

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

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALTomARE, Nello	Transcona	NDP
ASAGWARA, Uzoma	Union Station	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian	Keewatinook	NDP
CLARKE, Eileen, Hon.	Agassiz	PC
COX, Cathy	Kildonan-River East	PC
CULLEN, Cliff, Hon.	Spruce Woods	PC
DRIEDGER, Myrna, Hon.	Roblin	PC
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	PC
EWASKO, Wayne, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FIELDING, Scott, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni	St. Johns	NDP
FRIESEN, Cameron, Hon.	Morden-Winkler	PC
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
GORDON, Audrey, Hon.	Southdale	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
GUILLEMARD, Sarah, Hon.	Fort Richmond	PC
HELWER, Reg, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
ISLEIFSON, Len	Brandon East	PC
JOHNSON, Derek, Hon.	Interlake-Gimli	PC
JOHNSTON, Scott, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
KINEW, Wab	Fort Rouge	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAGIMODIERE, Alan, Hon.	Selkirk	PC
LAMONT, Dougald	St. Boniface	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom	Flin Flon	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya	Notre Dame	NDP
MARTIN, Shannon	McPhillips	PC
MICHALESKI, Brad	Dauphin	PC
MICKLEFIELD, Andrew	Rossmere	PC
MORLEY-LECOMTE, Janice	Seine River	PC
MOSES, Jamie	St. Vital	NDP
NAYLOR, Lisa	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Midland	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
REYES, Jon, Hon.	Waverley	PC
SALA, Adrien	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu	The Maples	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SMITH, Andrew, Hon.	Lagimodière	PC
SMITH, Bernadette	Point Douglas	NDP
SMOOK, Dennis	La Vérendrye	PC
SQUIRES, Rochelle, Hon.	Riel	PC
STEFANSON, Heather, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
TEITSMA, James	Radisson	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	NDP
WHARTON, Jeff, Hon.	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	NDP
WISHART, Ian	Portage la Prairie	PC
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Fort Whyte	
<i>Vacant</i>	Thompson	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 3, 2022

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Good morning, everybody. Please be seated.

House Business

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Good morning, Madam Speaker. Pursuant to rule 33(8), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Altomare). The title of the resolution is Calling on the Provincial Government to Immediately End Patient Transfers.

Madam Speaker: It has been announced that, pursuant to rule 33(8), the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Transcona. The title of the resolution is Calling on the Provincial Government to Immediately End Patient Transfers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (Official Opposition House Leader): Good morning, Madam Speaker, again. Will you please call Bill 217, the fatality amendment—fatalities amendment act, for second reading debate.

Madam Speaker: And just to correct my announcement, it is orders of the day, private members' business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Madam Speaker: So it has been announced that the House will consider second reading of Bill 217 this morning.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**Bill 217—The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act (Overdose Death Reporting)**

Madam Speaker: I will therefore call second reading of Bill 217, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act (Overdose Death Reporting).

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member from Union Station, that the—that Bill 217, the fatalities amendment act, overdose death reporting, now be read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Point Douglas, seconded by the honourable member for Union Station (MLA Asagwara) that Bill 217, The Fatality Inquiries Amendment Act (Overdose Death Reporting), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Mrs. Smith: I'm very proud to rise in the House today to bring this forward in honour of those who have passed, but also, you know, listening to the voices of the families who have suffered through this, you know, addiction crisis that's only been amplified through the pandemic.

We've had no, you know, response from this government. If anything, things have been cut back. We've seen detox beds, you know, cut in half in this province, which has only amplified, you know, people losing their lives.

We are the only province in all of Canada that doesn't report on this. And I've been now to Calgary's safe consumption site, I've been to Vancouver's safe consumption sites, and I recently went to Victoria's safe consumption site. And all of those provinces use that data to actually inform the front-line workers, to inform the community of bad drugs that are out there.

I recently—and people would know in this House—lost a brother-in-law to the, you know, the very bad drug that's called down. Thankfully, the Winnipeg police reported on that and let the community know, but it's a duty of this government to be doing that. The people of Manitoba deserve to know how many deaths are—people are dying in Manitoba due to overdose, and it's the responsibility of this government to act and actually put things in place that'll help save lives.

I've talked to too many parents that, you know, they're suffering in silence. They want this government to do something. Front-line workers have told me that their hands are tied, that this government hasn't given them the resources that they need or the data to actually, you know, put the strategies in place that need to be put in place, such as Main Street Project, Salvation Army, Siloam Mission, OPK, you know, Mama Bear Clan, Bear Clan—these are direct front-line workers that are actually feet on the ground, working with people who are struggling with addictions.

I've talked to people that work in the health-care system that are extremely frustrated, that don't, you know, have the data to inform some of the work that they're doing.

A couple of years ago, my own daughter, she was 17, her boyfriend turned 18, she decided to take a pill that her boyfriend gave her. She overdosed. I was at an event, I came—actually, it was three years ago. I was actually—I had a work event, came rushing home, my husband said something wrong with our daughter—and they were just at the corner. My daughter makes good decisions. She's a good kid, comes from a good family, but made a bad decision that day.

She could have lost her life. She was foaming at the mouth. She couldn't breathe. We were freaking out, didn't know what to do. I had been trained how to administer naloxone. I had a naloxone kit. I struggled, I broke the vial, I didn't know how to administer it. My husband had called the—or, the fire paramedics, 911, the fire paramedics came before the ambulance—and that's actually when the ambulance had been cut from our area and had to come from Concordia and it took longer for them to get there.

So the fire department arrived and, you know, had asked some questions, but they didn't administer anything. We had to wait 'til the paramedics came and, you know, thankfully, she was administered naloxone, and we found out that she had, you know, overdosed on something laced with fentanyl.

I could have been, you know, one of those families. And this doesn't just—you know, we think about people who, you know, struggle with substance abuse order as those that are living in poverty, but it's not. It crosses all across Manitoba. I've talked to people in the south end that have lost their loved one, that, you know, are struggling to help their loved ones or struggling to get them into detox, or struggling to know the drugs, the bad drugs that are out there.

* (10:10)

And this bill, you know, it isn't my bill. It's a bill coming from families. It's coming from front-line workers. It's a non-partisan issue—and, you know, I implore those across the lane to you know, support this. Let's have a unanimous vote and allow that bill to go through. This is a second time I'm bringing it forward. It's something that should've been done a long time ago, and we've been calling for it now—not us, but the community—and we owe it to them. We owe it to the families. We owe it to their loved ones that have passed on.

This Sunday's going to be Black Balloon Day, you know. There's going to be hundreds of names and pictures across the family members' fence at 472 Lyle. They're having a vigil in honour of all their loved ones. They've actually called for pictures right across Canada. So it's going to be, you know, very emotional to go and see all of those families that have lost someone's loved one, someone's son, someone's daughter, someone's friend, you know, someone's cousin.

It's—we're losing way too many people in this province and we have the tools to be able to stop it from happening. We have the tools to be able to save lives, and this government, you know, can do that by passing this. It's a little step. It's nothing really big that we're asking for.

We're asking for this government to report, to put it on a website monthly, to let the community know what bad drugs are out there so that people can make informed choices. You know, if there's a pill that's out there—and I told you my daughter took a pill that was laced with fentanyl. They didn't know what they were taking. They thought they were taking you know, something to get them a little high. They didn't realize. You know, and she's 17. She could've lost her life. So I'm not the only one.

I'm going to tell you a little story—and I'm probably going to get emotional about this—but I haven't shared this. My dad, 20 years ago, and the

member from Rossmere knew my dad. My dad went to church. My dad was a good man. My dad struggled. Twenty years ago, August 15, he died of an overdose from cocaine. He was my age, 48 years old. He was a good man. He had a story. You know, his marriage had broken up and he was heart-broken. He turned to using cocaine to help him, you know, mask his feelings. And that's so many other stories.

You know, so many lives can be saved just by, you know, reporting on this bill, by telling us what drugs are out there, by giving the front-line workers the tools that they need to be able to—to know what drugs are out there, good or bad.

Thank you, because I'm asking for this government to do the right thing today: to support those who are struggling, to help the community know what drugs are out there and to do the very same—just report on it. You know, it's embarrassing, actually, to actually look at that federal website and to see nothing for Manitoba, and we're the only province. We can be transparent. We can help save lives.

You know, I ask, again—you know, we can't bring back my dad. My sister, actually, was the one who found my dad, and she's actually the one that found her husband recently. You know, so, she's dealing with that and that's a struggle. But we can help save lives—and we're trying to keep my sister from doing any drugs because, you know, she's going through pain as well and she's going through some counselling and—but people do drugs for different reasons, and, you know, people are suffering and we have the power to really put the tools in the hands of those who are struggling to make informed choices, but also help the front-line workers that are, you know, struggling to know what the real numbers were.

We know that there were 199 deaths in six months of last year. We don't know what the real number was for the whole year; 87 per cent increase last year in overdose deaths. Those are preventable. Those numbers shouldn't be so high.

So I ask you again—I'm begging you, actually—to pass this bill, to do the right thing to help save lives in Manitoba.

Miigwech.

