

Fifth Session - Thirty-Ninth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable George Hickes
Speaker*

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Ninth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ALLAN, Nancy, Hon.	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ALTEMEYER, Rob	Wolseley	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
BJORNSON, Peter, Hon.	Gimli	N.D.P.
BLADY, Sharon	Kirkfield Park	N.D.P.
BLAIKIE, Bill, Hon.	Elmwood	N.D.P.
BOROTSIK, Rick	Brandon West	P.C.
BRAUN, Erna	Rossmere	N.D.P.
BRICK, Marilyn	St. Norbert	N.D.P.
BRIESE, Stuart	Ste. Rose	P.C.
CALDWELL, Drew	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CULLEN, Cliff	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
EICHLER, Ralph	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	P.C.
GRAYDON, Cliff	Emerson	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
HOWARD, Jennifer, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
IRVIN-ROSS, Kerri, Hon.	Fort Garry	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
JHA, Bidhu	Radisson	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MARCELINO, Flor, Hon.	Wellington	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McFADYEN, Hugh	Fort Whyte	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MELNICK, Christine, Hon.	Riel	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
OSWALD, Theresa, Hon.	Seine River	N.D.P.
PEDERSEN, Blaine	Carman	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
RONDEAU, Jim, Hon.	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
ROWAT, Leanne	Minnedosa	P.C.
SARAN, Mohinder	The Maples	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELBY, Erin, Hon.	Southdale	N.D.P.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan, Hon.	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
SWAN, Andrew, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
TAILLIEU, Mavis	Morris	P.C.
WHITEHEAD, Frank	The Pas	N.D.P.
WIEBE, Matt	Concordia	N.D.P.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.
<i>Vacant</i>	Inkster	
<i>Vacant</i>	Lac du Bonnet	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 21, 2011

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

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

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 22—The Securities Amendment Act

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Securities Commission): I move, seconded by the Minister of Education (Ms. Allan), that Bill 22, The Securities Amendment Act, be now read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Wowchuk: There are—this bill has four changes. Three of the changes have been endorsed by the council of ministers of security; the fourth strengthens provisions against trading enhancements and ensures that there is not a misuse of public information in trading.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, these are bringing us in line with other jurisdictions as has been agreed to by the security ministers—ministers of security. Thank you.

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

PETITIONS

PTH 16 and PTH 5 North—Traffic Signals

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

And these are the reasons for this petition:

The junction of PTH 16 and PTH 5 north is an increasingly busy intersection which is used by motorists and pedestrians alike.

The Town of Neepawa has raised concerns with the Highway Traffic Board about safety levels at this intersection.

The Town of Neepawa has also passed a resolution requesting that Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation install traffic lights at this intersection in order to increase safety.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To request the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation to consider making the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of PTH 16 and PTH 5 north a priority in order to help protect the safety of the motorists and pedestrians who use it.

And this petition is signed by M. Nicholson, R. Lebedynski, D. Cox and many, many other fine Manitobans.

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

Auto Theft—Court Order Breaches

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to the petition is as follows:

On December 11th of 2009, in Winnipeg, Zdzislaw Andrzejczak was killed when the car that he was driving collided with a stolen vehicle.

The death of Mr. Andrzejczak, a husband and a father, along with too many other deaths and injuries involving stolen vehicles, was a preventable tragedy.

Many of those accused in fatalities involving stolen vehicles were previously known to police and identified as chronic and high-risk car thieves who had court orders against them.

Chronic car thieves pose a risk to the safety of all Manitobans.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all court orders for car thieves are vigorously monitored and enforced.

And to request the Minister of Justice to consider ensuring that all breaches of court orders on car thieves are reported to police and vigorously prosecuted.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by M. Dyck, S. Hughes, L. Evanchow and thousands of other Manitobans.

Convicted Auto Thieves—Denial of MPI Benefits

Mr. Blaine Pedersen (Carman): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

In Manitoba, a car thief convicted of stealing a vehicle involved in a car accident is eligible to receive compensation and assistance for personal injury from Manitoba Public Insurance.

Too many Manitoba families have had their lives tragically altered by motor vehicle accidents involving car thieves and stolen vehicles.

It is an injustice to victims, their families and law-abiding Manitobans that MPI premiums are used to benefit car thieves involved in those accidents.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request that the Minister of Justice deny all MPI benefits to a person for injuries received in an accident if he or she is convicted of stealing a motor vehicle involved in the accident.

And this petition is signed by A.R. Mutcher, W.F. Mutcher, B. Harbour and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Bipole III—Cost to Manitoba Families

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): I wish to present the following petition to the Legislative Assembly.

The background to this petition is as follows:

Manitoba Hydro has been directed by the provincial government to construct its next high voltage direct transmission line, Bipole III, down the west side of Manitoba.

This will cost each family of four in Manitoba \$11,748 more than an east-side route, which is also shorter and more reliable.

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

To urge the provincial government to build the Bipole III transmission line on the shorter and more reliable east side of Lake Winnipeg in order to save each Manitoba family of four \$11,748.

And this is signed by H. Dyck, M. Sandercock, R. Froese and many, many other Manitobans.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Education): I am pleased to table the 2011-2012 Departmental Expenditure Estimates for Manitoba Education.

Hon. Erin Selby (Minister of Advanced Education and Literacy): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the 2011-2012 Departmental Expenditure Estimates for Manitoba Advanced Education and Literacy.

* (13:40)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Flooding and Ice Jams Update

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister responsible for Emergency Measures): We're now on day 17 of active flood fighting in the province, as water levels continue to rise in both the Red and Assiniboine rivers. To get an idea of the magnitude of this year's flood, one only has to look at the number of local states of emergency that have been declared throughout the province: In 2009 there were 16 local states of emergency compared to 32 so far this spring.

I would like to inform the House it now appears that the Red and Assiniboine rivers' crests will coincide within two days of each other in the city of Winnipeg, bringing water levels close to 22.2 feet James Avenue sometime between May 2nd and May 5th. There will be prolonged high water levels in Winnipeg after the crest passes with the potential for record total natural flow volumes on the Red River at Selkirk.

Work is planned to raise the south access in the town of St. Jean Baptiste to ensure community road access is not cut during the flood event.

Work is also under way to complete the partial closure of the Roseau River community ring dike, where 166 medically vulnerable residents are being transferred to Winnipeg today. This brings the total number of evacuees in the province to 1,039, up from 866 yesterday.

