it, although briefly, before the vote interrupted my comments.

So today I will address the Chamber and continue with my comments on the actual Throne Speech motion, and I would like to make it very clear that I will not be supporting this Throne Speech. In fact, I have not supported one single Throne Speech that the NDP has put forward, and for good reason.

In the little bit of time that I have left, and I touched it on it on my speech from yesterday, that one of the things my communities of East St. Paul, West St. Paul and Springfield stand for and they—that I love about them and they—I know they appreciate about me is the fact that they are communities that are built on integrity. And integrity is where you say what you mean and you mean what you say, which is not something that this NDP government is known for.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, every member of the NDP, all 57 candidates, including the Premier, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), went door to door and said they would not raise taxes, No. 1, and they said, read my lips, we will not raise the PST. And they did so, especially those who were in Cabinet and those today who are no longer in Cabinet but were in Cabinet, all know that that particular topic had been raised, had been discussed, had been considered and, in fact, was delayed until after the election. They knew it was coming. They knew if they wanted to live up to the commitments and the promises that they made, they would have to raise taxes, No. 1, and then they would have to raise the PST.

So, Mr. Speaker, my communities of East St. Paul, West St. Paul and Springfield are communities built on integrity, and they saw through the NDP and in fact did not buy into the NDP big lie that there would not be a tax increase, neither would there be a PST increase. Because as soon as the NDP got

elected, no sooner had they gotten into this Chamber that they already broadened the scope of what PST would be applied to.

In fact, one of the things that a lot of families struggle with and that is home insurance, it is one of those things that a lot of people view as being an add-on. They view it as being something that you should debate, that you should consider whether you should have.

Now, I would suggest to all families that that is one of those things that are non-debatable. House insurance is incredibly important, and I know there are a lot of families that sit at the kitchen table and struggle with how they can make budgets meet, and I know we have that discussion, too, in our household.

In fact, I got a phone call yesterday from my son. Yesterday was a big sale on the Internet, and he wanted soccer cleats, and I keep having to negotiate the price down with him what I think is a reasonable budget, and he keeps wanting to negotiate the price up on what is a reasonable budget, certainly when it comes to soccer cleats.

But I know a lot of parents are sitting at the table deciding whether or not they would have house insurance, whether they could afford to increase their insurance, because we know that the costs of building and renovating have gone up substantially. And many of them might have decided after that PST was increased—sorry, Mr. Speaker, I misspoke; the PST was applied to house insurance. So at that point in time, 7 per cent PST was applied to home insurance, and that was a big hit to those families who are debating what they can and can't afford. They then had to decide whether or not they would have house insurance, but what they didn't realize is the next year the PST would be increased by 16 per cent—another increase in the taxes applied to house insurance.

Not just was PST applied to house insurance, but to many other operations and many other services that are provided to Manitobans. It was the big turning their back on the public that hurt the NDP, and that was applying the PST to everything, the PST increase. That is where the NDP have suffered. That is where the NDP are starting to see that there is a backlash from Manitobans, that Manitobans are troubled with what the NDP have said, and it reflects itself when you go shopping.

I know often I stand in line and I'm shopping for my family and I think I'm buying something for 100

or 200 or 300 dollars, and the price—the sales clerk will tell me what the final bill is, and I'm always shocked, and I say, what? I thought it was supposed to be \$300? And they say, well, yes, it's because of the NDP PST that you have to pay, and the connection is being made. And I would suggest to the Premier (Mr. Selinger) that a lot of the troubles that he is facing today goes back to that moment when he stepped into Cabinet and said, you know, despite the fact that we went door to door and with some credibility said we would pay for all of our promises without raising taxes and without raising the PST, both of those they ended up not living with.

In fact, what was even more troubling is that there was the ability—and members opposite who ran in '99, 2003, 2007, 2011, all ran that the balanced budget legislation or the taxpayer protection act would not be removed, that people would still have the right to vote on a PST increase. And, in fact, after taxes were broadened, after the PST was increased, the NDP did the final clincher—and this was the strike three, Mr. Speaker, when they removed the taxpayer protection act—which they ran on in 1999; which they ran on in 2003, 2007, 2011—they ran on it each and every time and they turned their back for the third time on those individuals that they went door to door to and said they wouldn't do any of those three things, and that's the strike three.

And if the Premier wants to look back—and some day he will look back on his career and look where things started to go sideways, where things started to become a problem for him, it goes back to those three strikes. Mr. Speaker, he's got three strikes against him and his government, and each and every one of the 37 members on the opposite side voted for the tax increases, voted for the PST increase and then voted to decimate the taxpayer protection act. Each and every one of them, whether they're in Cabinet, whether they're formerly in Cabinet, whether they're in the backbenches, it makes no difference; each and every one of them voted for each one of those strikes and they must all wear it in the next election campaign.

* (14:50)

I know that when the time comes, whenever it seems to be that the cabal who now run the NDP, when they decide that there is going to be an election, and I certainly would recommend to members in this House don't trust the said election dates. I think that's about as fluid as the government Cabinet is right now. Whenever the Premier and his

cabal decides that they are going to call an election, that's when election's going to be.

And at that time I will be going door to door in my constituency, and I will be pointing out the members of my community who work their lives in their businesses and their jobs with integrity—I will point out to each and every one of them that this is a government, that this is a party that went door to door and misled them, lied to them on three different issues, Mr. Speaker, on three different points. And I will point out to everybody and anybody that I talk to at the door that is a group of men and women that do not conduct their affairs with integrity, with the kind of integrity that is expected of each and every one of us—the kind of integrity that, when our children step out of the door, we say, you know, study hard, you'll be careful when you're driving and, whatever you do, conduct yourself with integrity. And that is not something that they can look to their government as and say there was a government with integrity, because they did not conduct themselves with integrity.

They went to the door and on three counts misled the public. Shame on each and every one of them. Whether they were in Cabinet, whether they are in Cabinet and whether they are on the backbenches and wish to be in Cabinet, each and every one of them should hold their share of responsibility. In fact, we had a vote yesterday where individuals could've said to their Premier, you were wrong on the first count, you were wrong on the second count, you were wrong on the third count; you're strikes out, Mr. Premier. They could've voted for—actually, in most cases, their own words and chose not to do so.

Mr. Speaker, we'll have another vote today, where each and every one of them will be able to stand up and say, with some atonement, we apologize for what we did. We got it wrong in three cases. And they should vote against the Throne Speech, because the public has had enough.

And I would suggest to members opposite that they go and they look what integrity means. And integrity means that you say what you mean, you mean what you say and when it comes to the NDP, that is no longer the case. And I know there are going to be a lot of individuals, that are going to go door to door in the next campaign, and they're—the NDP—they'll put up their 57 candidates and they'll say trust us. And that trust is broken; that trust is no longer there. They have broken that trust on three

significant counts, and that's why the NDP is having troubles and that's why the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) is being challenged for his leadership because on three counts the public trust was broken.

And I would recommend to each and every member of this Legislature, look hard within yourself. You cannot support a government that has broken the trust of the people, that has broken the integrity that evidently they went door to door on and said they wouldn't do—that they have now turned their back on integrity. They have broken the trust with the citizens of Manitoba.

I, for one, representing the good people of East St. Paul, West St. Paul and Springfield, I will stand for integrity. I will stand up for the trust that has been given to me by the citizens of my community, and I will do the right thing, Mr. Speaker, and I will be voting against this terrible Throne Speech. I will be voting for integrity, and I ask all members to please join us. I will not be supporting this Throne Speech.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to address the Throne Speech.

I watched intently yesterday as the government and the NDP members had an opportunity to get it right for Manitobans, and they failed in that opportunity yet again. They had an opportunity to go back and decide that, you know, maybe that they don't have the best interests of Manitobans at heart. And we know that's the case and that Manitobans would have an opportunity to look for a new leadership and a new government. But again, they failed.

They—we—it is true, though, that they have another opportunity today. They have an opportunity to vote against the Throne Speech and make things right for Manitobans, because we know that some of the members have gone out there and they pretended that they were not involved in the PST increase. They've said to people they were not involved in any of the discussions, not involved in any of the processes that went along there. So it's interesting that we hear from the staff from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar), and the staff knows that they not only looked at increasing it by up 1 per cent to—you know, to wherever they did go. They also looked at going 2 per cent; they also looked at bringing in the HST and, surely, the Finance Minister would be aware of what that individual's staff is doing, what

that minister's staff is doing, and then for the rest of the NDP caucus pretend that, ah, we knew nothing. This was sprung upon us by a leader that was not listening to them anymore, apparently. That's just, you know, very disappointing that they would try to pretend that they could get that by Manitobans. Manitobans are very smart and they don't buy that.

In fact, you know, I look at what this government has done in education, and our family, my wife and I, we have four children. They've all gone through the Manitoba education system. Some of them started prior to the NDP coming into power, and we found it strange as they got in a little further into the education system that we had to spend more money outside of the education system to make sure that they were fulfilling the things they needed to do, they were learning the things they needed. So we found that, as the NDP got further and further into power, we had to spend money on things like Kumon. We had to spend money on things like tutors to make sure that our students were keeping up to where we thought they should be, because this government was failing them in the education system.

This NDP government, experimented on my children's education and I am not happy about that. I think it's a discredit to the children of Manitoba and we are paying for that down into the future: failures of this government.

So we see that further and further, Mr. Speaker. We're very fortunate that my children were able to, with the resources that we were able to pay for outside of the education system, they were able to graduate with honours and move on to university. But, again, we're comparing ourselves now to other students from other provinces in those universities and it is a challenge.