Questions

Madam Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a

member from another party, this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties, each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): I know the member in her presentation talked about visiting safe injection sites—a number of them, as a matter of fact.

So I'm just wondering if the member sought consultation from the development of those sites, or were there other organizations that she also consulted with in putting this bill together?

Mrs. Bernadette Smith (Point Douglas): I thank the member for that question.

This bill actually is coming from families who have lost their loved ones. They've come and asked us—this is the second time—to bring this bill forward again in this session. They want to make sure that Manitobans know about the drugs that are out there.

When I visited those safe consumption sites—you know, I went to visit them to find out what were the best practices, what did they learn from opening those safe consumption sites? What were some of their, you know, barriers with starting those safe consumption sites?

And every single one that I visited said that safe consumption sites save lives. Puts them in touch with the resources that they need because there's medical—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): Thank you to the member from Point Douglas for bringing this forward.

In 2020, my office conducted a community needs assessment in Wolseley, and there was overwhelming support for safe consumption sites.

So I'm wondering if the member can tell me what, you know, some of the other additional reasons that safe consumption sites are needed in Manitoba, and perhaps some of the reasons brought forward from specific neighbourhoods?

Mrs. Smith: I thank my colleague for that question.

So I want to tell you a little story about what happened this winter. There were a group of families that were frustrated with this government's inaction on safe consumption sites. They took it upon themselves to open up a tent on Higgins Avenue to provide a safe place for people to come and safely inject. And, like, they were overwhelmed.

They offered foot care. They had some nurses there that, you know, were doing—people had been injecting in many veins in their body and—yes, so there's been lots of discussion—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): My question has to do with the proviso in this legislation that the information should be posted on a government website no later than three months after the end of the month.

I appreciate and recognize the passion that the member has for this issue and I just wondered if it's possible to decrease that to—from three months to two months or one month?

Mrs. Smith: I thank the member for that question.

This, actually, is in consultation with the medical examiner's office. They need some time to accurately, you know, have those numbers and, you know, to give the government a bit of time to put that onto a website.

We would absolutely love to have that number decreased, but, realistically, we know that three months is kind of, you know, the time period.

We know that the 199 deaths that were actually reported were actually reported from Arlene Last-Kolb, who is a family member that lost their loved one, with her pressuring the medical examiner, calling every day to find out what the numbers were, and that was reported through media and not through the government.

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): I thank the member for bringing this forward.

This bill is intended to quickly disclose data about overdoses occurring in Manitoba. I'm just wondering, why does it set the disclosure time as a three-month delay?

* (10:20)

Mrs. Smith: I think I just answered that question, but I'll go on just to, you know, put a little more context to it.

Again, like I said, Arlene Last-Kolb, you know, every month she calls a medical examiner to get those numbers. Every month she's talking to other family members that have lost their loved ones to an overdose. Every month, you know, we should be reporting those numbers.

But again, you know, we want to be realistic and we want to make sure that we're giving the government enough time to put those—and if the government

wants to reduce that time, we're certainly open to that, and if, you know, they think they could do it in less than three months, certainly, we'd love to see that reported monthly, maybe even every 60 days if possible.

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): I just want to put on the record, I want to thank the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) for standing up in this Chamber in this House and sharing such personal, heartfelt, traumatic events with all of us here this morning in an attempt to have agreement on bill—on her bill this morning. I think it's really courageous when we take those moments to share those personal journeys and how they've affected us, and how they've affected all of Manitobans—Manitoba.

So I would ask her, why is it necessary for the government to understand the scale of overdose through data collection?

Mrs. Smith: I thank my colleague for that question.

We're the only province that isn't reporting. You know, that's—you look at that website, and we're not giving the tools to the front-line workers that need it. We're not giving the information to the community about the bad drugs that are out there.

This is about saving lives. This is about, you know, giving the tools to the community that need it and this is about harm reduction. This is really about making and ensuring that our front-line workers and those that are on the streets, on the boots—on the ground, like Mama Bear Clan, that are going out and actually talking to folks on the street, that they can let them know that there's these bad drugs out there and that, you know, they should be getting drug testing done—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): I want to thank the member for bringing forward this bill. It's obviously very personal and very important to her, and I can appreciate very much her grace under pressure. I don't think I could talk about the kinds of things she talked about and keep my calm quite the same way she manages to. So I have admiration for that.

So, currently, under this legislation—or under the legislation we already have—there is a duty that the chief medical officer does have towards people who are dying of overdoses and poison and various other things.

Can the member explain, like, how this legislation kind of changes the duty that the chief medical officer already has?

Mrs. Smith: It actually doesn't change the duty of the medical examiner. It actually puts the onus on the government to put those numbers that the Chief Medical Examiner is giving to the government, put those on a website and to actually let the community know what drugs that that person overdosed on.

It's more about, you know, saving lives in Manitoba, but also to have an accurate picture of how many people are losing their lives in Manitoba, which is super important, because, you know, the year before last, 2020, we had an 87 per cent increase in overdose deaths.

If the community had known, if public service, you know, providers, health-care providers, if those that are on the front lines knew what drugs, they can inform those people that were coming in that are using so that maybe they wouldn't choose to use those drugs—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Uzoma Asagwara (Union Station): I'm wondering if the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) could share with us how, exactly, it is that knowing what type of drug is involved in an overdose and having that information would help future harm reduction efforts.

She's talked, you know, and shared with us a great deal about the efforts happening right now, but how would having this information help future efforts in Manitoba?

Mrs. Smith: I thank my colleague for that question.

Well, front-line workers have told us that, you know, they would be able to inform the community. So if someone's coming in to, let's say, one of their clinics and they're a known substance abuse user, they can let them know that there's this bad drug out there, that they should get their drug tested before actually injecting or inhaling whatever it is, because we know that people aren't only dying from injection, but they're actually dying from inhalants too.

When I was in Victoria—Victoria is, you know—they're far advanced, way further than we are. And they have a smaller population. But they do have a lot of drug users out there. They have an inhalant site and a safe consumption site.

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Brad Michaleski (Dauphin): Thank you, Madam Speaker, again, and I'll also echo thanks to the member for bringing this resolution forward. It is a serious matter, without a doubt. I know I've seen a lot of these challenges in this mental health and addictions area. And I certainly do appreciate the work of the government, the focus and the supports that they're providing right now to seriously look at this issue.

There's a definition—there's no definition of what type of drugs would trigger the changes outlined in this legislation, so would it be prudent to amend this legislation with a definition of what would trigger the chief medical officer's duty to investigate—

Madam Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mrs. Smith: Well, the Chief Medical Examiner does inform what drug was overdosed on, but the government chooses not to publish those numbers or the data on what the drug was used. So, like I said, the Winnipeg police took it upon themselves, because they were seeing an increase in deaths from a drug, down, and they informed the public. So this government can do that. They can put it on a website and they can inform to save lives—Manitobans' lives.

Madam Speaker: The time for this question period has expired.

Debate

Madam Speaker: Debate is open.

Mr. Len Isleifson (Brandon East): I do want to make a comment right off the top for the member from Point Douglas. I didn't want to take up the time in my question because it was a lot shorter. But I do admire the ability to rise in this House and share those personal feelings. And I think it really just goes to show that we can work together on a number of issues, when we understand that we're all here for the same reason. We may have different ideologies on how to get there, but we are on the same playing field.

I mean, just as a matter of fact, just last week, a few of us on our side of the House made the trek up to The Pas, and I want to commend the member from The Pas for hosting us up there—another show that we can work together. And when we look at a bill like this that's come to the floor, I realize that Bill 224 was in the previous session, and now we have Bill 217. So it is important.

It's obviously important to the member to make sure that she is doing what we all should be doing, which is representing our constituents. And she

clearly mentioned that this came from the families of people who suffer with loss of loved ones. And I think we can all appreciate that when we look at what really is our purpose in this House, how do we really debate bills?

I agree with something she said, that we don't have to be partisan on everything. There are certain things—now, I have—I do have a number of more questions. I'm definitely not against this bill, at all. I actually like this bill. I do have a few more questions, if we could go back to question period, I have about three more that I'm seeking answers for. But maybe over the course of time, when someone is speaking, they can provide the answers, and I'll certainly listen to those. And maybe, even, when we're done, if those answers haven't been presented to us in the House here this morning, that I will reach out to the member and seek further input, if I may, on some of those answers.

When I look at Bill 217 and the purpose of the bill in reporting the deaths, reporting the type of deaths, it's important that we report this information. But what is the balance between reporting the information? And how do we use that information, Madam Speaker? How do we use that information going forward in the prevention of more deaths? Those are some of the things that we need to look at, in beyond this bill.

And when we look at what each and every one of us can do—I'm going to use a recent example. In November of 2020, my constituency office was located at 1229 Richmond Ave. in Brandon. For those that are maybe unfamiliar with Brandon, shame on you. But come on out, and I'll show you a tour of the city. But it was on the southern end of the constituency.

Like any other city in Canada, any other city or town in Manitoba, we have issues in our downtown core area. Not that an issue of consumption or overdose are confined to a downtown; they're not. But they're more prevalent because people see it. And what was happening in downtown Brandon—and I'm sure it happens in other communities as well—the clientele downtown, compared to those who come down to frequent businesses, creates a conflict. And I'm not picking one side or the other, it's just something we have to work with.