Trailers with flood tube barriers and provincial staff are now being positioned in The Pas for flood

proofing around the town of The Pas, Ralls Island in the RM of Kelsey and the Opaskwayak Cree Nation in anticipation of rising water on the Saskatchewan River and the Carrot River.

Today, the Province announced that it will be assisting homeowners by covering the full cost of bacterial water testing for private well water supplies in all flood-affected areas.

Mr. Stuart Briese (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his latest update. We may be heading into a long weekend, but there will not be much rest for those dealing with the flooding.

This morning, Manitoba Hydro relocated six staff from its Melita office to a portable substation. Although the water levels appear to be stabilized around Melita, the community will be monitoring the situation very carefully in the days ahead.

I know there's also a lot of activity under way in other western Manitoba communities like Souris, Oak Lake, St-Lazare, Sioux Valley First Nation and others. In addition to protecting people and property, efforts to protect essential infrastructures such as sewage lift stations, water treatment plants and sewage lagoons continue.

Flood preparations are also well under way in more northerly areas like the Carrot River Valley and The Pas, as the minister has stated.

Precautionary evacuations continue, such as the relocation of 42 residents from the St. Adolphe Personal Care Home to another facility in Grunthal. The total number of evacuees continues to rise, having reached 866 yesterday.

At least 32 communities have declared states of local emergency, and certainly more could follow. Damage to provincial and municipal roads continues.

As we mark the Easter weekend, I would like to thank the countless provincial, municipal and First Nations staff and the hundreds of volunteers who are working so diligently on the front lines of this flood. Their efforts are appreciated more than they will ever know. Thank you.

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

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, first a thank-you to the minister for his statement and the commitment to testing of water that was made today.

Certainly, as we move into this critical Easter weekend, there are communities like Melita, St-Lazare and many others who are looking very closely at their situation and hoping that we don't have further rain or other activities which will complicate or make the situation worse. Fortunately, let's hope that's not the case, but recognize the situation in the area around The Pas and OCN and many other areas of the province, including very significantly along the Red River and the Assiniboine River, where there's a lot of preparation going on.

And I want to say thank you to all those who have done so much and a thank-you to those who will contribute so much over this coming Easter weekend.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us today from St. James Collegiate the AAA Senior Boys Provincial Basketball Champions, the St. James Jimmies who are the guests of the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Korzeniowski).

And also in the public gallery we have with us Mr. Joachim Fritz-Vannahme and Mrs. Verena Vannahme from Bielefeld, Germany, who are the guests of the honourable member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson).

And also we have Francis LaBossière, president and chief operating officer of the Victoria General Hospital and Rena and Reno Molinari from the Victoria General Hospital Foundation who are the guests of the honourable Minister of Housing and Community Development (Ms. Irvin-Ross).

And also in the public gallery we have from Whitemouth School, we have 70 grade 5 to 12 students under the direction of Ms. Patti Enns. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you all here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Budget

Proposed Amendments

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, today is the day that every member of the House will have the

opportunity to vote on the amendment that was put forward by the opposition to the budget that was tabled on the 12th of April.

Mr. Speaker, it is a balanced and reasonable amendment that calls on the government—that acknowledges the things that are right but calls on the government to do two things. One is to get the deficit under control and make some progress on controlling debt so the budget's not just about five months of politics but about how Manitoba looks five years from today. The second is an amendment to save every family in Manitoba \$11,748 on their hydro bills, protect hydro's reliability, avoid running the bipole line through the flooded Red River Valley and do what's right for the future of Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, will they vote today in favour of these fair and reasonable amendments that ensure a better future for the people of Manitoba?

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Finance): I can tell the member opposite that we looked very closely at the amendments he proposed, Mr. Speaker, and it became very clear to us what spending review means in their minds. Spending review means Connie Curran. Spending in health care means Connie Curran and cuts to health care. Spending review in Manitoba Hydro means that the members opposite would not build anything. They would not build bipole. They would not build the converters. They would stop all development as they did in the past. They shut down Conawapa and they would shut it all down again.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the map that the members opposite—that they have put out, that is the only thing that they can mean, and that's the difference between them and us.

We will invest—we will invest, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, that's not at all what the amendment says. The amendment calls on—the amendment—it's only 43 words and they're good words. They call on the government to reduce waste, protect front-line social services and bring a more balanced fiscal approach, therefore ensuring a prosperous future for Manitobans.

So my question to the minister is very clear: Will she, Mr. Speaker, emerge from the grassy knoll, come away from the grassy knoll, abolish those delusions and paranoia and vote for this very

balanced—balanced and sensible improvement—to the provincial budget?

* (13:50)

Ms. Wowchuk: The member may have written 42 words, but I can tell you that what I've had—the message is only four words, Mr. Speaker, and Manitobans don't trust the Conservatives; they don't trust you.

That's what Manitobans have told us, because Manitobans remember what happened in the '90s, and Manitobans remember that last budget the members opposite put forward, amendments that would remove \$500 million from the budget, would have cut front-line services, would have taken teachers out of the classroom, would have taken police off the street. That's what the members opposite stand for, and the members opposite stand for privatizing Manitoba Hydro so their friends can make money like they did in the Manitoba telephone system.

And I can tell you that we will not listen to his amendments; we will listen to Manitobans.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, they didn't listen to Manitobans because the results of the pre-budget consultations weren't even compiled two working days before the budget was tabled. And it's very clear when you look at the budget and you look at the government's plans to increase debt by between 8 and 10 per cent a year, when you look at the fact now that debt servicing is the fourth largest department of government, when you consider the fact that if interest rates rise it will put further pressure on front-line social services and will result in higher hydro bills, higher taxes and a lower quality of living for all Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, will they vote for an amendment that will protect Manitobans against higher taxes, against reductions in social programs by getting the debt of Manitoba under control?

Ms. Wowchuk: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition will say anything, but we all remember what he said nine months ago. Nine months ago he said, put—take out \$500 million out of the budget, balance in one year. That was his plan. Nobody in Canada was doing that, no Conservatives, no Liberals, no NDP. Members opposite would have done it.

He talks about our debt-servicing costs. I will remind him that under the Conservatives, when he

was working for Filmon, Mr. Speaker, debt-servicing costs in 1999 were 13 cents on a dollar of revenue. Now they are 6 cents on the dollar. And I can tell you, during those conservative times, the Conservatives were spending over a billion dollars on debt servicing.