So, coming back to this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, this government has an opportunity, this—these members have an opportunity to defeat this Throne Speech and give Manitobans an opportunity to have a new government, because what we need out there is somebody that will tell Manitobans the truth. We've seen this government come out about infrastructure. They came out pretending—let's see, what did they pretend to do? They promised a 2-to-1 ratio of spending from the gas tax; that didn't happen, not 1 cent, not one dime. Increased vehicle registration fees directly into the government coffers, all of that was supposed to go to roads and highways—again, not one dime.

They broadened the PST. Much of that was supposed to go into infrastructure and, again, no new spending, not one dime, and, of course, there's the big one, Mr. Speaker, the PST increase. Every cent, every dime, every dollar from the PST increase was promised by this Premier (Mr. Selinger), by this Minister for Infrastructure, by each and every member across the floor that it would go into core infrastructure, and we know now, of course, it didn't: another promise, another government lie. Over \$2.2 billion were underspent on infrastructure over five years. What a five-year plan; what a failure.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, they promised underexpenditures for infrastructure would be carried over into the next year. Now, I know that the Premier and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) may not be accountants. That's understandable, but they have staff that are. Those staff understand generally accepted accounting practices. They understand public sector—the rulings of the Public Sector Accounting Board. They understand all those processes. They could tell all those people, they could tell the minister, they could tell the Premier that under those rules you can't carry forward funds.

So, again, they're trying to mislead Manitobans, Mr. Speaker. Unspent funds are, of course, returned to the Treasury, and the NDP, of course, continues to run a deficit. So they're pretending those funds will be there the following year, but they're not. We need them to admit this to Manitobans.

* (15:00)

It's very sad. You know, it's sad to watch. I travelled this summer. I travelled over a period of a couple weeks to six of our fabulous provinces in Canada, saw the other opportunities that there are there for Canadians, saw how other governments deal with infrastructure spending, and saw the failures in comparison that we have in Manitoba when I came back.

It's quite sad, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the opportunities that could have been outlined this—in this Throne Speech but were not; failures again for Manitobans, lots of things that could be done to foster growth in Manitoba and are being ignored by this NDP government because of their instability. There's concerns out there. There's concerns out there about the instability of this government. There's concerns from companies and individuals that invest around the world. There's concerns about investing in Manitoba, and not just with dollars but with students.

There are students that are coming to Manitoba to study, and when the countries that they come from look at Manitoba and they look at Canada, they see Canada as a stable country, but they see that we have instability in our government here and they're concerned for their students, Mr. Speaker. Is that not a sad statement for the students of that country that they are concerned that it might not be safe for those students to come and study in Manitoba because of this government's instability?

Time to change things, Mr. Speaker; they had an opportunity with the Throne Speech and missed it. They have another opportunity to vote against the Throne Speech and they could fix a lot of things for Manitoba then.

You know, Mr. Speaker, what I hear from my constituents and many people on Manitoba is this government is very, very good at taking tax dollars from them. And they continue to do that, but now they're taking their tax dollars, they're taking my tax dollars and this Premier is spending them on running for the leadership of the NDP. How do they differentiate that? How do you prove to Manitobans as a premier that you're not taking my tax dollars, my constituents' tax dollars and using them to make sure that you remain as the Premier in your internal competition, your internal leadership competition that is not open to the public, that is closed to the majority of Manitobans, but you're taking their money. This Premier's taking their money and spending that money to ensure that he remains leader of the NDP.

I have constituents, Mr. Speaker, very, very irate about that prospect, not happy to see that at all. The Premier needs to do the correct thing. If he wants to run for the leadership, that's fine, no problem there. Step down as leader. Anybody that wishes to run against him for the leadership, remove themselves from Cabinet. Then it's an even slate, everybody is starting from the same base. But, no, we have here that the Premier's taking those tax dollars and they're being spent in a leadership competition. Sad to watch.

Mr. Speaker, obviously, this summer we had a lot of challenges in Manitoba, couple of floods, big floods all the way along. I spent much time in the southwest and in the middle part of Manitoba travelling around, seeing how things were being dealt with. Lot of challenges there for Manitoba. I did go down to the southwest with the MLA for Arthur-Virden, the MLA for Spruce Woods and the

MLA for Midland on a long day trip. We travelled around through a lot of places that we could not go. We had closed roads. We had to turn back, find another road to go through, met people around the southwest, saw their—how they were trying to deal with the devastation that was down there.

And I was struck, Mr. Speaker, when I listened to the Premier (Mr. Selinger) speak at the AMM convention. He talked about things like the flood and he talked about we had issues around Portage la Prairie; we had issues around Lake Manitoba; we had issues along the Assiniboine River. But then when he talked about the southwest—as they had a flood, they had another bad year—they are not included as Manitobans. I was very disappointed to hear those words from the Premier of Manitoba who is empowered to respond to all Manitobans' issues, not just the issues of the unions, the issues of the people that vote in his leadership campaign. He was talking about the southwest as they—as if they didn't even belong to Manitoba, as if they didn't even rate in Manitoba. So I looked for something in the Throne Speech that might maybe include them in Manitoba again, and I saw nothing. Another loss for Manitobans—sad to see.

Mr. Speaker, there are tremendous opportunities for Manitoba, and we see that around us in all the provinces and the states. We see the opportunities that we could have here, but they are ignored time and time again by this government that is only interested in one thing, and that is how they hold onto power at all costs. Very disappointing to watch it.

We see a minister that's talking about trying to steer the Titanic. I'm sure she maybe meant ocean liner because there was problems steering the Titanic, I think. In fact, there's a reason there's no sequels for the Titanic. There's reason there's not going to be a sequel for this NDP government. You know, they tried to make remakes of those and they did, not very good remakes sometimes and this government's trying to remake itself. They're trying to remake themselves, so they can pretend to Manitobans that they are concerned about their issues. They're trying to remake themselves to pretend to Manitobans they're concerned about infrastructure when they underspend by \$2.2 billion over five years. They're pretending to Manitobans that they can remake themselves and be important again, but they are failing again and again and again, Mr. Speaker. It's disappointing to watch for Manitobans because there is so much opportunity out

there for Manitoba to be a huge part of Canada and contribute back to Canada, as opposed to take.

But that is what this government is good at, taking from Manitobans, spending it towards their own end. We have the Premier taking from Manitobans, spending it on his leadership competition here and it's time to quit that, Mr. Speaker. It's time to look at this Throne Speech that was released—that was read into our House here and say, you know what, that doesn't do it for Manitobans. There's an opportunity for each and every member on the government side to do the right thing for Manitobans and vote against this Throne Speech. They had an opportunity yesterday and they passed it up. We know there's renegades out there that aren't happy with what the Premier's doing. They are saying the Premier's not listening to them. I wonder what's changed. What has changed in those few weeks when they stepped out of the caucus and said the Premier will not listen to them? Apparently, nothing has changed, but they are still backing the Premier up.

They're still going to vote for his Throne Speech and it is his Throne Speech. It is not the Throne Speech that represents Manitoba and it is very disappointing to see the Manitoba that could be, the opportunities that we could have here and the opportunities that the Manitoba that this government envisions and—very disappointing what they see. They don't see what other Manitobans see. They don't see the work that's being done. They don't value the work that's being done. All their value is the tax dollars that are coming in to the government coffers and are now being spent by this Premier on his leadership race, not for the good of Manitobans, only for the good of that Premier, only for the good of that member, so that he can grasp, he can cling on to power and make sure that more taxes will come in from Manitobans for their excess spending, many programs, spending more and getting far, far less, except in infrastructure, of course, where we've underspent in this government by \$2.2 billion over five years. Just imagine the Manitoba we could have had, imagine the opportunities that were foregone, imagine the investment that is flying over Manitoba to other provinces and countries and is not coming here because of the instability of this government.

I ask all the government members across the floor, the NDP members, grasp this opportunity for Manitobans. You have an opportunity today to make things right. Make things right for Manitobans and vote against this Throne Speech.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): And I thank the member for Brandon West (Mr. Helwer) for his comments and his—and the things that he has put on the record. I thank you also for the opportunity to speak this afternoon on the Throne Speech. And, Mr. Speaker, first off, I do want to say welcome back to you, to the Clerk and the table officers. I want to welcome the new pages here to the Legislature and like colleagues on both side of the aisle have said already, I think especially in the climate that we are in right now, subsequent to the events in Ottawa, we also thank all of those agents and all of those individuals who are involved, perhaps just outside of this Chamber, in efforts to keep us safe, to protect democracy and to make sure that the work that we are doing here is facilitated as best as possible. So those are important things, and we do thank those individuals in security who are involved in keeping us safe in this place.

* (15:10)

Mr. Speaker, today I do want to put first things first, and sometimes when I get focused and I give a response in a context like this, I forget to thank my family. So first thing I'm going to do is to publicly acknowledge that none of us as legislators stands in this place and gets up without the support of the—our families behind us, and so that means for me my wife, Shelley, and my children, Madeleine, Evan and Gwendolyn, are a big part of this effort.

It was only three years and a little bit ago that a number of us were first elected to this House. I still remember that time. At that point in time my son was just 12, turning 13. But today he turned 16, so it's an important event in our household as well. So that's a big happy birthday shout-out to my 16-year-old son Evan. We know we can't be there for everything. There is a price we pay, and so I can't be there today. But, of course, these—that's an important milestone turning 16, getting a driver's licence. And I was just in the vehicle with my son the other day chastising him and trying to convince him that this is a vehicle that weighs thousands of pounds and takes a long time to stop. And he is just so in a hurry to go everywhere. And so as we embark on this road as parents with our children, we will—we hope for the best and we, of course, always wish for their safety, and maybe along the way they will actually accept some advice from their long-suffering parents.