* (10:30)

And so I took it upon myself, when my lease was up, to search for a new location for my constituency office in downtown Brandon, which I was successful

in doing, and I am now on the corner of 10th and Princess, which is in the heart of downtown Brandon.

One of the very first things I did when we moved there in 2020 was to put together a coalition of non-profit organizations, four or five of them, some of the business community through the Brandon Chamber of Commerce, and I took them on a walk in downtown Brandon so we could see what was happening down there.

Then we went back to the office and we met for two hours, and we tried to discuss some possible solutions—understanding this was just our first meeting, Madam Speaker, and we couldn't actually come up with solutions on how to deal with homelessness, on how we could deal with mental illness, on how we could deal with substance abuse. We knew we couldn't come up with an answer at that time, but we met for two hours. We left with a task in hand, and we reconvened three weeks later.

We did this three times, until everything, unfortunately, with the pandemic, made us change our course of action. So, with that work in hand, you know, we worked with groups like the friendship centre, the Brandon Friendship Centre. I, too, did—not enough, I will admit that, and I'm committing to do more—but patrol with the Brandon Bear Clan. We did that, as well. I went with the Brandon Bear Clan.

As the member from Point Douglas pointed out in her experiences, I also took naloxone training. We went to a place in Brandon that—the Addictions Foundation that gave up a room and provided some counsellors for us to go in and—so that we could all learn how to administer the drug, should we need it when we're out on patrol.

From then, I'm going to say there was no need for me to reconvene that committee. And I say that, Madam Speaker, because a group in Brandon known as the community wellness collaboration has been formed. I just checked the email this morning: 48 members from various aspects of the community are on this coalition, and they're working hand-in-hand with the City of Brandon in building a better environment, not just in the downtown core, but in the city of Brandon as a whole.

Part of their mandate and what they've really picked up was, last year, our government made an announcement to provide funding for a sobering unit. There is one in Thompson that has—my understanding, is doing extremely well and serving the population greatly. So we had an announcement in Brandon with

the City and the mayor and—providing them funding for a sobering unit. The Community Wellness Collaborative has taken upon their role in working with the City and the government to establish this sobering unit.

So exciting things are happening. Part of the sobering unit, much as we heard from the member from Point Douglas, people would come into the sobering unit—obviously, right now what happens is, you know, if someone is intoxicated, whether it's on alcohol or drugs, the police would pick them up. They would take them to the detention centre or to the jail, but they really haven't done any crimes. They're just intoxicated.

So they're going to be taking them to this new place, which is the sobering unit. And in there, there are going to be professionals that will be able to offer them help and direct them in the right location.

So, much as the member from Point Douglas is bringing forward in what she talked about, that is coming forward in my community and, again, it is already in Thompson. So it is certainly something that we can look forward to as we go forward is not just reporting figures, not just reporting data, but providing preventative action to help bring those numbers down.

Taking it one step farther, Madam Speaker, the City of Brandon, at a recent meeting, created a bylaw under the mayor's jurisdiction to create a Downtown Wellness and Safety Task Force. So this task force is in place. They have had, I believe, four to five meetings. They have their terms of reference in place. I do not sit on the committee. There are no government—provincial government appointees or—from our aspect here on that committee. However, I will be sitting as a liaison between the government of Manitoba and the City of Brandon on this committee.

And, of course, it was designed—it has some purposes to make recommendations to council on the holistic and balanced approach to improving downtown safety, business economy and people's wellness. We'll identify issues related to the perception of the cleanliness and security of the downtown core and recommend appropriate action and strategies to rectify the perception. They will determine potential actions for immediate implementation and cultivate a long-term action plan involving partnerships and associated funding implications. They will ascertain means to advance the strategic plan pillars of downtown resurgence, economic development and

social issues and community safety through a lens of being bold and innovative.

So you can see, Madam Speaker, that the issues are real. We on this side of the House agree with the member opposite. These issues are real. We need to come up with solutions. Again, I've said it three times and I'm going to say it again: reporting numbers allows us to see where we're—are and any trending that we have. Coming up with solutions should help make, hopefully, one day, that we won't need Bill 217 because we won't need—be able—we don't need to report numbers because there won't be any deaths from overdose. That would be ideal, and if we can continue to collaborate in this House, with our communities, we can make that a reality.

I have much more to say, but I've only got one second, so thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): First of all, I want to say thank you to the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) for sharing her personal story, her family stories, and, you know, just, driving home how deeply personal the issue of substance use is to many folks in Manitoba and here in this House.

My community, Wolseley, lost a young man just last week, not someone that I knew personally, recently. I knew him as a young man, as he went to elementary school with my daughter. But it still feels very fresh and personal when I know that this vibrant 20-year-old is gone—more personal than I expected it to feel, sorry.

I—what I want to say that, you know, in the Wolseley constituency there's been a lot of issues with—whether it's, you know, drug overdoses, whether it's needles—I'm okay, thanks—in the community which have been an on-going issue, homelessness. This has been the chronic work, the everyday work of my term in office, particularly more so during the pandemic, I would say.

So some of the issues that the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson) identified in terms of, you know, the impact of folks in need of services, folks in need of housing, folks in need of a safe drug supply and how that interacts with folks who have perceptions about their safety or, you know, access to—you know, had the impact on businesses. These are real intersections that I understand why are a concern for the member.

But I also—you know, what's really important to me, and the balance that I try to find every day in the Wolseley constituency is understanding everyone

who is there is someone that I represent. So what I say and what I do and the values that I hold have to be just as meaningful and just as relevant for the person camping on the side of the river, or in my—the parking lot outside of my constituency office, as it is for a person living, you know, in a expensive home with a nice big yard. There aren't a lot of nice big yards in my constituency, but they exist. And so these—we have to maintain this balance. And I have—I constantly have to remember the human aspect of everybody that I represent.

So I know that the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson) specifically asked the question about doing more, and I'm going to take the liberty to speak on behalf of my colleague to say yes, we would love the government to do more.

* (10:40)

This bill calls for reporting because I'm sure the member knows that, as the official opposition party, we're not in a position to pass a bill that asks for the government to spend a lot of money or make investments, but the member is definitely in that position. So I would strongly encourage members on the other side of the House that feels that this bill does not go far enough to get around a table with your ministers and let them know what your communities need. Let them know that it is time to invest in this.

So I'm old enough to have grown up in the, you know, Reagan era, war-on-drugs era, and I can recognize the turning point that, you know, has happened in our culture and I can see where so much of those values still 'permeate' a lot of the values of even Canadian culture, right?

Most people in this House, probably not everybody in this House, but most people in this House, at some time or other, has consumed a glass of wine or had a beer. You might have even done that right here in this building, and yet you may also hold some really strong ideas about what kind of substances or drugs are okay to consume and which ones aren't, which ones are shameful or embarrassing or your children shouldn't participate in or you would never participate in, or if a family member did, it would be not something you would ever talk about.

And yet, substances are substances, and throughout history in every culture and every country everywhere in the world, people have used substances to modify their moods, to feel more relaxed at certain times, to—in spiritual processes. There's all kinds of reasons. And we have to let go of some of that, you

know, Reagan-era ideas of, like, what are okay drugs and which ones aren't, which ones good and nice people use and which ones, you know, not good or not nice people use, and all the values that are attached to that.

And I think the beginning of, you know, the beginning of starting to have that conversation and reduce the shame and stigma is to just start talking about it. And so this bill, you know, brings into the House the stories, the truth of many Manitobans who use substances, and, in some cases, that use cost them their life.

If you enjoy a glass of wine but someone put poison in it and you didn't know it, you could die from your substance use. But that doesn't happen very often. What happens to a lot of folks is they think they're going to use something that is, you know, no different than if you'd smoked a joint or you'd a couple glasses of wine, and the impact on them is death, because there's something in it they didn't know about.

So this becomes our government's responsibility to understand what's on our streets, to understand what is killing Manitobans, and to report on it, to educate our community about what is out there.

And, you know, although this isn't directly in this bill, I think it's important to also talk about those safe consumption sites. That is a way of controlling a safe drug use supply so people who cannot go a day without use will have access in a safe way, that it's not going to kill them or make them very sick and, you know, cost even more to our health-care system in that case.

Also, you know, there's a lot of needle distribution sites, and in my community, while there's a lot of support for the idea of safe consumption sites and there's a lot of support even for needle distribution, there's a real challenge with the sheer volume of needles in parks—just everywhere, actually.

And although the Bear Clan and all kinds of people go out of their way to pick up those needles and clear it out, you know, it's hard when folks are going to church on a Sunday morning. Had an elderly couple clearing their lawn of needles and around the stairs before folks could go into the Lutheran church on a Sunday morning when they could finally start going back to church. And, I mean, this couple, they're in their 80s. And they weren't judgmental, they really cared about the people who had been living on that property and staying there and sleeping under the stairs, but they also knew that for safety and because

they had respect for the land they were on, they wanted to clean it.

And so that's another example of ways that our community can feel safer for everyone, both drug users and non-drug users, when people have somewhere safe to go and consume, the same way that you might, you know, go to a bar and have a drink.