We are spending less, we've reduced the amount, and we are making investments in Manitobans and Manitoba front-line services and economic growth.

Manitoba Hydro Bipole III Export Sales (Saskatchewan)

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

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, Mr. Speaker, for the people who voted in favour of the 1999 budget to now want to run against Gary Filmon in 2011—now, don't get me wrong, I'm sure he'd love to beat them a fourth time, but the reality is that it's 2011—that it's 2011—it's April of 2011. It's time to focus on 2011 and beyond, including an important vote that comes to this House later this afternoon on an important issue.

And one of those amendments deals with Bipole, Mr. Speaker, and I want to just ask the minister who has made the comment repeatedly, publicly in the media, that the reason—and this is about the ninth reason they've provided, but the reason they're building down the 500-kilometre longer west side of the province is to facilitate power sales to Saskatchewan.

I want to ask the minister: Is that really the reason? Was that a truthful statement, Mr. Speaker, or is it a further effort to mislead Manitobans?

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Hydro Act): Well, Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite doesn't like to reflect back on those years when he was advising the former premier or when he was advising Mike Harris on how to privatize the hydro system in Ontario. We know that he's taken that off of his website now because he wants people to forget about that.

But we know his record and Manitobans know his record, Mr. Speaker, on where he is on privatization of the Manitoba telephone system, where he was with helping Ontario privatize their hydro system. He bragged about that. All of a sudden he doesn't want to talk about it. The truth is, he doesn't want Manitobans to remember that he was

part of a team that privatized telephone in Manitoba, and privatized hydro in Alberta—in Ontario. He'd like to do Alberta too.

But that is his record. His record is he would do anything to privatize to make his friends money. We will stand by Manitobans, keep—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: And the minister seems to be having a hard time focusing on the question before her today, Mr. Speaker.

The question is this: They have—what they're saying is they want every family in Manitoba to pay an added \$11,000-plus for the west-side power line, Mr. Speaker. And the reason that they've given—*[interjection]* And the reason that they're giving—and they've offered about nine so far, and it seems to change every single day. What the Premier (Mr. Selinger) said is, it's very clear there's going to be demands in Saskatchewan; a west-side line would facilitate that by being closer to markets, no question about it.

I want to just ask the minister: If the reason is to facilitate power sales to Saskatchewan by building down the west side with a bipole line, why are they building the end of that line and the converter station east of the city of Winnipeg?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, we know that if the member opposite—if the Leader of the Opposition had his way, he would cancel Bipole, he would cancel the converter stations and he would cancel the building of the dams. If you look at his calculation, he has to be thinking about privatizing and cancelling all of that. He will mothball everything, drive Hydro into the ground and then sell it off to his friends. That's what he would do.

Mr. Speaker, we need Bipole III for security of supply for Manitobans, and we need Bipole III to reach our export markets so we can develop revenue and earn revenue for Manitobans.

The member opposite really doesn't want to be—the people to think that we can sell power to Saskatchewan. Well, I can tell him that the discussions are going well with Saskatchewan, and if he recalls that at committee the CEO of Manitoba Hydro said that if there was a major sale, we could build a converter, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. McFadyen: Mr. Speaker, so now the minister has added another billion dollars to the cost of the project. She wants to build another billion-dollar converter on the border of Saskatchewan.

The reality, Mr. Speaker, is that they've offered reason after reason and none of those reasons stands up to any scrutiny. The latest is that it's going to facilitate power sales to Saskatchewan, even as they're building their billion-dollar converter east of the city of Winnipeg.

I just want to ask the minister if she can just come off the Charlie Sheen tour bus and acknowledge, once and for all, Mr. Speaker, that everything that they are saying about Bipole is complete nonsense. They don't have a good reason for the decision they're making. They simply allowed themselves to get bullied by US pressure groups, and the cost is going to be borne by Manitoba families to the tune of more than \$11,000.

Will she acknowledge that today?

Ms. Wowchuk: And you can tell that the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, will say anything. He will use any line he can get. He will use any number that he can pull out of his head, Mr. Speaker. And we know that when he is talking about \$11,000, he is talking about cancelling the converter stations, cancelling the bipole, cancelling the dam. His agenda is to mothball everything, run Manitoba Hydro down, and then sell it off and privatize it, just like they did with the Manitoba telephone sister-system.

Mr. Speaker, our agenda is different. Our agenda is to build this economy. Our agenda is to develop hydro so that we can keep the lowest power rates in the country for Manitobans, the lowest power rates in North America and have power for the—as a reliability of supply and for industry in this province and for other markets.

Budget Personal Income Tax Brackets

Mrs. Heather Stefanson (Tuxedo): In the 2007 budget, the Minister of Finance promised to, and I quote: reduce the first income tax bracket rate to 10.5 per cent by 2011. Yet, Mr. Speaker, according to the budget she tabled in the House last week, this remains at 10.8 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Finance inform the House today why she has failed to live up to her commitment that her government made in 2007?

* (14:00)

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Finance): Well, if the member will recall, in last year's budget we said that we were putting some of the earlier commitments on hold until we were able to come into balance to deal with the recession and that we would bring these back when we came back into balance in 2014.

But, Mr. Speaker, if you will remember what the members opposite said, they wanted to slash \$500 million out of the budget. They would not have been able to deliver on any of those. They would've been cutting front-line services. They would've been shutting down hospitals. They wouldn't have had teachers in schools like we had in the '90s, when the nurses left this province, doctors left this province. That's the agenda of members opposite.

Our approach is different, Mr. Speaker, and we have made increases to tax credits and we have committed to bring those other issues when we come into balance.

Mrs. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, at the same time the government indicated in their 2007 budget that by 2011 they would, I quote: The entire middle tax bracket will be moved upwards to the range between \$35,000 and \$70,000.

Can the minister indicate for the House today why in her 2011 budget it appears that the range remains at \$31,001 to \$67,000, lower than what she promised in her 2007 budget?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, the answer's the same. We've gone through a recession. We made some decisions in our five-year plan, and we told the public, we told Manitobans that we would be delaying some of those incentives. We told them what would be—they would be doing. Manitobans recognized that there was a downturn in the economy, and they told us to stick with our five-year plan and bring us back to balance by 2014.

Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite would have had their way and would've removed \$500 million out of the budget, they wouldn't, we wouldn't, nobody would've been able to implement any of the tax credits that we have done this year. This Budget 2011 reduces personal income tax by over \$80 million—\$60 million. There are other incentives that are there, and we will move forward on our five-year plan and get to the goals that we set out in—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a Stats Canada report for the House. According to Stats Canada, Manitoba never experienced the decline in the economy that the rest of Canada experienced.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable member for Tuxedo has the floor.

Mrs. Stefanson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, the member opposite is trying to say that the reason that she didn't live up to her promise in the 2007 budget was because there was a recession in Manitoba. What I'm trying to say is that according to Stats Canada we didn't realize that recession today. The only time, 2009, the economy remained flat. Every other year was up while the Canadian average was down 2.5 per cent. There is absolutely no reason, no credible reason, that this minister can give us why she couldn't have fulfilled her commitment to Manitobans that she made in the 2007 budget.

Mr. Speaker, why has this minister broken her promise to hard-working families in Manitoba? How can she be trusted to deliver on the promises that she's making in this budget when she can't even live up to past promises?

Ms. Wowchuk: It's quite interesting, Mr. Speaker. The other day we heard that there was no car thefts in the '90s here in Manitoba; now we hear there's no recession in Manitoba. Imagine that. Well, I'll tell the member it was because of good prudent management, because of sound investments in our stimulus package, making investments to make sure people are working, keeping Manitobans in the workforce, training them so that they can take on those new jobs, working very hard in immigration and building the population in this province. All of those are part of what made—what the *Maclean's* magazine has called the Manitoba miracle. The Manitoba miracle, imagine that.

Mr. Speaker, she has been preaching doom and gloom and, all of a sudden, she's seen the light. Manitoba is doing well. Well, I hope she'll say thank you to this government.

Social Assistance Budget Lack of Employment Program Funding

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): In this year's budget we see a 4.5 per cent increase in expenditures supporting more people on welfare while virtually no

increase in the budget to move people off of welfare and into the workforce.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk): Why is it her government's priority to keep more people on welfare rather than providing the supports to move them off of welfare and into work?

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Family Services and Consumer Affairs): Well, my understanding, from the last numbers I had, was the welfare rolls are down from when she was actually the minister.

Mrs. Mitchelson: And over the last few years this minister has stood up and he's huffed and he puffed and he's bragged about all of the wonderful programs that he's put into place to reduce the welfare rolls.

Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously they don't get it because it's not working. The welfare rolls are going up, not down. Obviously it just reinforces the cluelessness of this government.

Mr.—people—there's more people on welfare. There's millions more being spent trying to keep people on welfare and no increase to the programs that move people off of welfare.

Why is that this Minister of Finance's priority?

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, the last numbers I had, because I don't have all my notes with me because I didn't think we'd get this question actually, Mr. Speaker, but my understanding is that actually the welfare rolls increased quite significantly more in jurisdictions particularly to the west of us. But the Rewarding Work initiative introduced in April of '07, to my understanding, has helped 5,500 people get off of welfare into work, and, in fact, there are 4,100 people now working while getting a work incentive, a new work incentive that was introduced by our government.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're just—we're putting in place these initiatives at the same time one member after another completely has a flip-flop, side A and side B. The last one said no recession. This one said welfare rolls are up; there's a recession. They should really have a little caucus meeting before they come in here.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Speaker, you can certainly see why we've got a government that's out of control with their spending and doesn't even know what they're talking about. The budget is clear: \$13 million more in this year's budget to keep

people on welfare and no increase in programs that will move people off of welfare.

Mr. Speaker, is this the budget that the minister stood up and said she was so proud of because we were moving Manitoba forward? We're moving Manitoba forward by keeping more people on welfare. Is that what she's proud of?

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are always challenges when it comes to jobs in a period of a downturn, and we're fortunate in Manitoba to have mitigated many of the impacts that have been felt in other jurisdictions.

But it was a good thing that we had Rewarding Work in place beginning in '07 and building that program, and the member knows many of the components of it. In fact, one component, the Get Ready! component, it has ensured that 3,900 people, I'm told, who were in education or training plans have left welfare.

*(14:10)

So that's an example of the kind of investments that is getting people off of welfare and into work. And, in fact, many other initiatives had made sure that when it comes to moving people from welfare to work that work pays. That's the whole fundamental principle of Rewarding Work.

The member should open up some of the other pages and, as well, of course, talk to the other members in her caucus and come in here with a little, you know, maybe a plan, maybe, like, a strategy. Like, you know, it's all tactics, no strategy.

Outstanding Warrants Deletion Statistics

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Mr. Speaker, recently the Winnipeg Police Association, the association that represents the many fine men and women who protect the city of Winnipeg each and every day, expressed concern about the NDP government practice of deleting warrants, active warrants, from the records. Police correctly indicated that this sent the wrong message. It sent the wrong message to criminals who now believe that they can just simply outlast their warrants, and it certainly sends the wrong message to victims who now believe that the crimes that were committed against them don't mean anything to the government.

The police association wanted an answer to a simple question: How many of these warrants were deleted from the record? Can the minister, the

Attorney General, tell the police how many outstanding active warrants he deleted?

Hon. Andrew Swan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Certainly, as Manitobans have a right to be safe in their homes, safe in their communities, we note, too, that moving ahead to get dangerous people off our streets continues to be a priority for the police services across this province and for our government, and that's why we've taken effective steps to deal with outstanding warrants.

First of all, we've done that by increasing the number of police in every corner of this province. We've added police for the Winnipeg Police Service, for the Brandon Police Service, for the RCMP. We've also added police for municipal police services across this province to assist them in doing their work.

I also announced very recently, together with police, the creation of a warrant enforcement unit who will be there shoulder to shoulder with police in this province to work on getting the individuals who pose the greatest risk to our communities, to our streets, to make sure that they go where they should be, which is behind bars, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Goertzen: Mr. Speaker, you know, it's one thing for the Attorney General to ignore the questions that I ask in this House and not to answer them—he can certainly be held accountable on October 4th to the public, to the electorate, on that day—but it's another thing for him to ignore the question that the police are asking, the fine men and women who each and every day are out on the street protecting us from harm, Mr. Speaker, and they have asked the question. They want to know because they know it sends the wrong message to delete a warrant from the record. It sends a message to criminals that you can get away with things. It sends a message to victims that the crime against you doesn't matter.