Mr. Speaker, today I stand in the House and, having listened to the debate in the last number

of days on the Throne Speech, I have more and more come to understand that this Throne Speech is not about content. This Throne Speech must be understood in terms of context. And the context for this Throne Speech is as follows: that this is a government in Manitoba that is dysfunctional, it is disorganized, it is deeply distrustful. We are witnessing the disintegration of Cabinet and caucus solidarity, and this is a deeply divided government.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

This is a set of circumstances that Manitobans have not perhaps ever faced before, but they are circumstances that are not in isolation. This is not a situation where we can just stand by idly and watch the NDP ministers and caucus members squabble amongst themselves on a daily basis. We must understand that this very open and very deteriorating conflict that is taking place across the aisle has very serious implications for Manitoba and for the people who live here, just as the member for Brandon West and others have said this afternoon. That the implication is that all Manitobans pay the price even today as we are considering the news that the Premier (Mr. Selinger) is bringing into his own office new members of his political staff and that the cost to taxpayers will be in excess of two or three hundred thousand dollars. These are political officers, they will have political assignments, and the minister cannot—or the Premier cannot sit in his place and pretend for one moment that that decision is not one that is made in order to further his own ambitions to hang on to his seat as Premier in this province. These are not individuals who are coming on board to help with the many issues that face Manitobans. They are there to assist with one issue, and that is the re-election of the Premier in his own office.

The Premier wants to have it both ways. He wants to hang on to the office and he wants to hang on to his leadership within his caucus when the right thing clearly to do would be to step aside and to allow a process to take place whereby any contenders who would be looking for that position could contest the position. The Premier's seat could be safeguarded by another that is selected by peers or by another process, but that would be the way to proceed with integrity, and that's not the path that the Premier is choosing.

But, on the subject of integrity, I listened with great interest over the last number of weeks to the members of the dissidents, those former senior

Cabinet ministers in the NDP government who now sit in the back row, who now have been demoted, who now have been isolated and relegated to the seats in the back of this Chamber. And they made serious accusations against their own leader, and this is perhaps the most unique part of the whole disintegration of their Cabinet and caucus solidarity. These things are being done so publicly and members who are senior Cabinet members said that the Premier (Mr. Selinger)—they made public statements and said the Premier was not listening to them anymore. He wasn't listening to members of his own caucus. They made the allegation that the Premier's priorities were not the priorities of Manitobans, and that is a serious allegation to make against a premier of a province. They said that they could no longer serve with integrity in that government, that integrity demanded that they would withdraw from the position they were in. That may be the most serious allegation that they make because it is no longer an allegation only against the Premier, it is an allegation against every member who now sits in a position of Cabinet responsibility.

That—those words that they speak against the leader now are assessed against everyone in that first and second row. It says to them that they also cannot sit in those places with integrity, and yet some choose to do so.

So you see how deep this rift goes within their own group, and I understand those are not heady times for any party. But to see it done so publicly, to see it done before the cameras has to be very demoralizing, and it's because of that that we have—that we brought the motion against this Throne Speech, the non-confidence motion—and I realize we're not debating the non-confidence motion this afternoon. That opportunity came yesterday afternoon. That was the opportunity for those ministers who had expressed such great reservations about their own leader; that was the opportunity for them to actually stand on conviction because it was conviction that they said they were standing on; and in their places yesterday they could've sent a powerful message to their leader. They could've sent a powerful message to their constituents. They could've sent a powerful message to all Manitobans that they were actually willing to stand on principle. That principle would've been this: that they cannot have it both ways. They cannot purport to stand against their own leader because he doesn't listen, because they can't be there with integrity and that his priorities are not the priorities of Manitobans and yet

somehow find a safe place to stand in support of that same Premier's Throne Speech. That simply does not work. This is not an issue of integrity.

Yesterday, at 4:55 p.m., in this House, it became clear that every one of those former ministers had made this not an issue of integrity, but an issue of opportunism. They sensed an opportunity. They didn't finally agree with us as we have brought the charges against this government that their government is—has a failing record, a failing record on health care, a failing record on social services, a failing record on education, a failing record on infrastructure investment, a failing record on debt and deficit reduction, a failing record when it comes to joining the New West Partnership. It was not the host of those failures that drove those ministers to resign from their Cabinet posts.

What did they see that tipped the scales? Finally, what they saw was one negative poll. They saw one poll that suggested that the future did not look so bright anymore, and on the basis of that poll they decided that they would pull the plug. And I imagine what they thought is that their colleagues would go with them and that did not occur. Things did not go according to plan. Well, in many cases, in this Chamber, things do not go according to plan.

But yesterday at 4:55 was the opportunity for the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald), the opportunity for the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard), the opportunity for the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), the opportunity for the member for Swan River (Mr. Kostyshyn) to stand in their place—the opportunity for the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Pettersen)—to stand in their place and support a non-confidence motion that would say because that Premier does not act with integrity, because he doesn't listen to his caucus, because his priorities are not the priorities of Manitobans, because of that, we can't side with him.

* (15:20)

Instead, what we saw was the height of opportunism. The Premier's priorities are clearly not the priorities of Manitobans, and that was the reason we brought the non-confidence motion and that was the reason for our profound disappointment, to see those members choose a path of opportunity over a path of principle.

In the time remaining to me I would want to sum up, as the Finance critic for the province, I would want to sum up the extent to which this

government's—this government has failed to set a course ahead, a course of prosperity for the province when it comes to finances. Day after day in question period I rose and asked this new, new Finance Minister, who says he wants to eliminate the debt by—the deficit by 2016-17. He says he has no plan. He's sitting on a \$522-million deficit, but he has no plan. He says that he will reduce expenditures but the Finance minister before him and the Finance minister before that failed in that regard. We have seen deficit after deficit after deficit without a plan.

This is a government that is clearly addicted to spending increases but is not seeing the writing on the wall. And that writing on the wall is when Moody's Investors Service indicates a negative opinion on the ability of this NDP government to get back into balance by their newest stated target. They failed to do so in 2014, even though they said that in this fiscal year they would be in balance. But it didn't happen. Instead, what Manitobans got was a \$522-million deficit.

But we know that they failed. They failed again when they said they wouldn't raise the PST. It doesn't matter whether we're talking about income tax rates. It doesn't matter if we're talking about the debt that now surpasses \$33 billion. It doesn't matter if we're talking about the job growth numbers that are the lowest in the country. It doesn't matter if we're talking about the fiscal stabilization account that this government continues to raid year after year and draw the balance of that important account down to almost nothing.

What is clear is that the legacy of this government is one of mismanagement, that in the end Manitobans pay more and get less. We have the—among the highest taxes in Canada and that we see mismanagement after mismanagement, and that is why, as the opposition party, we will not be in support of the Throne Speech today in this Legislature.

Ms. Theresa Oswald (Seine River): It's my great privilege to rise in the House today. I thank the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) for endeavouring to hurry his colleague along. It has been my experience when the member for Morden-Winkler (Mr. Friesen) speeches—speaks, the beginning and the end tend to be very far apart.

I want to say thank you so very much, say how grateful I am to be able to stand in the House today to provide a response to the Speech from the Throne. This privilege, of course, has been afforded to me by

the people of Seine River, and it is with them in mind, along with families from across our province, that I rise today to share my views on the vision that the government has articulated. Also, of course, on my mind today is my family, as was the case for the member for Morden-Winkler and I wish happy birthday to your 16-year-old son, a special day indeed.

I think about my own family and my own son, Jack, and the opportunities that I hope for him for the future. We know that all parents, regardless of political stripe, want the very, very best for their children and, not selfishly, they want their children to find opportunity in Manitoba, to be happy in Manitoba, find love, perhaps get married, buy a house, maybe a cottage, have a great career. It's the great Manitoba dream. And what that means, of course, for us is that those children are home at Christmastime and they're home at Easter and they're home on Thursdays. All of the days of the year, they're home to be with us and to share special celebrations, and it's really with my own son in mind and with the sons and daughters of the parents in my community that I stand today to speak about this Throne Speech.

Over the last couple of weeks Manitobans have been presented with two visions in two throne speeches, one from our government and one from the opposition. This is a fact, and I do believe—and I will say this quite honestly, that both visions are the culmination of a lot of hard work and careful thought. I will concede this point to the opposition, and I would also say that members should be commended for investing that time in the two throne speeches that we have seen in the last weeks.

Beyond that, however, I would say that for those who read or listened to the two speeches, we can clearly find two very different visions for Manitoba, and these visions will have a profound and meaningful impact on the very families about which I've just spoken, the families that live here in Manitoba.

And it's because of that impact that I will say to you that I do believe and I do declare that elections really do matter. There has been some rhetoric in the days gone by thrown towards me and towards some of my colleagues that, you know, all you care about is winning your seat or all you care about is winning an election, as if this were some sort of dirty, vile passion that one would hold. But in absolute reality, yes, I care deeply about our government winning

another election and I care deeply about winning my seat because it is only in doing so that you can carry forward with the kinds of visionary ideas that we see in the very Throne Speech that I stand here today to speak about and to absolutely, unequivocally support.