But in this case, safe consumption sites aren't a place to party with friends. They're a place to get access to social workers, to someone who can help you access a treatment program if you're interested in that, to someone who can help you get housing, if you're interested in that. So those are some of the important things that happen in safe consumption sites.

And I'm going to get back to the actual reporting piece of the bill, because I think it's really important to underline this a little bit before time is out, that this government really has not taken any action to address the drug crisis that we're facing.

And in terms of the reporting, and in terms of the overdosing, in 2016, there were 142 fatal drug overdoses between the April election and December, and as we move on, I mean, by 2020 there were 372 fatal drug overdoses. Every year, year after year, the fatal drug overdoses in this province have increased under this government. We're—at six months into this, into 2021, it was already 199 fatal drug overdoses.

So we have lost 1,307 Manitobans since 2016, valued members of our communities. And we owe it to them, we owe it to their families and we owe it to other Manitobans who could lose their lives in the years to come to try to make a difference around this, to publish these numbers, to make this public, to have these conversations and reduce the shame and stigma and know that we can fund and put the supports in place.

And we start with reporting. We start with putting a light on the truth and making this public for everybody in Manitoba.

Thank you.

Madam Speaker: The next person I have on my list is actually the honourable member for Borderland.

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to put a few remarks on the record on this legislation.

As I said in question period, I thank the member for bringing it forward, and we've heard some

testimonies and experiences shared today, very difficult, about losses in our communities and in our families. And, of course, it's very difficult, and I have some of my own, as well. And I know they are always shocking. I—friends—childhood friends that I had as—in my childhood hit me when I learned that their mom had passed away from a drug overdose, and so these are always deeply hurtful in sad and difficult times.

And so I recognize the importance of this debate. As the member for Brandon East (Mr. Isleifson) said, you know, the focus should be on prevention, and I agree, and I think that the sentiments that have been expressed, that we're on common ground. I think that the real question is, how do we get there? And I think prevention has got to be an important focus in this debate, as well.

Obviously, you know, as an MLA, I've had many conversations with constituents in the last two years who have struggled with difficult thoughts of—some have even, in tears, told me about where they were at in their—at that point in life where they felt that they had—maybe had nothing left to live for. And whether it was a mom who shared that her daughter, who was an exceptional student in school, was struggling with not being able to connect with friends and therefore wearing that in terms of her mental health, and the mother was very concerned that, although the daughter had always had good marks and was a bright student and had a lot of friends, that she was contemplating, you know, some very difficult things in her life.

And so these are very difficult experiences to even talk about, and they're difficult to hear and—but it's important that they be addressed and recognized, and there are many reasons why people, you know, take drugs and, you know, find themselves into—in that path in life where they're struggling with addictions.

* (10:50)

And none of us are perfect and we all have—we all struggle with our own demons. Some are different from others, but we all have our struggles. But, certainly, for those who struggle with drug addictions and drug addictions substance abuse, there are many, many reasons why they find themselves in that situation. For some, it's—it starts with curiosity at an early age and for others it's peer pressure. For some, they—you know, it's stress at work or, you know, their social network, perhaps, isn't there or has frayed or they find themselves under a lot of pressure in life, and others seemingly inadvertently because of, you know,

a personal injury or injury to their health or well-being and they're prescribed certain medications or they begin to take prescriptions and drugs that create a dependency and so that leads them on a path.

And so, obviously, these are all difficult experiences. But I think—as I said, the pandemic has certainly exacerbated what was a pre-existing real need for supports and help for people who are struggling. Certainly, many people throughout the pandemic have struggled, and that has resulted in an increase in drug-related deaths.

We've seen, in 2020, a record level of drug-related deaths with, I believe, 322 deaths identified between January and November; 68 per cent of these deaths were opioid-related, and an average—just as a comparison—of 190 drug-related deaths were reported between 2017 and 2019. So that's 322 deaths between January and November of 2020, and 190 deaths between 2017 and 2019.

So, clearly, people being separated from their loved ones, for some people, not being able to seek services because they're closed and that sort of thing, it's been difficult and led to, obviously, tragic outcomes for so many.

And so I do think it's important—and, of course, this is something we've seen across the country with nearly 20,000 apparent opioid toxicity deaths being reported across Canada between January 2016 and September 2020. So there's—there were 1,705 apparent opioid toxicity deaths reported in 2020. The—quarter three—the highest quarterly count since the national reporting—since national reporting began in 2016. That's 120 per cent increase for the same time period in 2019—so, clearly, a problem we're dealing with here in Manitoba, in Canada, on this continent and, I believe, around the world.

And so there's a number of things our government has done to address this, including working with over 40 organizations and agencies across the province in every region of the province—northern, rural and urban—to ensure individuals receive the services they need to address struggles that they may face in regards to mental health and addictions.

We do have six RAAM clinics. We have expanded access and we offer comprehensive opiate agonist therapy services. There's a number of work we've undertaken with the Bruce Oake Foundation as well, which I think worked quite well in partner with—*[interjection]*—thank you.

Madam Speaker, it's a distinct privilege to be speaking in person today, so I have to get used—after two years of virtual this is—I feel very much like a rookie today, so I appreciate this opportunity.

But we've opened 11 flexible-length withdrawal beds suitable for patients who are addicted to dangerous rugs—drugs like methamphetamines in Winnipeg and Brandon.

As I said, the—we've invested \$3.5 million in the Bruce Oake Recovery Centre to enhance access to mental health and addiction treatment in Manitoba. And this—the contribution will be used to support capital construction costs for the centre.

Additionally, the Bruce Oake Recovery Centre will add 50 residential addiction treatment beds into the addictions system in Manitoba. The facility is set to open this year.

The Bruce Oake Recovery Centre will add important capacity which will alleviate pressures on existing residential treatment services and allows partnership organizations the opportunity to focus on other critical levels of service.

We've invested, since the fall of 2019, more than \$58.1 million to improve access to mental health and addictions treatment and care, and I think that's—significant investment of \$58.1 million. These investments will help ensure that we're able to provide the right care at the right place and at the right time.

So, Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to put a few words on the record, and will allow other colleagues to take the floor at this time. Thank you.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Madam Speaker, first I want to express my condolences to the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) about the loss of her father. It was tragic, and it speaks clearly to the point of this bill. I appreciate the passion of the MLA for Point Douglas for getting improved addiction—help and treatment for addictions. It's a passion which I share. We need to much better recognize and prevent overdoses and much better treat addictions in Manitoba.

We need—it is actually astonishing that the government, elected first in 2016, not being accountable, has worked so hard for almost six years to block accountability and reporting of essential information. If you have data, regularly report it monthly. You're able to move and react more quickly. You can adjust and improve. A government which does not report

regularly—monthly, in this case—is not sufficiently interested in improving. You can't fix what you don't measure is a mantra which is often raised. A government which is not interested in reporting is not interested in fixing.

There are, and have been for decades, deficiencies in addictions help and care in Manitoba. Our governments have tinkered rather than solved problems. We need to do much better.

There will be an inquest soon on Lee Earnshaw, who died June 14th, 2021. It is a very 'stad' story of a commercial fisherman who was loved by his family, who tried many times to get help, including three times at rapid access clinic. The story has exposed major deficiencies in addictions care in Manitoba.

In summary, Madam Speaker, we support this legislation. It's badly needed, and I thank the MLA for Point Douglas for bringing it forward.

Mr. James Teitsma (Radisson): I want to thank all those who have taken the time to put words on the record on this important bill. Certainly, you can see the passion and the concern that the members opposite have. And I think it's fair to say that we do share—contrary to what the member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard) was trying to say, we do share those concerns. We have taken action. We continue to take action.

And I'm encouraged by the appointment of a new minister of mental health and addictions, that we will be able to continue to take action and to—you know, this might be the action that's taken. There are other things that need to be done, and that have been done, I think, at the RAAM clinics and all the advice in the VIRGO report which really is—yes, has been very instrumental, I think, in guiding the response of our government.

And these are the things that our government will continue to do. I think this bill has merit. I've—*[interjection]*

Madam Speaker: Order.

Mr. Teitsma: —expressed my admiration for the member for Point Douglas (Mrs. Smith) and the poise and the passion that she brings into this Chamber on this topic. She, I think, experiences these kinds of issues far more personally—

* (11:00)

Madam Speaker: Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have nine minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 2—Standing in Solidarity with Ukraine by Condemning Russia's Illegal Invasion

Madam Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and time for private members' resolutions. The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on Standing in Solidarity with Ukraine by Condemning Russia's Illegal Invasion, brought forward by the honourable member for Fort Garry.