The police have asked how many warrants this minister has deleted. I'm asking on their behalf. You can ignore me; don't ignore them, Mr. Minister. How many warrants did you delete?

Mr. Swan: You know, if the member from Steinbach wants to talk about being accountable, I wonder what he says to the police officers across Manitoba when he stands there and tells them that he's voted against every single police officer that has been added in the province of Manitoba. With this budget, we will have added 255 police officers in this province since 1999.

I guess we'll find out—we'll find out in just a couple of hours whether the member for Steinbach and all of the other women and men sitting on that side of the House will put aside the way that they have ignored the wishes of Manitobans. We'll see whether they'll be voting in favour of greater public safety, in favour of more police officers, in favour of more Crown attorneys, in favour of a warrant enforcement unit or whether they'll continue to ignore Manitobans and vote against Budget 2011.

Mr. Goertzen: Mr. Speaker, it's very regrettable that the Attorney General won't answer the question that police have put forward, those very police officers who are protecting us each and every day.

It's also regrettable that this minister often has to be shamed into doing the right thing. He was shamed into supporting a police helicopter by the mayor of the City of Winnipeg. He was shamed into reporting probation breaches by the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen). He's also been shamed into ending welfare payments for people with outstanding warrants.

It's our understanding that he's also been shamed into doing the right thing in this situation. Can he confirm that the government has now changed its policy, that it will no longer be deleting warrants? He's been shamed into doing something he should never have done to begin with, Sir.

Mr. Swan: I'll debate the member for Steinbach's vision any time, any day.

And it's very interesting, of course, what was his measure on dealing with outstanding warrants? Well, he went on Google and he decided to see what another province was doing, and he photocopied an act and brought it in.

Well, the member for Steinbach probably doesn't know that in that other jurisdiction, the only way they deal with these matters of people's outstanding warrants is they ask people when they come in to get social assistance—they ask them: So, do you have any outstanding warrants?

The member for Steinbach should probably know that criminals lie. They don't tell the truth. Instead of bringing in pieces of legislation that have been shown to be ineffective and pointless, the member for Steinbach just keeps his hand on the horn, full speed ahead.

We'll be doing things on this side of the House that work, that are effective and create greater safety for the people of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

Highway 6 Upgrade Plans

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, most members in this House know how dangerous Highway 6 can be. In fact, they speak for themselves. There were 11 vehicle-related fatalities from 2006 till now on this particular highway. There was 165 crashes over the same period of time including 31 collisions in which injuries were reported. At a recent meeting, packed, in Grosse Isle, we heard heart-wrenching stories about lives that have been lost on this road, and life-threatening changes forever have been sustained.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation explain why it's taking so long to draw up a plan to tackle the problems in regards to Highway 6?

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud on behalf of this government to be the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, and there is no highway that I know personally better than Highway 6.

I can say to the member that when we came into government in 1999, there had been virtually no work done on Highway 6 for more than a decade, and we started, Mr. Speaker, on every stretch of Highway 6, from the Perimeter Highway all the way through to its end in Thompson, and I'm very pleased to report that we've exceeded now probably around a hundred million dollars worth of investment on Highway 6.

And particularly in reference to the member's question, some of the concerns on the southern stretch of Highway 6, we moved, in fact, just as recently as last year, to have a significant straightening out of one of the curves that was a major concern.

So we are making real progress on Highway 6 and that's because we do care about infrastructure. We're investing money in all our highways.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, the minister knows full well the challenges that exist on Highway 6. As he says, he goes there, to his constituency, on a regular basis, but I find it very strange that this government is now looking to local governments to help make

upgrades on a dangerous road, and the RM of Rosser may be prepared to do just that because of the concerns for the safety in regards to Highway 6.

I would also like to table copies of an article from the March 31st edition of the *Stonewall Argus*. In it an official from Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation stated, and I quote: We are open to discussing specific projects with the RMs to include their input, offers of cost-shared projects, as Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation continues its long-term planning to renew highways across the province. End of quote.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister explain when it became the responsibility of municipal governments to cost share their upgrades on provincial highways?

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've had a long-standing relationship with municipalities throughout the province, but I do want to put on the record—and perhaps the member is not aware of this—to give him some idea of how much we've invested on Highway 6.

The curves at Grosse Isle, \$7.2 million, completed 2010; intersection at Warren—the member would know that well—\$1.2 million; the culvert north of Warren, point 7 million; micro-surface at St. François, 1.4; 7 million of paving north of St. Martin; four structures in Grand Rapids; 5.5 paving near Highway 60; paving near William River, 7 million; paving near Minago River, 10 million; 11.3 million paving south of Thompson, and reconstruction south of Thompson, \$25 million.

That's because this government has recognized the need to invest in infrastructure. We're investing \$363 million throughout the province. That's a record, and Highway 6 is one of the main focuses of that, Mr. Speaker. We're proud of that.

Mr. Eichler: Mr. Speaker, obviously something's not working because you had 11 vehicle fatalities since 2006. It doesn't matter where your priorities are; you have to make sure you address this issue.

I table for the House the names of 1,129 citizens who signed petitions because they want immediate action taken on Highway 6, and this is just the beginning. Every person in attendance at the Grosse Isle meeting made it very clear something has to be done. The minister knows every other major highway going into Winnipeg from the north is either four lanes or is at least a direct straight line and provides safe driving conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the minister: Will this government today commit to upgrading or twinning Highway 6 from 101 to 67 in order to protect motor safety, and will he do it without making the municipalities held accountable and their costs put in?

* (14:20)

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I and this government, we respect the concerns that have been expressed. I know the member for the Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff) attended a public meeting along with the member from Lakeside just recently.

I want to stress, though, Mr. Speaker, that the way you fix up highways is you actually invest in them. And I'd suggest to the member opposite, I know he's concerned about Highway 6, and I take him at his word in terms of that, but if you want to take the concern and move it to action, you know what you do? You vote for a budget like the 2011 budget which includes a record investment in highways.

Put your money where your mouth is; that's what this government is doing.