So elections really do matter. When a family comes forward, an individual, a family comes forward and casts their vote, they're choosing a representative to make decisions on their behalf; decisions that might be very easy and decisions that might be more complex and challenging. So supporting a party that actually shares your vision and shares your values as a family really, really matters, and we have to work very hard as elected representatives, regardless of political stripe, to earn that trust and to support the vision that the families in our community want us to bring forward.

New Democrats listen carefully to Manitoba families and to their concerns, and it's those concerns that help shape our vision to go forward. And we understand very clearly, because we talk to our neighbours, that families want a province that is affordable; families want to be able to enrol their sons and their daughters in hockey and ringette, in the Manitoba Theatre for Young People, in piano lessons and what have you. We understand that Manitoba families want to know that their kids are going to get the skills that they need to be able to invest their time and their energy in pursuing an excellent career right here in Manitoba.

They want to know without a doubt, in good times and in bad, that medical care will be there for them when they need it, not just because they have a fancy, shiny, gold, platinum-plated credit card, but because they have medical need, and they want to know that that care is going to be there when they need it most. They want to know that we'll have better roads, better highways, better flood protection—you name it—so that we can ensure that we live in a safe environment and we live in an environment where our economy can steadily grow. That's what Manitobans tell us.

The vision articulated in the government speech responds to these very visions and values that Manitoba families have spoken to us about. The vision in this Throne Speech is a vision that includes talking about thriving schools where students can learn and teachers can do their jobs because they're not afraid of losing their jobs. This is a Throne Speech that talks about affordable college and

university tuition along with growing apprenticeship opportunities so that no matter what your sons and daughters choose to be, who they are from the inside out, that they will find an opportunity that is just right for them that will allow them to put down those roots and be here at home for Christmas, for Thanksgiving, for Easter, for Mother's Day—I say unabashedly—and for Thursdays and Wednesdays and Tuesdays and Mondays.

* (15:30)

That's what it's all about. But it means focusing on keeping life affordable and ensuring that we can pursue those dreams—we can and our children can—and it actually does mean lower taxes. Now, you'll never hear the members opposite utter such a word. You'll never hear them talk about the fact that, indeed, thanks to 80 tax cuts roughly, give or take, our government has made the average family pay about \$3,800 less in provincial taxes today than they would have under the tax levels and regimes that were in place under the members opposite. This is a fact.

But then we can talk a little bit about what we saw in the other throne speech. In the spirit of fairness, I will say that we did see, in the alternative throne speech, values reflected. And I think that, if we dig a little bit deeper and take a look at those values and perhaps what they might call vision, we might see some very telling things. Now, I did a quick read of that; that's all it took, by the way, a quick read, and I saw the Leader of the Opposition refers to his vision as a way up. And so, with anxious anticipation, I went to see what, by definition, a way up would be to members opposite. And what I actually read was a way back, a way back to failed policies, failed ideas and, indeed, values that aren't reflective of Manitoba society today. I can say, for example, that nowhere in that throne speech—that alternative throne speech—did you see from the opposition a mention of hiring more doctors and more nurses—not a whisper, not one.

Now, I can tell you, having had the privilege of 7.25 years as Health minister, here's a really important fact I can alert the members opposite to: doctors and nurses are important. They are very important, indeed, and you have to have a strategy and you have to have a plan and you have to have a vision for ensuring that Manitobans have a doctor when they need them, not because of the fatness of their wallet, but because of their medical need.

I also noticed that there was nary a mention in this alternative throne speech of hiring a single teacher. Now, the Leader of the Opposition, when he puts on his warm and cuddly cloak, says, I was a teacher. I love teachers. Wouldn't you like to be a teacher too? I—there's a tune, I think, that goes with that.

But, in the same breath, he also talks about the Filmon government being one of the finest governments Manitoba was ever blessed to have. That same government who sent 700 teachers or more to the door, who gave us Filmon Fridays—I remember it vividly—who had in his own Cabinet the kind of people that believed that arts and music and band and theatre, these were frills that should be done away with. This was the vision of days gone. That is a way back; that is not a way up, not even close.

There wasn't a single word in this alternative speech about keeping Hydro and MPI publicly owned. But, of course, who would believe such words anyway, from the chap who was enthusiastic about selling MTS? And, unless I missed it, and I did read through this document, as I say, I didn't see one commitment whatsoever to the preservation of universally accessible, publicly funded health care. Zero. Zip. Nada. And why would that be? Because the same Leader of the Opposition has said in private and mused on public radio that he believes that two-tier, American-style health care is the thing that Manitobans want.

Well, I don't know the Manitobans that he's talking to, but I know the Manitobans that I'm privileged to speak to every single day are those that want to ensure that there's home care when their mom and dad and their grandma and their grandpa need it; they want to ensure that there's daycare when their children needs it, not that they have to pay a skyrocketing amount for. They want to ensure that health care is there in the worst possible times in their lives. And, in this alternative to the throne speech, this opportunity for members opposite to put their best foot forward, this was their chance, not a whisper about caring, about universally, publicly funded, accessible health care. And, frankly, I think that says it all.

Now, I don't think that we should be overly surprised about the values and the vision that exists in that alternative throne speech. I don't think that we should because it actually does, based on my observation, represent the Leader of the Opposition's

values and represent his vision. So none of us should recoil in surprise that it is so bereft of anything that is close to what Manitoba families actually have a view for.

I don't think he had to speak in detail, actually, about his values when it comes to cutting from public services, because he's tried to do it before and he will undoubtedly do it again. I don't think that the alternative throne speech needed to elaborate on his principles when it comes to privatization and user fees, because he did it before and he'll do it again. This is something that you can absolutely take to the bank.

But what about those deeper, fundamental values—values that I believe define us as Manitobans; values like kindness and acceptance and, yes, love. I'm talking about values like mutual respect and equality that should guide us in all that we do. These aren't the kinds of values from someone who has historically referred to relationships and marriages of gay and lesbian people as a social experiment; the values of somebody who can stand in this House and vote against Bill 18, an antibullying bill that was really about no more than allowing children to come together to meet if they so chose. And every single person led by the Leader of the Opposition stood in their place and voted against that piece of legislation. You do not call members of our society—good Manitobans, gays and lesbians, bisexuals, transgender, queer—you don't call them a social experiment and get to lead this province. That is just not what we do. I'm talking about values that guide medicare, like universally accessible health care. These aren't the values that Manitobans share.

And, when I say to you, very humbly, today that, yes, indeed we saw two visions in the last weeks of a Throne Speech, the government's Throne Speech and the alternative throne speech, and the Manitoba families to whom I speak every single day are families that absolutely want us to support a vision going forward that's about accessible, publicly funded health care; that's about good education; that's about opportunities for young people; that's about ensuring that we accept one another for all that we are and all that we can be. And Manitobans will reject a negative, narrow view from those on the opposite side of the House who do not value acceptance, who do not value commitment to one another, who, frankly, I would ask myself—who do not value love and present a set of values that is so far away back that it isn't possibly, not even for a second, something that anybody on this side of the

House could support, and it certainly isn't one that I could support.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): I do want to thank the member from Seine River for her clarification on her stand. I think that she's going from one day to another day, and really don't know what she wants to do, but I can tell you this much: the media is following this event.

We know that just not a month ago they were on the other side of the fence saying that what a great thing this Manitoba was, and then they were on the love train, as the member from Steinbach said. They wanted to make sure that Manitobans got it right, so they resigned from their post. Every one of them resigned. In a matter—in fact, the member from Fort Garry-Riverview started a standing ovation the other day after the Throne Speech. We saw nine members not get up, so now all of the sudden they been brought into shape, they've been told by their peers that they're going to have to toe the line or else, but they're going to kick them out of something else, maybe won't even back in the caucus, I don't know. But one thing we do know for sure is they can waffle, they can go back and forth on their views and appear to be somewhat credible within their own mind.

But you're not going to fool Manitobans; you're not going to take the bait with what they really have to stand for. When one looks at what they said—in fact, I'd like to put on the record from the member from Seine River says, I think that when you—there was a sign of turmoil, it is never helpful. I'll acknowledge that.

* (15:40)

I will also say to people out there who voted for me and have supported me and did that because they believe in me and believed in my integrity; that is a right thing for me to do. Sometimes doing the right thing isn't the easy path. I assure you this isn't easy, but being truthful and holding on to your integrity is something my parents raised me to do, and I honour them today with that.

So why would you waffle from a commitment that your parents brought you up on and you truly believe one week? And then the next week you say, no, that's not what I believe at all; that's not what I said. Obviously, to me, that means that you don't have any credibility at all. But it's not for me to decide; it's for Manitobans to decide. They're the

ones—they're the ones—that are paying attention. And, if you underestimate the public, I guarantee you, it'll come back to bite you. Everybody knows that and anybody that has any credibility will take the public very seriously. And we know—we know—that every member from that side of the House that has taken the stand that they have and is not prepared to back it up, is going to be held accountable, same as we bill—it will be on this side of the House.

But I can guarantee you one thing we will do, Mr. Speaker—Deputy Speaker, is that we'll hold them to account. We—when we brought our amendment forward, the Leader of the Opposition was—comments made by the rebel five. Also, I want to give credit to the member from Flin Flon who—the Premier (Mr. Selinger) went up, made an announcement in his own community, and he stood his ground and he said, that love train has left the train station. We're not going to be taking part of that love train because that train has left the station and we're not going to be part of it. Because I know what he really wants to say and not be muzzled by his leadership or the other members in his caucus. He has an opportunity today at 5 o'clock to stand up in this House and see what he's really made of. Is he going to stand up on that love train or is that station left as well?