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): I move, and second by the member from St. Johns,

WHEREAS Manitoba has a deep historical relationship with Ukraine and early Ukrainian settlers and more recent newcomers have helped shape this great province; and

WHEREAS over 180,000 Ukrainian Manitobans are currently living in the province and that ongoing relationship continues to strengthen and enrich its culture and economy; and

WHEREAS Russian forces invaded Ukraine by land, air and sea while launching missiles and airstrikes on Ukrainian cities; and

WHEREAS Ukrainians continue to attempt to flee their country out of fear for their safety; and

WHEREAS Russia's aggressive invasion and attacks violate Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and jeopardize stability in the entire region and puts countless innocent lives at risk; and

WHEREAS Russia's invasion to Ukraine could spiral into the largest military conflict on European soil in decades, lead to tens of thousands of civilian deaths, a European refugee crisis, and negatively impact the global economy; and

WHEREAS the last time Ukraine faced Russian aggression in 2014 with illegal occupations of Crimea and Sevastopol, it ended with the annexation of Crimea and the deaths of over 14,000 people, including many civilians, and internally displaced 1.5 million people; and

WHEREAS the Federal Government has thus far imposed sanctions, deployed Canadian Armed Forces personnel, and provided loans and funding to support an on the ground response to humanitarian needs,

peace security initiatives, economic resilience and technical assistance; and

WHEREAS there needs to be de-escalation through more robust diplomacy, humanitarian aid and improving mobility opportunities for Ukrainians seeking to come to Canada by waiving visa requirements and assisting refugees to resettle in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS it is imperative to defend the sovereignty of Ukraine and ensure that freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law are fully respected in Ukraine; and

WHEREAS Manitobans want the institutions of democracy and human rights to be respected in Ukraine and around the world.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba condemn Russia's illegal, aggressive invasion of the Ukraine by affirming the applications of sanctions against Russia and calling on the federal government to use all available means to support Ukraine's efforts to maintain sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence and assist those seeking safety.

Madam Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv), seconded by the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Fontaine),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba condemn Russia's illegal, aggressive invasion of Ukraine by affirming the applications of sanctions against Russia and calling on the federal government to use all available means to support Ukraine's efforts to maintain sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence and assist those seeking safety.

Mr. Wasyliv: As Manitobans, we are only all too familiar with the horrors and injustices of colonization, cultural genocide and empire. The pernicious belief that one group is superior to another, that they have the right to take away another's language, culture and way of life, that they don't see the value in it and, worse yet, they don't understand it, feel threatened by it and need to destroy it. Our province has been scarred by this mentality and forever changed by it.

As legislators, we enter this building every day to try to pick up the pieces from it and build a new, better, more inclusive Manitoba, where all Manitobans,

regardless of their background, can live and thrive and see a future here.

Prior to this invasion, President Putin laid out the justifications for his attack to his parliament. He denied the existence of the nation of the Ukraine, claimed that it was never a sovereign country and it was simply a wayward province of Russia.

He blamed weak Russian leaders over the past 30 years for allowing it to exist. He denied the distinct Ukrainian language, history and culture dating back thousands of years. He denied that Ukraine and the Ukrainian people were legitimate. And he publicly declared that Ukraine and Ukrainians have no right to exist—certainly, chilling echoes of what has been done in Canada to Indigenous Manitobans, and this was done in the name, of course, of Russian nationalism. And this poses a danger to us all.

Sadly, this is one chapter in a 300-year history of colonization and oppression. Ukraine has been led by tyrants and ego-driven leaders for many years. It's been occupied by Austria, Poland, Germany and Russia. It's been official government policy in those 300 years to rewrite the history books, mandate that Ukrainian not be used in schools, make Russian the official language, force conversion of Ukrainian Catholics to Russian Orthodoxy, jailed or exiled Ukrainian nationalist poets, banned Ukrainian Sunday school classes, prevented the publication of educational and religious texts in Ukraine, fired professors of Ukrainian history, Ukrainian language publications being removed from libraries, the prohibition of theatrical performances, poetry and songs in Ukrainian, place names of major cities being changed.

Mr. Andrew Micklefield, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

You sometimes hear of Kiev. That's Russian. And it's actually a political act now to mispronounce the capital of Ukraine, which is Kyiv. But they did that to all the major cities.

And, of course, during the Holodomor, the Soviets blamed the failure of their policies on Ukrainian nationalists. They rounded up intellectuals, politicians, clergy—executed, jailed or exiled them all.

The legacy of this is that Ukraine now has the largest Russian-speaking group that's not ethnically Russian, about 5.5 million Ukrainians whose first language is Russian.

So those are the history of assimilation and colonization and what this is about. It's not about

territory, it's about control. It's about denying the Ukrainian people.

But it's also about snuffing out democracy. Ukraine is 44 million people, and it's the most democratic of the eastern European states of the former Soviet empire. It has a very liberal history. It's the first eastern European country to legalize homosexuality. It is a country—there's only two countries in the world with a Jewish head of state, and Ukraine is one of them. They have over 100 women in their parliament as MPs, and Ukraine has one of the highest proportions of women soldiers fighting in their military of any military in the world. Imperfect democracies, as they all are, but it's been stable for 30 years and getting more stable.

And, of course, that, to an autocrat and a tyrant, is frightening. It becomes a real-world experiment to the Russian people of what their world could be if they parted ways with Mr. Putin and his oligarchs. And for those reasons, Putin cannot let Ukraine stand. It becomes a symbol of everything he is not, and here we are.

So, hearing from the government benches yesterday, I was truly saddened and disappointed. I don't think this government understands this moment in history, and I want to express to the government benches that not only are Ukrainians watching, Manitobans are watching. And they are hurting right now, and they feel helpless, and they want to help, and they want to do their part to do what's right, here.

And how we do that in Manitoba is we have our provincial government. It is our collective voice; it is our collective will. What this government does, it does in our name, and what it doesn't do, it also does that in our name. And the Ukrainian people are crying out from real action from this government, and there was no sense of urgency. What this government has done is they spent \$150,000 on a press release, and that is shameful. We are better than that. We can do more than that.

And I look out to some of my colleagues on the other side who have Ukrainian-Canadian heritage. You know how this is affecting your families. You know the conversations you're having when you leave this place tonight. You know how devastating this is. Please, please, take this to the Premier (Mrs. Stefanson) and explain it to her because, honestly, I don't think she understands, because if she did, this would not be her response.

We are giving less than \$1 for every Ukrainian in Manitoba. We heard yesterday the shocking news. Buhler Industries, which appears to be 97 per cent Russian owned, with direct ties to the Kremlin, that three of their board of directors are actually on the board of directors of Vladimir Putin's political party. They gave \$100,000 yesterday to humanitarian relief. If they can give \$100,000 in humanitarian relief, what does it say that the people of Manitoba can only give \$150,000.

Well, we deserve action. Manitobans deserve action. And we don't need, sort of, empty rhetoric and, you know, conservative virtue-signalling, because that's what it is. So this government needs to match, dollar for dollar, the money that's raised by Manitobans in relief.

Yesterday, the other side accused me of being partisan. I think the reaction of the government is wholly, entirely, inappropriately in partisan. I want to reach out to this government, say, depoliticize this issue. Let's have an all-party committee where we sit as equals around a table with members of the Ukrainian community and figure out how Manitoba is going to respond to this together, and it will be very telling when that very simple act is rejected by this government as they try to make, you know, political hay out of this, which is shameful.

This government needs to come to the table when it comes to refugee resettlement. We have two civil servants in our immigration process; no wonder why we have a backlog.

* (11:10)

That should be ramped up. We need an army of civil servants right now to deal with this issue, and we need to provide funding to Ukraine Canadian congress for resettlement services. We shouldn't be talking about 18 applications, as this government was patting themselves on the back yesterday. We should be talking about thousands of applications, if not tens of thousands. We have an established community here in Manitoba that has the resources to absorb and to help. Let's let them do it, but they need help.

The other thing we're not talking about right now is our economy. Gas prices are going to spike. Things are going to be less affordable than they already were, and this government has a budget coming up and needs to start giving relief to Manitobans. We can do that by indexing EIA. We can do that by considering a PST low-income exemption. We can do that by keeping hydro affordable and cheap.

And there's so much more that we can do. Let's get around a table and discuss this as legislatures with a common purpose and make real solutions, not only for the people of Manitoba, but also for our family and friends in the Ukraine.

So, slava Ukraini, heroyam slava. [*Glory to Ukraine, glory to the heroes.*]

Questions

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. And questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party, any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties, each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Vérendrye): I would like to thank the member for Fort Garry for bringing this resolution forward at this important time in Ukraine.

Can the member opposite speak to his personal relationship with Ukraine?

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): I appreciate the question. Very briefly, I—on my mother's side, my mother came here when she was three years old with my grandparents. They were all, obviously, born in Ukraine, came as World War II refugees escaping the violence and the oppression of Ukraine. My father's side came from Ukraine a hundred years ago, but my grandfather on that side also was born in Ukraine and came here. I still have extended family there, and I've visited with them.

But, more importantly, everybody in Manitoba who have Ukrainian heritage has touched somebody else who isn't. And the history and violence of that region has very much shaped Manitoba and who we are as a people. And although some people might not be Ukrainian, this conflict touches us all and is relevant to us as Manitobans.

Mr. Mintu Sandhu (The Maples): On Saturday, over 5,000 people attended the rally at the Legislature, again, speaking out against the Russian invasion of Ukraine. I, along with my daughter, Bhavika, and her friend Natalia also attended the rally to show our support with Ukraine, Ukrainian community in Manitoba and in Canada.

My question is this: What is the Ukrainian Manitoban community calling for from this provincial government as the Russian invasion of Ukraine unfolds?