Antipsychotic Drugs Prescriptions to Seniors

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, Manitobans were shocked today to learn the story of Victoria Schindle. Victoria's mother was put on antipsychotic drugs without her or her family's consent. Victoria is in the gallery today, and so I'm asking the Minister of Health the questions on her behalf. On these antipsychotic drugs, Victoria's mother changed from an active, happy woman to become completely bedridden, unable to open her eyes, unable to eat, and she died.

Yesterday I referenced a Health Canada warning from 2005 which talked about the extreme dangers of these drugs. Mr. Speaker, knowing that so many Manitobans, like Victoria Schindle, are sharing their stories about the use of risky drugs on elderly patients without consent, will the minister today announce an end to this outrageous practice?

Hon. Theresa Oswald (Minister of Health): And, indeed, I was able to hear a good portion of the interview on a radio program this morning and, certainly, my sympathies go out to the family. I believe Ms. Schindle has much wisdom to bring to the dialogue on the use of antipsychotic drugs and

would welcome the opportunity to speak with her further.

I can tell the House, Mr. Speaker, that, indeed, in Manitoba, we do have a policy whereby the use of antipsychotic drugs or any other restraints, to be specific, must be done, indeed, with the consent of family. And if this is not done, as it was explained was not the case with this family, there are processes that can be followed, including raising issues with the RHA for their immediate follow-up, reporting as a critical incident, contacting the Protection for Persons In Care office, and, indeed, it could go to the point of filing a complaint with the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

We will certainly be following up on this particular case and story, Mr. Speaker, and, again, I welcome more advice from Ms. Schindle on the issue of her departed mother.

Mr. Gerrard: The problem is that this informed consent is not happening, and it's not happening very frequently in personal care homes. There are too many stories like Victoria Schindle's.

We now know that this minister's personal care home couldn't put Victoria Schindle's mother, Mrs. Doussis, on antipsychotic drugs quickly enough, only one day after she was admitted, and this was without consent. We now know that Mrs. Doussis, a prominent restaurateur in a past life, died after being put on these drugs without consent and likely because of these drugs. As Victoria Schindle said today on CJOB, it was not a gentle way to go. It was a very violent end to her life.

When is the minister going to be accountable and make sure that this practice of prescriptions without informed consent ends now?

Ms. Oswald: And the member, of course, is aware that I am unable, and it's inappropriate for me, to speak to the specific details of a case, and I caution the member also about presenting information as fact that may be otherwise. I want to ensure to the member that we are going to review the issues of this case, and we welcome the input of the deceased's daughter, and we welcome the input with caution, I have to confess, from the member opposite.

I want to let the member know that these decisions about putting people on antipsychotic drugs are not taken lightly by our medical professionals. There is a policy in place, that a team of professionals is required, and, importantly to note, Mr. Speaker, part of the policy is that there must be a

date of discontinuation of such medication and, indeed, an assessment before further medication is used.

If any of these processes were not used in this case, we want to review this, and, indeed, we want to make sure that our policy of the least restraint—indeed, no restraint—is the one that is followed.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, if people are so cautious, why are 20 per cent of patients in personal care homes on new-generation antipsychotics and 32 per cent on some antipsychotics of one form or another. Risperidone, 'haldon,' olanzapine are the three antipsychotic drugs that Mrs. Doussis was put on under this minister's purview without informed consent.

In Alberta, prescribing drugs without informed consent is considered abuse when it occurs, and I quote: for an inappropriate purpose resulting in serious bodily harm. Mr. Speaker, the minister now knows that this—the way seniors have been treated under her purview qualifies as abuse in other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister make a commitment to everyday Manitobans like Victoria Schindle that effectively right away drugs of any kind will not be prescribed in Manitoba, especially in personal care homes, without prior informed consent?

Ms. Oswald: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would say again for the member and for Ms. Schindle, who's in the gallery, and to all members of this House, that it is the current policy that antipsychotic drugs are not to be administered without consent of the family. I can let the member know, in reference to his earlier statement, that the Canadian Institute for Health Information cites that, indeed, Manitoba is slightly below the Canadian average for the use of antipsychotic drugs in personal care homes. We've gone down from—this year from the year before, but we believe there is more work to do.

We know when we did two pilot projects in Winnipeg PCHs using nurse practitioners in that environment with a wraparound model of care that the use of antipsychotic drugs dropped dramatically, and we want to see that kind of care expanded. We agree that these drugs should not be used, except in circumstances where there are absolutely no other alternatives and, indeed, the family must be consented, as is the policy.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

St. James Jimmies Boys Basketball Team

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the new AAA varsity boys' provincial high school basketball champions, the St. James Jimmies.

This March, the St. James Collegiate Jimmies gave their high school and surrounding community a reason to celebrate when they defeated the St. John's-Ravenscourt Eagles in overtime to win the 2011 provincial championship.

The Jimmies entered the provincial championship with an incredible season under their belts, and the championship game ensured that the excitement carried through until the last minute. In the final, the team had fallen a few points behind in the fourth quarter. But the Jimmies fought their way back until, with less than 15 seconds on the clock, grade 11 forward Raymond Tuazon tied the game with an incredible three-point shot, sending the game into overtime. These young athletes show what you can achieve by putting up a fight all the way to the end, as the Jimmies came out of this very tight 88-to-83 overtime game victorious.

Making this victory especially sweet is the fact that St. James Collegiate had gone over five decades without a provincial championship banner. The last time the Jimmies brought home the victory was in 1959. I'm sure it even evoked a sense of pride in our Premier (Mr. Selinger), a graduate of St. James Collegiate himself.

Many members of the team have been playing together since middle school, and there is no doubt that their hard work and chemistry played a huge role in leading them to this year's finals. According to the Jimmies' coach, Ryan Kangas, a varsity championship has been in the making for a number of years now, thanks to the long-standing support from many different people within the St. James community.

* (14:30)

Congratulations again to the St. James seniors—Senior Boys' basketball team. May you enjoy sharing this victory with the rest of your school, your families and friends. You can be very proud of your accomplishments and, of course, we'll be looking forward to watching much of the team go on next year to bring home another championship.

Mr. Speaker, I would also ask leave to have the names of the new AAA provincial champions, the St. James boys' basketball team and coaching staff included with this statement in *Hansard*.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement for the names of the players and the coaches for the St. James Jimmies AAA champions to be included in *Hansard*? [Agreed]

St. James Jimmies AAA Champions

Ronel Banilbo, Brendan Gali, Raymond Tuazon, Erik Nottveit, Judd Eusebio, Rodney Brown, Tyler Carswell, Ian Stratton, Carlo Dungca, Riley Lewchuk, Edward Vallo, Kean Goodwin, Kevin Gelo, Joey Ducharme, Ryan Smith. Coaching staff: Ryan Kangas, Dennis Dare, Jeff Eusebio, Adam Lister.