When one thinks about what we have to do as we go forward, and this leadership race—this pretend leadership race that the member from St. Boniface is pretending to put on for the folks over on that side of the House, we already know what he's doing. He's got close to \$400,000 in extra staff, stacking the deck against anybody that has any credibility that might want to run against him. We know that's not going to happen, either. They've been read the riot act; they're not fooling anybody.

Even the member from Thompson understands it. He's been standing right beside the First Minister's side, making sure that he will, in fact, support his leader. Unfortunately, the damage is done. Manitobans are the ones that are going suffer as a result of this mismanagement of this government. What we've seen is the Manitobans are going to be paying for this in—not only now but in many, many years to come.

We know that this government has also made a huge mistake in regards to Bipole III, and we have asked in this House many, many times about what Manitobans are going to be expected to pay. In fact, in the 2011 election, the NDP government went on

the record and attacked, through a franking piece put out by their party, that Manitobans would not pay 1 cent for the cost of Bipole III. What a misleading statement. What we found out in Hydro committee this past summer that Manitobans will be paying the entire cost, which was, according to the First Minister, \$1.1 billion in 2010. All of a sudden now, that cost is \$4.62 billion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what has happened to the credibility of this government? They have nothing, nothing to offer Manitobans except higher hydro bills, higher taxation. This very same government went to every door in Manitoba, and what did they say? We will not increase your taxes.

In fact, our leader at the time, Hugh McFadyen, made it very clear that the government had to raise taxes in order to meet the demands of which they said they were going to do. But what do we do? We saw that they said any tax increase in the PST was nonsense. They misled every Manitoban—every Manitoban—when they went door to door. And so we've seen not only an increase in the PST but also taxes on insurance, home insurance, driver's licence fees and the list goes on and on.

In regards to the hydro bills, we know, because of Manitoba's—Hydro's own plans, of which they brought forward, the hydro rates will at least double—at least double—from what they are now. We saw a 10.5 per cent increase in hydro rates in the past two years—\$120 million out of every Manitoban's pocket. What have they got to show for it? Nothing, nada, squat, according to their terms. They seem to like that term, because that's what they're offering Manitobans as an alternative—nothing, except higher tax bills, higher insurance rates. The list goes on and on.

Also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to talk about the outlet on Lake Manitoba which I know you have a huge interest in, and, unfortunately, they're throwing you under the bus. I don't know if you got that figured out yet, but what they've done is they've stalled this thing off for a decade. They have no intentions of building that outlet; they have no intentions of moving forward on that outlet. In fact, what they've done is set Lake Manitoba up for another flood come next year.

We have not seen Lake Manitoba levels at this level going into the winter of what we have now, and, of course, we know they're going to blame everybody. They're blaming the First Nations people they can't get an agreement signed. They can't get the

federal government to come to the table, it's all those bad federal guys that are not putting forward the name—the things that they need to get done in order to make sure they build the outlet.

Well, I can tell you they haven't even made application. For the member from Interlake, they have not even tried to help him out. They just threw him under the bus with the rest of them saying, too bad, so sad. You'll live well on your pension as you go forward, my friend from Interlake.

We also know that they promised multi-year funding for compensation for those farmers—those farmers that are represented by the member from Interlake. What did they do? Bail—bail—the member from Dauphin said, you can go to the bank on that. I will make sure that the Province of Manitoba offers multi-year funding for those flood victims. So three years later, fast-forward to 2014, what do we see? Another flood. These guys can't manage anything.

What they've done is just more water, more water, more water, and they just to talk about this bathtub—this bathtub—they put 34 bathtub fulls in, these big Olympic pools they love to talk about that don't happen in Manitoba, by the way. But, instead, what they talk about is the seven bathtubs that they're letting out. They're letting out seven bathtubs full. Guess what? The tubs get overfull—overflow, overflow, overflow. And you know what? They're not paying attention. They're not paying attention to Manitobans. They said that they went out and they consulted with Manitobans in regards to the Throne Speech. They didn't rep—they didn't consult with Manitobans at all; not once did they go out and listen to Manitobans.

This Throne Speech was made up by one person, and we know who that is, the member from St. Boniface. His views and his views only, and we know because the rebel five and the member from Flin Flon stood up and said the very same thing that all Manitobans knew. So we're going to give an opportunity here in about an hour and a half, two hours, in order to find out whether or not these folks really can make it happen. So that opportunity is about to come, and we encourage them all to do the right thing, and that's vote against the Throne Speech.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I would encourage the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) to not get too excited here.

I know the Conservatives have been having a little bit of excitement over the last few weeks and, matter of fact, they're at the point where they not only want to run their own party—as a matter of fact, they just had Lyle Bauer start eight months ago and now he's already quit on them. So not only they can't even run their own party, but yet they want to tell us how to run ours. They're asking questions every day when there's important economic questions to be asked of the government. They're asking questions that legitimately should be ruled out of order because they really are party affairs, and they want to—the member—the Leader of the Opposition wants to decide, you know, who can run in our leadership. He wants to set up the rules. I'm kind of half a mind to give him some membership books and let him go out and sign up some members since he really wants to get that involved.

But, you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to hear the Conservatives talk, you know, this province is already in recession. I mean, everything you hear from these guys is totally negative. But yet, you know, they should get out a little bit—they should get out a little bit. I don't know whether they've been to Polo Park last, but if you go to Polo Park you can't find a place to park your car, there's lineups at Starbucks right out in the mall. Air flights are sold out, auto sales are robust, business tax is zero.

* (15:50)

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

You know, whenever they mention that, they just kind of pass on and talk of—change the subject right away. They don't want to hear the good news.

But, you know, I talk to voters. I talk to voters every day, and I find the typical family in my constituency has a husband who's working, a wife is working. In fact, they're usually working two jobs. The kids are working—going to school. They're working as well. In fact, businesses can't find employees. We have the third lowest unemployment rate consistently in the entire country and yet they can't seem to get a—their minds around that.

Now, you know, there's a lot of good things going on in Manitoba and, in fact, we have some very, very good quotes from different people. For example, the realtors who—you know, I've been critical. They—a lot of them tend to be Conservative voters, but they—the realtors are very optimistic about city of Winnipeg.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, here's a quote: I believe Winnipeg is re-inventing itself with a new airport terminal, a new Canadian Museum for Human Rights, new football stadium at University of Manitoba, the most impressive in the country, major hospital expansion and a whole new industrial project called CentrePort, which will set Winnipeg up as a major freight-forwarding destination.

Who said that? Peter Squire from the Winnipeg Realtors Association in the Financial Times, July 18th, 2004.

Another quote: We have communities across the province who are firing on all cylinders, where population growth, according to Stats Canada, exceeds 20 per cent in the last five years. We have areas where industry and business are contributing to the finances of the province.

Who said that? Well, this was a quote from the Throne Speech debate just last year. So which one of the government members made that statement? Well, none of the government members made that quote. That was the opposition member. Which opposition member, you might ask? Well, the member for Winkler—Morden made that statement about Manitoba.

Now, we, as I've indicated, have the third best economic growth in Canada. We are going to be—we have the—unemployment's the third lowest in Canada, at 5 per cent. According to Statistics Canada, and surely they can't argue with Statistics Canada, weekly earnings in Manitoba have increased by 5.4 per cent, compared to September 2013, which is the biggest increase in the country last year.

Manitoba's increase in average weekly earnings is far above Saskatchewan. Now I ask him to listen to that. Everything in Saskatchewan is good, according to them. Manitoba's increase in average weekly earnings is far above Saskatchewan's, 4.7 per cent. Alberta is 3.6 and Canada is 3.5.

The Conference Board of Canada released their 2014 provincial outlook, and the outlook gives very good information regarding Manitoba's near-term economic outlook. And you know, the new Minister of Finance (Mr. Dewar) has only been in office for two or three weeks and already the Conference Board has reported, has given him a first job report and now we have moved ahead in economic results for this year to No. 2 in the country and that's all in three weeks. So, you know, I only look forward to even better results in the near future. So they say—the

Conference Board report says that Manitoba's near-term economic outlook is a good news story. Manitoba will quickly become a top performer next year, fueled by a boom in the construction industry, as the government allocates more money for public infrastructure.

The Conservatives know that. There's roads being built all over their constituencies. They can't drive anywhere without seeing road construction and as business investment gets a lift from new electricity transmission projects, and that, Mr. Speaker, is page 4 of the report. The Conference Board has increased their outlook for Manitoba's economic growth. They've upgraded from 2.0 to 2.3 to protect—that Manitoba will have the second strongest economic growth in Canada for 2014. And, as I indicated, it's been No. 3 for a number of years now.

And I had—and I know I was short on time today, but I couldn't pass up the opportunity to have a quiz for the members opposite. I know that the members certainly have difficulty in the past answering some of these questions, so I'm going to say—I'm not sure what the time is right now, but—*[interjection]* We're okay?

So I'm very pleased to have made the comments today on the Speech from the Throne, and look forward to it passing in the *[inaudible]*

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): It's always a pleasure to follow my friend from Elmwood. I often spend some time rebutting the—much information that he put on the record. I won't have as much time today, Mr. Speaker, because I've committed to ceding the floor at quarter after for the Premier (Mr. Selinger) to provide his comments.