Mr. Wasyliv: I just want to acknowledge, first of all, that I'm very proud that my leader and my House leader attended with me the meet—in a Zoom call with Ukraine Canadian congress; certainly signalled to me how important they take this issue and how valued the Ukrainian community is in Manitoba. So I want to thank that.

But they made it very clear to us in that meeting that, although they're appreciative of \$150,000, it just simply is not enough. It does not meet this moment. It does not speak to the scale of this crisis or this tragedy. As of today, there's a million refugees now out of Ukraine, mostly women and children. They are expecting that this may be one of the largest refugee crisis in world history. We have—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): I'd like to thank the member for Fort Garry for bringing this resolution forward.

My question for you: Is there anything that our province could be doing directly to help combat the racism that is occurring with the evacuation in Ukraine right now?

Mr. Wasyliv: I mean, that's difficult to watch, and I know any fair-minded Manitoban is struggling seeing that, and, obviously, war brings out the worst in people in a crisis and you sort of get to see who they are.

I don't know what we could do. We certainly could as a country extend no—visas for those students. We certainly could provide safe harbour to them if their countries are not in a position or they're not financially in a position to do so. Again, this is something that I think an all-party committee could work through, and I think we all could come up with some creative ideas.

But thank you for raising this. This is an issue that we have to keep in our mind.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): My question to the member is: Does he feel this is going to be a fast and quick war, or could this potentially be a long, protracted war over many years?

Mr. Wasyliv: I don't know what's to come. I don't think anybody does, and certainly not a military expert.

I don't think that the prospect of this being a long conflict should excuse this government's inaction.

I think if this government is standing up and saying, well, we're not going to do anything because this is going to go on for years and we want to dole out \$10,000 cheques every six months, I don't think that's appropriate. I don't think that meets the moment. I think we need to meet this moment head on, now, with the appropriate resources and not look for excuses not to act.

Mr. Ian Bushie (Keewatinook): I want to thank the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv) for bringing forth this resolution.

And I want to point out that we are not helpless, but we can also not be complacent. We have an obligation, responsibility and a moral duty to assist and support our fellow citizens of Ukraine.

Around the world some are taking up arms, some are donating funds, some are taking in Ukrainian citizens. But there is always more we can do. We just can't do the bare minimum.

So my question is: Why is it important that we immediately form an all-party committee to respond to this crisis right now?

Mr. Wasyliv: I appreciate the question.

I mean, this place can be difficult and we sometimes get bogged down in partisan politics.

If the other side is sincere—and I really wish they would be, and I keep calling out and hoping that they would be—we would have an all-party committee that would have been established already, today. But the fact that this government is reluctant to do that is politicizing this situation and is politicizing the response in Manitoba.

Ms. Janice Morley-Lecomte (Seine River): Thank the member opposite for his resolution.

Has the member—*[interjection]*

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: —consulted with any federal government individuals on the relations between Canada and the Ukraine?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Could the member repeat the question, please.

Ms. Morley-Lecomte: Yes. Has the member opposite consulted with the federal government on relations between Canada and Ukraine?

Mr. Wasyliv: I haven't personally consulted with the federal government. I'm meeting with federal MPs on

Monday. They're now back from Ottawa on a break, and so I'm certainly going to be discussing Manitoba's situation with our federal counterparts and hopefully have a co-ordinated approach to the response.

But, yet again, this is another reason we should have an all-party committee and so that we can speak as one voice in this Chamber.

Ms. Lisa Naylor (Wolseley): There are many gender-based impacts of war, and we know that women's bodies are almost always weaponized in war through rape and other sexual violence. This isn't something people have been talking about very much, but we need to talk about it. We need to talk about the trans folks who are not able to leave the country because their birth certificates don't match their gender identity, as well as the folks of the—of colour that we've been hearing about.

But when it comes to this impact of gender-based violence, how might this have reverberating impacts right here in our country and province in the future?

* (11:20)

Mr. Wasyliv: I really appreciate this very important question.

As—and as a fellow alumni of the Winnipeg School Division, I think my friend rightly knows that when people come here and they may be safe, they don't necessarily leave war and war doesn't leave them. And they're often trauma-affected and their children are trauma-affected, and it can affect their schooling. It can affect what happens at—in their home life, and Manitoba certainly has a responsible—responsibility to them and we certainly need resources with refugee settlement for trauma and mental health and to support victims of sexualized violence.

Mr. Schuler: If there's one thing we can all agree with in this House with the member for Fort Garry is he clearly is not a military expert.

However, knowing what's going on over the last week and a half, wouldn't a long-term strategy be important to put in place as a province of Manitoba? For that matter, as a country, considering that this may be a long, protracted war?

Mr. Wasyliv: I mean, what do you say to that?

This is a government that ducks and dives, that does everything that it can to actually, you know, be responsible for an issue, will look to the federal government, say, it's not our issue. It's the federal—no, it's your issue. It's our issue. We are legislators of the—of

Manitoba. We have a duty to our citizens. We should not be looking for excuses. We should be looking for opportunities to work together. Why is that so hard for this government to do?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The time for questions has ended.

Debate

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The time being over, the floor is open for debate.

Mr. Dennis Smook (La Vérendrye): I would like to start out by thanking the member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv) for bringing forward this resolution on the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

As legislators, we must do everything in our power to stop Russia and its aggression into Ukraine. The world can now see the lack of respect Putin has for the lives of civilians, children and anyone that gets in his way.

Since February the 24th, the invasion has only escalated. Targeted bombings of Ukrainian hospitals, residential areas, orphanages, malls, schools and shops have increased since the invasion began. Just the other night on the news it was showing the devastation of parts of Ukraine, how the Russians were using cluster bombs that, according to the news, are now allowed to be used. It's incredible the amount of destruction that these bombs cause.

A convoy of Russian armoured vehicles, including tanks, stretching for approximately 60 kilometres is headed toward Kyiv. Approximately 75 per cent of the Russian troops gathered along the Ukrainian border have entered Ukraine. Putin is a bully and is finding out that Ukrainians are not the pushovers he thought they could be. His troops are facing a lot more resistance than he expected. He is having logistical issues, shortage of fuel and food for his 60-kilometre-long convoy. Because of this resistance, Putin is blaming the West and the EU for support being supplied to Ukraine. Being the bully that he is, he has put his nuclear forces on standby, threatening anyone helping Ukraine.

We must do everything in our power to stop Russia's invasion of Ukraine. If Putin is successful in his invasion of Ukraine, will he stop there, or will he regroup and look at other countries to add to his empire? Could this be the start of the largest military conflict on European soil in decades?

When you watch the news and see the footage of destruction of buildings and property, one can only

wonder what Putin's goal is. It looks like he is intent on destroying the country and its people. Many important buildings have been destroyed. He is destroying Ukrainian history.

Ukrainian being known for the—as the breadbasket of Europe, it has been the target of many dictators. Stalin tried to starve Ukraine in 1932 and 1933—the Holodomor, also known as the great famine that killed millions of Ukrainians. It is estimated that some place between 4 and 7 million died from starvation.

Putin has been slowly trying to take control of Ukraine for years. In 2014 he annexed Crimea, and now, in 2022, he has started a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. There have been thousands of lives lost on both sides, needlessly.

I am proud that many countries are helping Ukraine fight Russia's aggressions—aggressive invasion and the attack on Ukraine. I am proud of the actions taken by Canada and by the government of Manitoba in supporting the democratically elected government of Ukraine.

Manitoba condemns the actions of Russia and respects the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine. Manitoba supports the many sanctions that have been imposed on Russia. Our government supports the government of Canada's action on sending military equipment and financial loans to Ukraine.

Manitoba will support the federal government in everything it can do to pressure Russia to end its aggression and restore peace in the region.

Canada, the EU, the US and UK and other allies have called for Russia to be removed from the SWIFT system, the Belgian financial messaging system that links more than 11,000 financial institutions in over 200 countries. This will make it extremely difficult for Russia to conduct financial transactions with other countries.

The more economic sanctions that we can put—can impose on Russia and directly on Putin and his inner circle may create enough pressure to make Putin rethink his position. Freezing Putin's assets may be one way to get his attention.

In the meantime, we can hope and pray that Putin changes his mind. But we must do whatever is in our power to help Ukraine and the thousands of Ukrainians that have been displaced by Putin's actions.

I know our Manitoba government has authorized the 'prioritisation' of review of Ukrainian applicants' files for the Manitoba nominee-Provincial Nominee Program, including Ukrainian families. So far, our government has committed \$150,000 to the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for humanitarian relief.

We will continue to work with the—with our federal colleagues to move quickly to support Ukrainian immigration to Manitoba. We are standing by to assist with any refugee programs the federal government chooses to implement. Canada, and especially Manitoba, have had a great relationship with Ukraine that dates back to the late 1800s, when the first Ukrainians immigrated to Canada.

I believe that my dad's parents arrived in Canada in 1896 and settled in the southeast area of Manitoba near Vita. My mother's parents settled in Senkiw, Manitoba. Manitoba has strong interpersonal and cultural connections with Ukraine; 15 per cent of Manitobans report that they are of Ukrainian descent, which represents the greatest proportion of Ukrainian Canadians in any province in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud to say that I am part of that 15 per cent, and extremely proud of my Ukrainian heritage and culture. Ukrainians are a proud and hard-working people that have contributed much to the success of Manitoba and to the strong multicultural background of Manitoba.