Organ Donations

Mr. Hugh McFadyen (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we often think of a hero as a person who commits an act of remarkable bravery or someone who is admired for outstanding qualities or achievements. But, for a patient who is waiting for an organ transplant, a hero is an ordinary person who has decided to sign their donor card because they have made the decision to save a life.

The decision to become an organ donor is a personal one. However, upon the death of an organ donor is the next of kin who is required to make the final decision on whether or not organs will be available for donation. That is why it is so important for Manitobans to discuss their intentions to donate with members of their family so their final wishes can be respected.

Last year Manitoba had one of the highest organ donation rates in Canada at 15.4 deceased donors per million people, but we all know that we can do better. Last year there were 53 kidney transplants in Manitoba. There are currently about 160 Manitobans on transplant waiting lists.

Mr. Speaker, there's a great need for organ donors in our province today. It's my hope that the online registry introduced by the government will soon be available for public's use so that Manitobans can have an easy way to sign the registry and health professionals can easily access donor records. Through an expanded donor registry, patients who require a transplant may receive one much sooner.

As we recognize National Organ Donor Week in Canada, I would like to thank all Manitobans who have been a donor or who have taken the opportunity to sign up to become an organ donor. Mr. Speaker, it's my hope that all Manitobans will consider signing up to become an organ donor. I would encourage all Manitobans to speak with their loved ones about their desire to become an organ donor.

Although the loss of a loved one is always a tragedy, we can have some comfort in knowing that we can save the life of a stranger through this very simple decision.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Victoria General Hospital 100th Anniversary

Hon. Kerri Irvin-Ross (Minister of Housing and Community Development): It gives me great pleasure to rise today in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Victoria General Hospital.

The Victoria General Hospital opened its doors on March 13th, 1911, at its original location on River Avenue. In 1971, the hospital moved to its current home on Pembina Highway in Fort Garry where it has evolved into a 231-bed community hospital, with over 1,200 staff and hundreds of volunteers.

The Vic, as the hospital has become known, has established itself as a leader providing a high level of quality health-care services to the community. Through the years, the Vic has consistently demonstrated the ability to adapt to an increasingly complex health-care system, new technology and the needs of the community they serve.

The present and past boards of directors have worked tirelessly to position the hospital to continue to provide high-quality care for our community for generations to come. Without their leadership, the Vic would not have become a home to the dedicated team of caring, skilled professionals and volunteers that exist there today.

The volunteers of Victoria General Hospital Guild work throughout the hospital as well as organize fundraising events, the proceeds of which enhance patient care and services. The guild's largest project is the hospital gift shop, which is run entirely by volunteers. Other examples of the projects the guild has provided support for include refurbishing the intensive care unit quiet room and the redevelopment of the emergency department.

Victoria General Hospital Foundation has been instrumental in making a direct impact on the

health-care system with the donations they receive: purchasing equipment, supporting the Vic's redevelopment project, as well as ongoing research and evaluation.

The mission statement of the Victoria General Hospital reads: In partnership with patients and families, Victoria General Hospital's mission is to promote and ensure quality patient care through the provision of excellent services leading to effective health outcomes with a changing and growing community.

I would suggest that the Victoria General Hospital has accomplished their goal throughout the past hundred years and, without question, will continue to do so in the future.

It truly is a privilege for me to extend my sincere congratulations and thank you to the small hospital with the big heart.

Earth Day

Mr. Larry Maguire (Arthur-Virden): Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to put a few words on the record about Earth Day 2011, which will be marked on April 22nd, tomorrow.

Earth Day is a global event, celebrated in over 170 countries. Earth Day aims not only to foster awareness around climate and environmental issues but also to convince people and communities to adopt greener, more environmentally friendly practices in their lives.

It helps us recognize the impact we are having on our environment, and how we can make improvements to help protect it. For example, each year, the average Canadian family uses anywhere from 20 to 40 litres of toxic cleaning products. In a lifetime, the average North American will throw away 600 times his or her adult weight in garbage. Choosing more environmentally friendly alternatives in the short term can lead to better outcomes over a person's lifetime.

There are numerous ways we can integrate greener practices into our everyday lives. It involves engaging in small things that can reduce pollution, conserve our resources, reduce waste and help protect the earth's ecological balance.

Some of these easy-to-incorporate strategies can include turning off the thermostat on the water heater when we go on holiday or away for a long period of time; using cold water to wash your clothes—if every household in Canada did this, it would reduce

approximately 1.5 billion kilograms of greenhouse gas emissions yearly; installing low-flow toilets and shower heads; walking and cycling to work and for leisure; using both sides of a sheet of paper before recycling it; remembering to bring your reusable bags when you shop for groceries, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, these are but a sampling of the easy actions that we can adopt to insure a greener future for our planet. I invite all Manitobans to get involved in their communities for this Earth Day and during every day of the year. Together, we can create a cleaner, better environment for all Manitobans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Mass Atrocities

Hon. Nancy Allan (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, one year ago, Parliament unanimously passed a resolution recognizing April 23rd as National Day of Remembrance and Action on Mass Atrocities. This date was chosen in honour of Lester B. Pearson's birthdate and in recognition of his commitment to peace and international co-operation to recognize and end crimes against humanity.

Manitobans of many origins know well the tragedies and damage that have resulted from mass atrocities. Many of us, our family members, neighbours and friends have come to Canada and Manitoba seeking refuge from war, persecution and various forms of mass atrocities.

The purpose of this day of action is to support those who have suffered and survived mass atrocities throughout the world, remember the victims of mass atrocities, and learn from these terrible events in order to prevent them from happening in the future.

I want to recognize the great work that the Salvation Army Multicultural Family Centre is doing in my constituency of St. Vital to assist newcomers who've experienced war, trauma and loss. The LEEP program for war-affected youth provides a safe environment, education, career counselling, a two-week work placement, recreational activities and mentoring to help youth of war-affected countries gain insight into Canadian culture and access education and job opportunities.