I look forward to seeing which members from the NDP, whichever caucus they represent—I know there's a few over there—but which ones come and which ones support the Premier in terms of his comments, and which ones are providing enthusiastic support and which ones are providing tacit support and which ones are providing no support at all. We know that the placeholder Cabinet that's in place right now, they'll certainly be giving support. They owe to much extent their positions right now because of the turmoil that's happening within the NDP from the rebel five, or five and a half or six, or whatever. I'm a little confused because I know that the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Pettersen) is also—not been removed from caucus, but he can attend meetings, if I've got it right. So he's sort of like the

rebel five, but we only refer to the rebel five; it should probably be the rebel six or maybe the rebel five and a half.

And then there—of course, there's the rebels on the other side who are rebellious against the Premier but don't have the courage to stand up and say it, so we could include them, but they're not actually coming out and saying it. Then there's the member for Riel (Ms. Melnick). We're not really sure what her status is. She was an independent, of course, at one time, and then she got promoted sort of back into caucus, but she can't attend meetings. She's probably—I can't believe how low she was, because she's the only person I've ever seen get promoted to rebel status. She got a promotion that actually put her into rebel status, so she was at some sort of alternative universe, Mr. Speaker, that was somewhere beyond what the Cabinet is.

But that's how divided this Cabinet is. You have not just the Cabinet, of course, their caucus, you have a variety of different factions that are going on. You have the leadership camps that are, of course, organizing in the different areas for the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). The member for Thompson's been running for the NDP leadership for about 30 years, I think. So, of course, I mean, he's organizing and he'll have some of his supporters that are going to be supporting him. You've got the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald) who's made clear what her leadership ambitions are, and that's why she's on the backbench. We have the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), who once ran a half of a leadership campaign, so maybe he wants to finish what he started.

So you have the different camps that are coalescing around the different caucuses. And, you know, I heard somebody on the other side saying, boy, wouldn't it be interesting to be a fly on the wall of the Conservative caucus. Well, we'd love to have a few flies on the wall of that NDP caucus, the few caucuses they have. We'd have to have a few flies because of the few different factions. And they don't all meet together. They got the rebel alliance, and they sort of meet, and then you probably got the—*[interjection]* Oh, good, you got the member for Thompson—the member for Thompson is organizing his leadership campaign from the loge. I'm glad—oh, and, of course, he's there with the member for Tyndall Park (Mr. Marcelino), I think, Mr. Speaker—the member who was beside and on the love train about five minutes ago, and now he's talking to the member for Thompson.

So I know that there's a lot of different factions that are going on within that caucus. And really it's not for us to figure out. I mean, we're sad about it, of course, because it's not good for Manitobans, but it's really up for them to figure out all the different machinations. And, you know, I have a lot of sympathy for the member for Maples; it must be hard to be a whip and organize three caucuses. I know in talking to our own whip it's hard enough to organize one caucus, let alone you have to organize three separate caucuses. You know, maybe we can have an LAMC meeting and try to get him three stipends because he's organizing three different caucuses, all the work that he's doing.

* (16:00)

I want to say, first of all, the Premier (Mr. Selinger) was talking about—earlier about Steinbach. I love it when he speaks about Steinbach, and we'd like to see him there more often. But he was talking about this jobs tour that he was doing and what a great success it was, and it struck a bell. It reminded me of an email that I got the day after he was in Steinbach from a business person. So I looked in my archives of emails, and sure enough there it was. And it was forwarded to a number of the different NDP cabinet ministers, current and past. And I just want to read a little bit about it because it paints a very different view than what the Premier painted during question period.

It says, we as employers—this is the day after the skills tour—it says, we as employers believed that we were invited to this event because, as the invite stated, they wanted input and participation into concerns or comments with the apprenticeship program. In my small group we had a variety of employers who employed 500 people and as little as two people. We thought we would have a constructive time to discuss and question those in authority how to address or improve our businesses in regards to apprenticeship. What ended up happening was half an hour of government officials bragging on each other and what the government is doing for us. After this we had exactly 10 minutes, small group time, to voice a concern or comment to a person that couldn't answer anything—sounds a bit like question period, Mr. Speaker; that's my addition—followed by the panel of experts answering questions the minister of Education asked, which were predetermined questions and mostly irrelevant but another opportunity for apprenticeship board to tell us how awesome the program and the government is.

One relevant question that the now-Minister of Justice (Mr. Allum), the former Education minister, asked the employer on the panel was, how can apprenticeship board in government improve the program, and then the important answer came from the employer, which was to meet with employers and listen to their concerns, which was what most of us present thought we were there for yesterday. Sadly, all we did was end up listening to your government and you did all the talking, and, as a result, nothing was accomplished and the opportunity was missed.

A very, very different view of what happened at that particular jobs skills panel than what the Premier said, just a little bit. *[interjection]* I'm happy to table it, and that's interesting because the member for Dawson Trail (Mr. Lemieux) says, he says, table it, and when I look on the cc's, he was one of the recipients. So, you know, not only does he not listen when he's there, he doesn't even read his emails. So I'll give him a chance to read it now since he ignored it the first time he got it. Thank you very much, member for Dawson Trail, for showing us how little you listen to people who raise concerns.

And I want to speak a little bit, Mr. Speaker, about the rebel five or the rebel five and a half or the rebel six or whatever they are over there, could be the rebel 10 or the rebel 12. You know, initially, they came and they said, well, we're going to leave our positions in Cabinet and in caucus because of the PST increase. Can you believe it? They were upset. I think the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) said, we were upset by how the PST increase was brought forward. Some of them expressed surprise. They were surprised about the PST; it caught them off guard. Now, you know, I haven't had a chance to speak to my friends in the media about this, but if they remember back to the summer of 2013, you know, you'd think that suddenly the Premier, he brought everybody into the House and they called a quick vote on the PST and they were caught by surprise and they didn't know what to do, so they all just stood up because they didn't know what they were voting on. That's the picture that the rebel five or six or six and a half or 12 or whatever they are—that's the picture that they are painting. Well, in fact, that's not what happened. Do you know that there were, by my count, 28 separate votes on the PST bill, 28 separate votes?

When I look back at the record and I know this will be a painful recollection for the members of the Clerk's office, but we had a vote on first reading, we had an opposition day vote, we had a reasoned

amendment vote on Bill 20, we had a hoist motion vote, we had a second reading vote, we had a report back from committee vote, we had a report stage amendment vote on August 12th of 2013, of August 13 of 2013, August 14th, August 19th, August 20th, again on August 20th, two on the 21st, one in August 22nd. And then we had three months that the rebel five or six or seven—they had three months to think about the PST vote, and then they voted again in favour of it on December 2nd. And they voted again in favour on December 3rd–28 and I'm leaving some out because I've got to give the Premier (Mr. Selinger) time—28 times they had to vote on the PST and yet they said they were shocked. In fact, a quick calculation, I found that there were at least 533 votes cast by individual NDP members in favour of the PST—500-and-some votes, and yet the rebel five, the rebel alliance says that they were shocked. They didn't know what they were doing.

You know, the member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) says that the Premier isn't to be trusted. Well, what kind of a Svengali figure is he that he can somehow convince all of these members, who are pretty bright people. You know, I don't have anything negative to say about the rebel five as individuals, Mr. Speaker. As individuals, I have respect for them, but what kind of an effect does the Premier have on those individuals and members of his caucus and Cabinet that he can convince them to do something against their will 533 times over six months with 28 unique votes, ringing the bells for more than a day, and they didn't know what they were doing? How could any Manitoban believe it? How did they survive in Cabinet that long if they had absolutely no control of their own faculties in terms of what it was that they were doing?

So it's not a surprise that they suddenly changed their view and they changed their message, and they got together and they said, okay, let's not talk about the PST thing because, you know, we voted for it 533 times, 28 separate votes over six months. We better come up with something different because Manitobans aren't buying it, Mr. Speaker. So they said, well, actually, the reason now that we're the rebel five, six, seven, eight, whatever they are, is because we've decided that we don't think that the Premier's priorities are really our priorities. We think that he puts his own priorities ahead of our priorities or ahead of the priorities of Manitobans.

Well, you know, that's a better line than the PST thing. It's a little bit more vague. It's, you know, sort of hard to nail down in terms of votes.

So I get why they went with that line, Mr. Speaker. But what an opportunity on the Throne Speech, because the Throne Speech—the Throne Speech ultimately—*[interjection]*—well, I'm glad to hear the Minister of Justice (Mr. Allum) saying something. He knows nothing about his department, but apparently he knows something now.

But, you know, obviously, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to priorities—when it comes to priorities, that is supposed to be what the Throne Speech, you know, is supposed to be about. If there was ever an opportunity to say our priorities are not the priorities of the Premier, well, wouldn't it be the Throne Speech?

In fact, we had a unique situation where, you know, we sometimes like to take credit for things that we shouldn't always, but I'm not going to take credit for the amendment to the Throne Speech because we didn't write it. The person who wrote it was the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald), the member for Fort Rouge, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), they actually ended up writing our amendment that they voted against. They voted against their own words. They said that it was the priorities of the Premier that were misplaced, but they voted yesterday against their own words, and I suspect, you know, I'm not very good at predictions always, but I suspect, when we have the vote sometime within the next hour, those same members, the same members of the rebel five, six, 10, whatever they are, are going to end up voting in favour of the Throne Speech and voting in favour of the priorities of this Premier.