The member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliw) talks about his parents and their strong Ukrainian background, about his Saturdays going to Ukrainian school to make sure they maintained the Ukrainian language or to Ukrainian dancing. Although I am many years his senior, I share the same type of Saturday he had. Many of my Saturdays growing up were in the Ukrainian school or at the Ukrainian dancing.

Manitoba is a big province, but at the same time, a small one. This member for Fort Garry talked about his parents and how they influenced his life. Growing up, I also got to know his parents. They spent a number of years in Vita. His father was the parish priest at the Ukrainian Orthodox church, and his mother taught school in Vita.

* (11:30)

I attended the rally that was held in front of the Legislative Building last Saturday and saw the passion of the thousands of people—they're showing that thousands of people there showed for Ukraine. Then, just this week at the Jets game, where the Hoosli Ukrainian Male Chorus sang both the Canadian and

the Ukrainian national anthems. Manitoba is truly a friend of Ukraine.

Once again, we must do all we can to support Ukraine in this time of need. Today and every day, we stand with Ukraine. Slava Ukraini. [*Glory to Ukraine*]

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I really want to thank my colleague from Fort Garry and commend him for, first, yesterday, speaking on the MUPI and really providing a lot of valuable information and background and historical context that helps those of us that aren't Ukrainian really understand more about this conflict, more about this conflict and how this conflict affects us as Manitobans. So thank you very much.

I want to thank him again for bringing forward this resolution today. It gives us the opportunity to really try and do some non-partisan work together with the government. And, certainly, there seems to be confusion as to what that means, to form an all-party committee to put forward ideas, to talk about those ideas and to try and find the best way to help the people of Ukraine should be what that's all about.

Now, my colleague and our party have put together a list of ideas on things that this government can do together, things that we can advocate for together, things that we can ensure that we're doing more than just supplying words. Words are important and words of support, certainly, are important. I, too, was at the Leg. on the weekend while the protest was—that—there—the rally was there, and we heard a lot of words from a lot of people about the dire situation in Ukraine.

And any time you turn on the news, listen to the news, we see that the situation continues to get worse. And I heard the member from Springfield-Ritchot talk about, well, is this going to be a long war or a short war? And it would be an unfair question to ask my colleague to speculate on how long this war might go. But I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it will go longer if we do nothing. It will go longer if we merely send words and don't take action. So we've put together from our side, our party—which it's unfortunate that we're still talking about sides when we should be all together, putting forward concrete plans and actions to help our friends in the Ukraine.

But it won't work, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if some members aren't willing to listen to ideas; that just because somebody else proposed it, they won't listen to it. That's not how a non-partisan committee will ever accomplish anything.

Oftentimes on other issues we've heard the government say, well, you always say we're doing bad, but you never offer us any ideas on how to do things differently.

So we've offered ideas, and I'll go through them again for the members opposite, so that they hear them, and the more they hear them, maybe the sooner they'll be able to comprehend and get their heads wrapped around the fact that, together, we can do something and make a difference.

So, right now, we're calling on the government to dramatically increase the amount of support offered to the Ukrainian Canadian federation because \$150,000 in today's day and age is clearly inadequate. It's clearly not enough. So, what is the right number?

You'll notice that we haven't got that number written here, because we need to sit down and have that conversation, collectively, with that all-party committee, to come up with the realistic number for today and, potentially, a different number for tomorrow.

Manitoba should be a Canadian leader in offering support for our fellow citizens and to the Ukraine. And why is that important? Why do we need to do that? Well, several members in this Chamber are of Ukrainian descent, have family members still in Ukraine that's under attack. And I would hope—as my colleague from Fort Garry—I would hope that the members opposite are really talking to their leaders to say we need to do more. It's our families, it's our cousins, it's our brothers, it's our sisters that are under attack, that are going to lose their lives, that are going to lose their country while we sit here and do next to nothing.

We have proposed a matching fund so that people in this province—and some people have already started making donations to the Ukraine to whatever funds they can find to try and do that in a legitimate way. And it would be a good thing for the Province to match those funds. And we haven't said that it should be an unlimited number. That's not realistic. So we've suggested \$5 million in matching funds.

Is that the right number? I don't know, but we'll never know if we never talk about it. We'll never know what the right level of support is if we don't listen and try and do something, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we've heard the federal government has taken several steps to place sanctions on the Russian economy and the oligarchs and the state-owned enterprises.

So the question is, is there something that we in Manitoba can do in that same vein? Do we have Russian-owned, -controlled entities in this province? Well, we know we do. Do we know who exactly those owners are and what their ties are to Putin and his regime? I don't. I don't know if any of the members opposite do. I'm willing to bet they don't. But we should find that out. We should know those answers. Because if enterprise in Manitoba is by its very nature making money and supplying that money to the Russian state to help fund the unjustified attack on Ukraine, then we need to find out and we need to figure out how to put a stop to that.

Now, I'm not suggesting for one minute, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that workers at those industries should be left out, that they should be left hanging. But we really need to know, and we propose that beneficial ownership piece so that we know who actually owns these companies in Manitoba.

So what I've heard today—and then there's other things that we've suggested, and my time is not long enough to go through them all—but what I've heard today—I've just listened to one of the members speak, that we have to do everything we can to support Ukraine. And that's what we've suggested. That's not what we heard.

* (11:40)

We need to do everything in our power, including spending money. Because sometimes that's what it's going to take to stop Putin from taking over the Ukraine. Sending words, thoughts and prayers—that's nice, but it's not going to get the job done.

So let's sit down together. Let's work together for once. Let's listen to what people are proposing. Let's listen to those ideas that have been suggested. Are they the only ideas? Maybe not, but let's find out. Let's do more than—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield-Ritchot): Two thousand and thirteen, President Viktor Yanukovich had first indicated Ukraine would join the European Union in a economic deal. That's what had been committed to by the president and by the parliament.

He then reversed himself suddenly, signed an economic deal with Russia. That brought on the first round of protests, November 21, 2013, and, as mentioned yesterday, was predominantly students that went out and started protests—wasn't a very large

protest, at that—and by November 30, 2013, started the violent suppression of those protests. Again, they weren't big. They weren't substantial.

What they did is they went out—police forces, military forces went out, and they beat up these young students, who went home. Families got involved. Neighbours got involved. And soon, they had a major, major uprising in the town square—the square that is known as Maidan. For those who have been there, they know it is just down a little ways from the Parliament of Ukraine.

The protests ended up becoming incredibly violent. For those of us who were there in May of 2014, the cobblestones were, by and large, all stripped out of the town square, and they were used as missiles. There were massive, massive piles of wood and flammables and tires and garbage that were set up, and those were set up as barriers. Every time the military forces tried to come out down the hill to take the Maidan, they would light those with gasoline and they would create an amazing amount of smoke, and would disorient the by and large Russian-supported forces that were trying to take back Maidan and stop the protest.

The use of the Molotov cocktail was very well used, and as the forces would come down the hill to try to take the Maidan square, they would let go of a volley of Molotov cocktails, and cobblestones would then be thrown.

Unfortunately, more than a hundred protestors were shot. There was one instant, a young boy, barely 18 years old, decided he would do his part for the Maidan uprising, and from what they could surmise, he had made sandwiches, because there were still things left on the counter. He made sandwiches, put it in a paper bag and decided he was going to go and do his part and help support the uprising. And he took his sandwiches and went to hand them out, and a Russian sniper shot him in the head, and he was instantly killed. He and over a hundred others, as they are now called, the heavenly one hundred.

It showed the tenacity. It showed the tenacity of Ukraine and of Ukrainian people, that they wanted, more than anything else, their freedom. They're prepared to die for it, that they are prepared to put their life—even young people were prepared to go out and fight and stand up for their freedom and a free democratic system.

It also showed that Putin, because he failed—in fact, it was on February 22nd, 2014 that

President Viktor Yanukovich fled to Russia. Putin then realized that his plan as president wasn't going to work, that he was going to have to do things otherwise, as mentioned yesterday. Then he went for Crimea, and then the Donbas region, and it—everything was there for us to see. And I know twenty—hindsight is 20/20, but we could actually see what was going to happen, that Putin wasn't going to get his way. He couldn't do it through his plan, the president of Ukraine, so he was going to do it otherwise. And now he is on his way in the attempt to take over Ukraine.

However, the tenacity that was shown—and for those of us who were election observers, I was there in May and then in fall, one for the presidential election and then one time for the parliamentary election. And as mentioned yesterday, there were oftentimes when things were done wrong and you would say to them, you know, that's not how democracy works, you have to protect the ballot—the secrecy of a person's vote, and they would, in tears, say, thank you. Thank you for being here. We love Canada. We love your support. Thank you for telling us.

Because they wanted to get their vote right. They wanted their democracy to be pure. They want it to be done in such a way that it was above reproach. That's the kind of country they wanted, free and democratic. They wanted their civil liberties more than anything else, and they were prepared to fight for it and prepared to stand up for it and that's what's happening today.

I want to briefly speak to—about the role of Manitoba.

I would suggest now than—more than ever we must support and encourage our federal government. We should encourage them and thank them for what they have done and also request that they do more.

What does Ukraine need now more than anything today? They need a strong international response, economic sanctions, their moving of SWIFT. There are news reports almost by the hour of more things being imposed on Russia. They need military supplies, for instance, flak jackets.

One of the more troubling moments was we were in Novohrad-Volynskiyi, and there was a gentleman from Toronto—he spoke Ukrainian—and a woman came up to us in the square and she said, I have lots of money I want to give you. I have lots of money. And he said, why would you give us money? She said, my

son is in the army fighting against the Russians in the Donbas region. And they didn't even have flak jackets. She says, my only child, he's my only son. If I give you all my money, will you take it back and send us—send me a flak jacket so I can get it to my son? I just want my son to come home alive. He's all I have, he's all I have left.

So the translator kept translating it and this elderly gentleman from Toronto who was part of the team observing the election indicated to her that's actually not allowed in Canada. We are not allowed to buy flak jackets, and she just stood there and she wept.

There was nothing we could do for her. But there is something that our Government of Canada can do is provide flak jackets—and I know that's being done around the world. They need light arms. They need surface-to-surface and surface-to-air, and that is being provided.

Right now, we need a—an appropriate international response.

I heard members across the way and their comments. We will disagree on points—that's okay. It's a strong democracy. We agree on things. The member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv) said perhaps we need tax relief.

Next time I have an opportunity to see the Minister of Finance (Mr. Friesen)—today, I'm going to actually mention that to him. Perhaps he can go and have a look at Hansard, you know, tax relief. We have something we can agree on.

Will this be a protracted war, more than likely. We would hope not, but more than likely that's what it's going to be. So what we need is a long-term strategy. And ideas coming across the way—I listened to the member for Flin Flon (MLA Lindsey) who actually said, in an about way, he said, yes, we do need a long-term plan.

We do not know what we're going to need tomorrow or the days beyond. We don't know what the level of support is going to be and what's that going to look like. I think it's important for all of us to listen to each other, were some very good ideas that came forward. Hansard will have picked those up. I know we will look at them, and we should always be prepared to listen to all members and their ideas.

I would just caution members: be careful that we don't just take the emotion of this moment and try to create a political wedge with it. We have committed \$150,000 of immediate relief, but the Premier's

(Mrs. Stefanson) made it very clear there will be more to come. But we have no idea what the needs are going to be in a week, in a month, in a year and they're going to be great.

Right now—today—the war in Ukraine, the war for Ukraine is going to be an economic—international, economic response, and a international military response. The long-term fallout, the long-term costs, that's when we will have to step in and that's when we will be there as Manitobans.

* (11:50)

We have done so and we have always, always batted way above our weight. We will be there for the people of Ukraine that need to flee because the Russians now are completely wiping out entire communities, wiping out entire villages. Those people have no homes; they have nothing to go back to. Canada will be there for them. Manitoba will be there for them.

We have—our Premier has indicated we're going to wait for a long-term strategy. We're going to wait to see what happens with the international economic response and the military response, and then provinces across this country will be putting a lot of resources in to help those individuals who have nothing and are going to be looking for a new home.

I thank all members in this House for their words. Let's keep up the good advice, and I would encourage all of us, let's tone down the politics, let's tone down the attacks on each other. Let's stop that. We need to have a concerted effort together as a Chamber to react to this international crisis.

Thank you.

Ms. Cindy Lamoureux (Tyndall Park): Again, I'd like to thank the member for Fort Garry for bringing forward this resolution.

All over the world people are coming together to show support because we support a free and democratic and independent Ukraine, and our actions now will help determine how long this war goes on for, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We're paying close attention to the news, to what our friends and our families are sharing with us, and to each other's speeches here in the House. Yesterday's MUPI and today's resolution, we're all learning a lot from each other and different perspectives and stories that are being brought forward.

We know how President Zelensky has set a phenomenal example and leading and telling world leaders that he will stay and lead the defence of his country. We know that our Ukrainian army has halted Russian advances, effectively delaying the Russians. Furthermore, Ukrainian citizens are risking their own lives to confront Russian soldiers and tanks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is racism being faced in evacuating Ukraine, buses not being fully utilized, and loved ones and pets being left at train stations.

You know, a friend of mine the other day told me about her family who is in a small city right now in Ukraine, and how they were told the other day that Russia has actually sent Russians to come and live in Ukraine over the last few months, basically as plants so that they can get to know the communities and the small cities, and now the citizens of these small communities are taking down the street signs and they're removing arrows and street names, but people and Russian soldiers still know how to get around because there were Russian military plants in the city to begin with.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Ukrainians—and keep in mind, Manitoba has over 180,000 Canadians with Ukrainian heritage—have contributed so much to our economy and to our diversity and to so many of us on individual levels. Now it's our turn to be giving back and doing everything in our power to save the lives, family, culture, and independence of Ukraine.

We recognize and honour the bravery of Ukrainian people, and many of us will reflect on the labour movement and the Ukrainian Labour Temple that is a great source of pride and a gathering place here today.

Personally, I find myself reflecting a lot on a trip that my father and I took several years back to Ukraine. Those deep metro stations have become temporary homes for many, and seeing the National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide has put a lot into perspective for me.

It is devastating that war is happening, but I believe with my whole heart that Ukraine will prevail.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to end my remarks here and keep them short because I think it is critically important that this resolution gets passed today, and I hope that it is passed unanimously.

Thank you.

Mr. Diljeet Brar (Burrows): I would put a few words on record, depending on the time I've been provided.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, 180,000-plus Canadians who have their roots in Ukraine, they are in pain. My colleagues on this side of the House and myself, we stand strong with those Canadians, and we ask all the elected representatives here in this Chamber to stand strong with us and do the maximum possible for those people, whose relatives, extended families, loved ones are in pain right there in Ukraine.

And I would like to say this: this is not just an attack on the land. It's an attack on their existence, on their language, on their culture, on their identity.

We should just think for a moment—if you are not allowed to speak your own language, how much suffocated you would feel.

We simply need to empathize how those people are feeling, not taking much of the time of the House. I would end here with thanks for my colleagues to stand together in this tough time with Canadians of Ukrainian heritage.

Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Are there any other speakers?

Mrs. Cathy Cox (Kildonan-River East): I will keep this very quick. All eyes on the world are on Ukraine. The world is not only watching but we are acting. We are united in sending Vladimir Putin a strong message that his unprovoked invasion of the people of Ukraine will not be tolerated.

Goodness over evil will always prevail. Ukraine and its people are strong and resilient. They have faced oppression.

They have endured the Holodomor where Stalin used wheat as a weapon to starve millions of peaceful Ukrainians. And they will continue to strong—to stand strong, united and proud in this battle against Putin.

Just want to say that there is nothing more powerful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, than prayer, and I am grateful to all of the churches of our Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy for the prayers for our Ukrainian people.

In—the invasion of our peaceful Ukraine is not only criminal, but unconscionable. Putin and his

regime have bombed and intentionally targeted those who are most vulnerable. Nursery schools filled with children, hospitals who provide treatments for cancer patients and small villages who have aging seniors.

These are the actions not of a leader, but those of a coward. Our government, our country and our province will stand together with Ukrainians, side by side.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The question before the House is the resolution moved by the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mr. Wasyliv).

Is it the will to have the resolution read?

An Honourable Member: No.

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

Recorded Vote

Ms. Nahanni Fontaine (St. Johns): Perfect. Deputy Speaker, can you please call a recorded vote.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A recorded vote being called, call in the members.

* (12:00)

Order, please. The question before the House is the resolution moved by the honourable member for Fort Garry.

Division

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

Yeas

Altomare, Asagwara, Brar, Bushie, Clarke, Cox, Eichler, Ewasko, Fielding, Fontaine, Friesen, Gerrard, Goertzen, Gordon, Guenter, Guillemard, Helwer, Isleifson, Johnson, Johnston, Kinew, Lagassé, Lagimodiere, Lamont, Lamoureux, Lindsey, Maloway, Martin, Michaleski, Morley-Lecomte, Moses, Naylor, Nesbitt, Pedersen, Piwniuk, Reyes, Sala, Sandhu, Schuler, Smith (Lagimodière), Smith (Point Douglas), Smook, Squires, Stefanson, Teitsma, Wasyliv, Wharton, Wiebe, Wishart, Wowchuk.

Nays

Deputy Clerk (Mr. Rick Yarish): Yeas 50, Nays 0.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion is passed.

* * *

Hon. Kelvin Goertzen (Government House Leader): This might be what my friend was also going to say, the Opposition House Leader, but I just wanted to note that while schedules sometimes don't allow all members to be there, this is indeed a complete unanimous vote of the entire Assembly.

Ms. Fontaine: I concur with my honourable House leader.

I would ask if we could have leave to send a copy of this resolution to the Prime Minister and to every federal party leader, as well as the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to send a copy of this resolution? *[Agreed]*

The hour being past 12 noon, this House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m. this afternoon.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 3, 2022

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