And you know—you know, and I'm glad the member for Brandon East (Mr. Caldwell) is happy to be back in Cabinet. I wouldn't—you know, I wouldn't keep the car too—don't get too attached to the cars, I'm going to say, Mr. Speaker, but let's find out—let's find out when the vote comes up in a few minutes whether or not the rebel five and a half or six, whether or not they actually are going stand true to their own words and whether or not they feel that the priorities of this government are misplaced, because when this Legislature rises in two days, I think a lot of things are going to happen. There's going to be a lot more comments made by these members and by their supporters, and a lot more things are going to be laid bare, but when they go out there and try to say to people, oh, you know, we have to get rid of the Premier; we have to get rid of him because his numbers are down; they're low; these former front-benchers, when they go out and say that to

individuals, they're going to actually have to show why they're any different, why there's a distinction. But, of course, this is a difference without a distinction. There is no difference between the rebel five or six or seven. There is no difference between them and every other New Democratic member. They're supporting the priorities of this Premier (Mr. Selinger). They've supported the PST increase in the past, and, you know, in their own ways, they're supporting the Premier's decision, an astonishing decision, to stay as Premier while he decides to run for the leadership of the party.

* (16:10)

Now, you know this has garnered national comment, Mr. Speaker. You know, Manitoba—you know, there's a lot of good things in Manitoba we'd like to see on the national news. What's happening in this government has garnered national attention and not in a positive way. People across the country are looking and saying, how can a premier who doesn't have the support, let alone of the public, but of his own Cabinet and his caucus stay on in government and then try to run for the position again?

Now in—yesterday, the Premier put forward this sort of a guise about, well, this is the parliamentary system; this is how the British parliamentary system works. Well, we know, because he says that's what happens during a general election. Well, during a general election, there are all sorts of rules that govern. There are restrictions on advertising; there are restrictions on what Executive Council can do; there are restrictions on what can be said. None of those restrictions will govern the Premier. He's not living under those sorts of rules. In fact, he's making up his own rules. We don't know what they all are yet. I don't know if the rebel five or six know what the rules are yet. But he's making up his own rules, and he's making up as he goes along, but he's making us look bad as a province, Mr. Speaker.

You cannot have a premier sitting in his office running a campaign with a couple of high-priced campaign workers or help that he's hired, Mr. Speaker—have them in the office of the premier running a campaign. Now he's going to say, well, I'm not going to be doing that in my office. Well, how do you separate that?

You know, this coming Saturday, we're going to have an open house at the Legislature, and I know you'll probably at some point welcome everybody to the open house. *[interjection]* Yes, we'll see. We're all going to sing on the steps of the Legislature as

MLAs. You know, we're going to have the Conservative caucus and the rebel five caucus and rebel two caucus and then the Premier's caucus and the member for Thompson's (Mr. Ashton) leadership caucus and the member for Seine River's (Ms. Oswald) leadership caucus. It's going to be a great big singalong as we're all going to sing Joy to the World and then see what happens in the months to come, but, beyond that—I digress, Mr. Speaker.

The issue is—I mean, we're going to come to the Legislature. The Premier's going to welcome hundreds of people to his office as other people are going to in this office, and what is he doing it as? Is he doing it as a leadership candidate? Is he doing it as the Premier? Well, he'll say it's as the Premier, but how do you separate those two? How do you separate those two functions? It brings disrespect to the office of the premier.

And the saddest thing is, Mr. Speaker, he knows it. You know, the Premier is not a man who is lacking in intelligence. He knows—he knows what he is doing is wrong, but he is continuing on that path. He knows he shouldn't be doing this to the office of the premier. When he ran for office of the premier, I can't imagine that he ever thought that he was going to do something to disgrace the office, but that's happening.

So, you know, Manitobans can look at this for what it is. They'll see the rebel five. They'll know that they didn't leave caucus because of the PST because they voted 533 times in favour of the PST—28 separate votes, 28 hours of the bells ringing for them to think about it. It wasn't some sort of hypnotic experience where they didn't know what they were doing or somebody stood up for them. We gave them months of opportunity to know what they were doing. It's not because of principle. We saw that yesterday and we're going to see that probably in about another 45 minutes or an hour, Mr. Speaker. It's not because of that. We know that the Premier isn't doing the right thing; and, when Manitobans have the opportunity to cast judgment on this government, as they cast judgment on all of us at some point during an election, I hope that Manitobans will look at all of them and say, you're all the same and you've all got to go.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to address the Legislature today.

This is—our government's Throne Speech is a plan that is rooted in the priorities of Manitobas—

Manitobans, focused on the basics to keep Manitoba moving forward and guided by values of compassion and inclusivity that will all-hold all Manitobans dear.

Despite uncertainty in the global economy, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has kept building, and our government has remained focused on things that matter to Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, our plan is working. More Manitobans are working than ever before in the history of this province. And then we have an unemployment rate that is among the lowest anywhere in Canada and one of the highest participation rates of working-age people in the economy.

We have kept Manitoba one of the most affordable places to live in the country through strong public-owned utilities like Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation and Manitoba Hydro, as well as targeted tax reductions for seniors.

We have added more than 140,000 people to our population—140,000—two Brandons, and if we just had two more Drew Caldwells, it would even be better than *[inaudible]*

Mr. Speaker: I'd like to remind the honourable First Minister we're to refer to the members of the Assembly by their constituency names or ministers by their portfolio. So I'm asking for the co-operation of the honourable First Minister.

Mr. Selinger: —two more MLAs like the one in Brandon East to serve the people of Manitoba.

Since the no-growth '90s, Mr. Speaker, our government has turned this province around: from hospitals, to schools, to new roads, to infrastructure to protect communities from flooding, Manitoba is on track and continues to have one strongest economies and strongest growing populations in the country. We are a younger province. The average age of Manitoba now: 37 years old, a remarkable achievement from just 15 years ago.

In 2015, 2014-15, the Conference Board of Canada has predicted our growth rate will be the second best in the country, and over the last decade our growth rate has been in the top three for Canada, something—a proud achievement.

Manitobans have told us their priorities: make sure young people have good jobs and opportunities to live here; make sure we invest in infrastructure; make sure that we support education at every level as

a lifetime endeavour. And, Mr. Speaker, how does that contrast with the Throne Speech we jaw-saw just a few weeks ago from the members of the opposition?

The Opposition Leader gave us just a glimpse of what Manitoba would return to if their vision for Manitoba was brought forward. He called it an action plan. What did that action plan contain, Mr. Speaker, \$1.5 billion of cutbacks in infrastructure for the province of Manitoba—\$1.5 billion? Would flood protection be built for our communities? Likely not. Would roads be built for our communities? Likely not. Would post-secondary and schools be built for our communities? Likely not. And that \$5-billion program that we put forward to grow 60,000 jobs in Manitoba to lift the economy by over \$6 billion, would that be going forward? No, it wouldn't.

He had also said that he would stop the construction of hydro generation for export and stop the construction of Bipole III. That would put us in a tremendous negative position for clean energy in this province. Mr. Speaker, he would leave Manitobans 'vulnervel'—vulnerable to power disruptions and would jeopardize billions of dollars in export sales. That's the vision of the Leader of the Opposition and every member of the opposition over there who believe in his vision.

And did his throne speech, alternative throne speech, hire one more nurse? No, it did not. Did it hire one more teacher? No, it did not. Did it hire one more daycare worker? No, it did not. It did not provide for any of the essential services that Manitobans count on in this province. It presages a return to the days when a thousand nurses were fired, 700 teachers lost their jobs, and capital budgets to build new facilities for hospitals and schools were frozen and nothing was done. That's the vision that was presented in the throne speech last week.

Our vision, Mr. Speaker, is for good jobs and a strong economy, and we start by making investments in infrastructure, something everybody in this Chamber believes was a top priority and Manitobans have told us it is our 'trop' priority to fix our infrastructure. Whether it be municipal roads, whether it be strategic infrastructure, whether it be infrastructure for flood protection, these are the things we're dedicating additional resources to in the province of Manitoba.

Last—two weeks ago I had the honour of going to Morris, Manitoba, and I met with the reeve. I met with the Reeve Ralph Groening; I met with the

Mayor Gavin van der Linde. And we announced the \$200-million investment there to lift the highway, to lift the bridge to allow—to reduce the amount of flooding in that community, which is a hub community. It's a regional centre for that part of central-south Manitoba.

We also said that we would go further down south and we would put a new bridge in at St. Jean Baptiste and have good drainage going east and west. We said we would go further north to Aubigny and rebuild the road there to have better drainage going east and west.

* (16:20)

It's an overall concept to make Highway 75 our major artery to the United States where we do \$19 billion of business every year. We said we would rebuild that road to reduce to a minimum the number of days of disruption and match it up with the international standards of I-29 that match up with that road as we cross the border. That is an investment for all Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, an investment for all Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, we've invested \$240 million in highway number east going west—Highway No. 1 going west of Winnipeg, a massive investment. It's a safer highway, and now we are able to lift the speed limit to 110 kilometres an hour and reduce accidents on that highway because of the investment we've made in it. And that will make a difference for trade and tourism and people travelling within the province of Manitoba.

We said that we would develop CentrePort. CentrePort is one of our strategic investments for the future. It reinvents Manitoba and Winnipeg as a transportation hub for North American. We used to be the gateway to the West; with CentrePort, we're now the gateway to North America. We can travel south to Mexico. We can travel into all the major markets east and west of us with a multi-modal transportation hub. Railway, runway and roadway facilities will all be in place there, Mr. Speaker, and people will be able to transfer goods to any one of those modes of transportation to find the most effective and efficient way to move their goods to market here in Manitoba, building on our historic strengths, reinventing Winnipeg and Manitoba as the gateway to North America.

In the west of the province, Mr. Speaker, we're strengthening and rebuilding Highway No. 10, an artery that goes from the border all the way up

to Flin Flon, and we're putting money into the Brandon regional airport as well in partnership with the local municipality and the federal government. In the Interlake, we're upgrading Highway No. 9 from Winnipeg to Winnipeg Beach and repaving Highway 17 north of Fisher Branch.

In the North, we continue to work with everybody to develop our Arctic gateway, and I know they just had a meeting today to look at that out of Churchill. And we've got a Mining Advisory Council, which is looking at stronger partnerships with our First Nations communities to look at the notion of revenue sharing as we do resource development in the north.

And, on the east side of the province, Mr. Speaker, we have our east-side road network. We just saw the opening of the first road, the first all-weather road in the history of Manitoba. It's hard to believe in this year 2014, for the first time ever, there's an all-weather road into Bloodvein, a large community of First Nations people, citizens of Manitoba, citizens of Canada. We built that road. We put the bridge in place to do that, and every single year members opposite have opposed that and voted against it. Why shouldn't those citizens have the same facilities and access to transportation as everybody else? Why should they be denied?

We're working with our municipalities, and I was pleased to be at the annual meeting of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities just last week, Mr. Speaker, and they said, after they heard the speech from the Leader of the Opposition, that the best working relationship with any provincial government was right here in Manitoba—right here in Manitoba. They sit on the Water Services Board. We work with them on the Small Communities Fund as full partners to identify priorities to invest in local municipalities, and we will continue to do that because we believe the municipal level of government is an important partner to build our communities throughout Manitoba. We announced a plan for fire safety with municipalities last week and we said we would double the municipal bridge project financing to allow them to do more municipal bridges.

All of these things will make a gigantic difference, Mr. Speaker, and last but not least, perhaps most importantly, we said we would put more resources into flood protection in the Assiniboine valley starting in Brandon where the new dike in place this summer made an enormous

difference. I can remember when we were out there and the sandbags were double the height of any six-foot person, and people were plugging the holes to make sure that there wasn't a flood in Brandon. Now there's a dike there, and that dike made that community safe and secure this year to one—to a level of protection they have never seen before in that community, and that investment was done by the City of Brandon. We contributed to that, and I want to commend the leadership of the people of Brandon for making that investment in a timely fashion.

In the Throne Speech, we said we would build a new outlet out of Lake Manitoba and expand the emergency outlet into a permanent outlet to add an additional 7,500 cubic feet a second of flow. That is the equivalent of one Olympic-size swimming pool every 20 seconds of water flowing through that channel. That investment will guarantee the future of that part of Manitoba. Communities will be safer. Local residents will be safer. They've rebuilt their cottages already. They've rebuilt their homes already. And now we're going to add additional protection, which, I believe, will lead to a greater level of certainty, a greater level of investment and a greater level of economic renewal in that part of Manitoba.

And we also had a major focus on education in our Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. We have talked about building a pathway of success from the earliest days, from the earliest days where you get opportunities for early childhood development, where you have people that support you as you start your young family, to opportunities for universally accessible daycare in Manitoba, a proud commitment that we have made in Manitoba. We've expanded the number of spaces by 14,000. We have provided a 60 per cent increase in wages for daycare workers, and we brought in one of the first pension programs for daycare workers in the history of the province. And we will continue to find ways to make our daycare system universally accessible. We will build more daycares attached to schools, and we will ensure daycares in schools remain in schools as we reduce class size. And that's another initiative: reducing class size for the K-to-3 area makes a gigantic difference in the amount of attention each student will get to get off to a good start in school, and that will make a difference, Mr. Speaker.

On the K-to-12 side, we're moving on opportunities. No wrong doors, no dead ends. Opportunities for young people to get a trades education, opportunities to be able to start a university education, and last week when I was in

Garden City Collegiate, I met a young student there that said she took a university level anatomy course there and she did well in that course. And that gave her the confidence to know that she could go on and do well at university. The bridge from high school to university got shorter. It got more stable. It got stronger because of the positive experience she had in high school succeeding at taking a university level course, and that makes all the difference.

And the great thing about this initiative, Mr. Speaker, all of our post-secondary institutions have signed on. Our colleges and universities, wherever they are in Manitoba, have said they will be part of that program we call First-Year Now, so high school students can get an opportunity to go to college, university or get into a trade, and that is something that we're going to continue to do.

Now, when we talk about post-secondary education, it's not about getting a job, although that's vitally important. It's also an opportunity to become a stronger citizen, and we say the same thing in high school and junior high school and elementary school. We are doing things, for example, the PAX program in the elementary schools with early childhood development that teach young people how to resolve conflict without the use of violence, something that is very important. We are teaching people in school opportunities—I see the two-minute sign; thank you, Mr. Speaker—on how to do better in terms of their citizenship, which is why we have We Day in Manitoba. Citizens all—students all throughout Manitoba are starting to understand that they are global citizens and can help the whole world.

And, Mr. Speaker, as we do these initiatives to help people have success, we're also keeping the cost of government affordable. We have the lowest bundle of electricity, home heating and auto insurance rates in Canada, on average, \$2,100 lower than the Canadian average. We're introducing consumer protection programs for home renovations, cellphones, home warranty programs and condo warranty programs. We are helping home buyers and realtors have a better understanding of what they do, and we're doing this because we want people to know that they have a good place, an affordable place to live.

And, finally, we're doing it by protecting front-line services. We're making sure health care is available to people, whether it's QuickCare clinics or ACCESS centres. We're making sure we have paramedics that work in the community, and we're

making sure that, as we go forward, we build these assets throughout Manitoba whether they're nursing homes, for example, the Tabor Home in southern Manitoba or a new facility in other parts of the city of Winnipeg.

All of these things are our way of saying that we care for Manitobans by putting resources to their priorities, and we will continue to do that. That's the vision of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, a Throne Speech that speaks to the needs of all Manitobans, regardless of their age, regardless of their geography, regardless of their background. We want it to be a place where people feel a sense of inclusion, which is why this government continues to support the families of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Manitoba. We are out there working with them on a daily basis to be able to come to grips with those tragic occurrences which have occurred in this province and to reduce crime and to reduce—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order, please. Order, please.

The hour being 4:30 p.m., pursuant to rule 45(5), I'm interrupting the proceedings in order to put the question on the motion of the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do members wish to have the motion reread?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: I hear a no.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please signify by saying aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion will please signify by saying nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In the opinion of the Chair, the Ayes have it.

Recorded Vote

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Official Opposition House Leader): Could you summon the members for a recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

* (16:40)

Order, please.

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer), that is, the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yea

Allan, Allum, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Braun, Caldwell, Chief, Chomiak, Crothers, Dewar, Gaudreau, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Jha, Kostyshyn, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Maloway, Marcelino (Logan), Marcelino (Tyndall Park), Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Pettersen, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wight.

Nay

Briese, Cullen, Driedger, Eichler, Ewasko, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Helwer, Martin, Mitchelson, Pallister, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Rowat, Schuler, Smook, Stefanson, Wishart.

Clerk (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 35, Nays 20.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Hon. Steve Ashton (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I think, if you canvass the House, there's, I believe, a will to call it 5 o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 5 p.m.? [Agreed]

The hour being 5 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow afternoon.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS	
Introduction of Bills	
Bill 11—The Public Health Amendment Act (Prohibiting Children's Use of Tanning Equipment and Other Amendments)	
Crothers	277
Bill 202—The Participation of Manitoba in the New West Partnership Act	
Stefanson	277
Bill 203—The Public Schools Amendment Act (Pedestrian Safety at New Schools)	
Friesen	277
Petitions	
Grace Hospital Emergency Room Upgrade and Expansion	
Driedger	278
Residential and Vocational Service Organizations—Standard Province-wide Funding Formula	
Rowat	278
Election Request	
Graydon	279
Piwniuk	279
Beausejour District Hospital—Weekend and Holiday Physician Availability	
Ewasko	279
Tabling of Reports	
Legal Aid Manitoba, 42nd Annual Report, March 31, 2014	
Allum	280
Oral Questions	
NDP Leadership Convention	
Pallister; Selinger	280
NDP Caucus	
Pallister; Selinger	282
New West Partnership Agreement	
Pallister; Selinger	283
Stefanson; Chief	283
Portage la Prairie Diversion	
Martin; Ashton	284
Lake Manitoba Water Levels	
Briese; Ashton	285
New Lake Manitoba Outlet	
Briese; Ashton	286
Flooding in Southwest Manitoba	
Piwniuk; Ashton	286
Flood Expenditures	
Gerrard; Selinger	287
Quarterly Financial Reports	
Gerrard; Selinger	288
Tanning Bed Regulations	
Gaudreau; Crothers	289
Big Game Hunting	
Martin; Mackintosh	289
Members' Statements	
St. Norbert Veterans Memorial Association	
Gaudreau	290
Project Echo—Lighthouse Missions	
Stefanson	290
Bethania Personal Care Home Ladies Auxiliary	
Wiebe	291
Good Neighbours Active Living Centre	
Graydon	291
Brad Mikoluff	
Ewasko	292
ORDERS OF THE DAY	
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS	
Throne Speech	
(Eighth Day of Debate)	
Schuler	293
Helwer	295
Friesen	298
Oswald	300
Eichler	303
Maloway	304
Goertzen	306
Selinger	309

The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba Debates and Proceedings
are also available on the Internet at the following address:

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