I was pleased to attend the LEEP grad recently at the Salvation Army Multicultural Family Centre and participate in this moving ceremony. They are young people who are courageous and full of hope, because

they have come from oppressed countries to participate in Manitoba society and achieve their dreams.

I want to thank NDP MP Paul Dewar and Senator Roméo Dallaire, who co-chaired and founded the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes Against Humanity, for their leadership in recognizing this day, and I ask all members of the Chamber to join me in recognizing the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Mass Atrocities. Thank you.

* (14:40)

House Business

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on House business?

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Yes, Mr. Speaker, on House business. I'm pleased to table the sequence for Estimates consideration.

Mr. Speaker: The sequence for the upcoming Estimates has been tabled for all members.

The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Ms. Howard: Yes, on further House business.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on May 25th, 2011, at 7 p.m., to consider the following reports: the Auditor General's Report-to-Report to the Legislative Assembly, Performance Audits, dated December 2010, Chapter 2, Economic Development, Loans and Investments under The Development Corporation Act; the Public Accounts for the year ending March 31st, 2010, Volumes 1, 2, 3 and 4; the Auditor General's Report-Audit of the Public Accounts for the year ended March 31st, 2010, dated December 2010.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on further House business.

Ms. Howard: Yes, sorry, Mr. Speaker.

Those reports that I referenced also have witnesses attached to them. The first one, Report to the Legislative Assembly, Performance Audits, the witnesses called for that will be the Minister and Deputy Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade; the second report, Public Accounts for the year ending March 31st, 2010, Volumes 1, 2, 3 and 4, the witnesses called for that will be the Minister

and Deputy Minister of Finance; and the third report, the Auditor General's Report – Audit of the Public Accounts for the year ended March 31st, 2010, the witnesses for that report will be the Minister and Deputy Minister of Finance, the Minister and Deputy Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, it's been announced that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts will meet on May 25th, 2011, at 7 p.m., to consider the following reports: Auditor General's Report—Report to the Legislative Assembly, Performance Audits, dated December 2010, Chapter 2, Economic Development, Loans and Investments under The Development Corporation Act, and the witnesses will be the Minister and Deputy Minister of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade; and the Public Accounts for the year ending March 31st, 2010, Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4, and the witnesses will be the Minister and Deputy Minister of Finance; and, also, the Auditor General's Report—Audit of the Public Accounts for the year ended March 31st, 2010, which was dated December 2010, and the witnesses will be the Minister and Deputy Minister of Finance and the Minister and Deputy Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines.

And that's for the information of all members of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

BUDGET DEBATE (Eighth Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: And we'll resume adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) in amendment thereto, and it's standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona, who has 26 minutes remaining.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise again and to continue my comments from where I'd off yesterday afternoon.

And I was talking yesterday about how proud I was of the members of this Legislature who are retiring and have had the opportunity to work with them for quite a number of years. And I mentioned them all by their constituencies, Mr. Speaker.

And my last part of my comments I was talking in particular about the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen). Of course, we've had the opportunity to work with the member—*[interjection]* Yes, he deserves applause. He's a great member of this Legislative Assembly, and he always, always represented his constituency and never—that in my recollection—ever failed to mention his constituency and the needs of the north, and we thank him for that.

And, of course, Mr. Speaker, in our time in this Legislature, the member for Flin Flon, of course, also had—and I'm thankful for this because he, along with our other colleagues from the north, took many members of this Legislative Assembly, and in particular the government side, into the constituencies of the north and into the communities and into the community homes. And he introduced us to the folks, and we had a chance to sample some of the food and see the quality of life and, of course, some of the challenges that were facing the north.

And I know the member for Flin Flon pointed out very clearly some of the challenges still facing northern First Nations communities, in particular with respect to the lack of running water and sewer programs for those communities, and, of course, recreational—some of the communities don't—do not have road access, of course, Mr. Speaker, and we continue to work at solving some of those challenges that are still facing those isolated or landlocked communities in northern Manitoba.

And I want to thank the member for Flin Flon for never failing for even a moment or wavering for a moment to point out to the government and to members of this Assembly the need to keep focused on the needs of the north and the challenges facing those communities. So I'd like to thank the member for Flin Flon for that.

But also I know that the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) and I had the opportunity to work very closely with the member for Flin Flon on one particular project I remember, which was a main one. And I'll get into my budget speech comments in a moment, but the member for Flin Flon had a significant role to play in the development of the grand transportation plan that we have in place for the province of Manitoba. Of course, that is a 10-year plan, Mr. Speaker, that invests over \$4 billion now into the transportation system of our province. And the member for Flin Flon played a role in the development of that plan, and we thank him for his service on behalf of the people of

Manitoba in the work that he and the ideas that he brought forward that we could then proceed to improve our infrastructure in Manitoba.

The plan that I refer to, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Flin Flon was a part-author of, was the 2020 transportation vision. Of course, that plan recommended that the government of Manitoba make investments into our road network in particular, but not limited to that, and that our investments would be \$4 million–\$4 billion over 10 years, and, of course, I'm quite proud that our government has actually exceeded that amount. In fact, I believe in the last two fiscal years, our plan now is over \$500 million per year and we're making those investments at a much more rapid pace than even our 2020 transportation vision plan had anticipated. And I'm happy to see that, because as our Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton) pointed out, just in question period today, that—and I know the member for Lakeside (Mr. Eichler) asked a question with respect to Highway 6. And I was at the meeting with his constituents along with the member for Interlake (Mr. Nevakshonoff) and listening to the concerns of the folks.

The one part that worries me about the member for Lakeside's question that he raised here today: Why did he stop the twinning of Provincial Trunk Highway No. 6 at, I think it was, 67, he said. Is there something wrong with northern Manitoba that we couldn't contemplate over a period of time twinning that road all the way to the north?

So I have to wonder why he left—why did he leave out northern Manitoba with respect to his question in question period today? It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that—why would you do that? It seemed that you would want to have some investment for all of the people of Manitoba, and I'm wondering here why would we not develop a long-term plan, at least make the recommendation that he was supportive of all of the people of Manitoba, not just isolated to the people of Lakeside or in around the community of Grosse Isle where the meeting was held.

It seemed to—I'm just giving it some friendly advice or information to the member opposite; I hope he will accept it with the gracious tone that it was offered in—that we want to make sure that all of the people of Manitoba are looked after and not just the people that are between the Perimeter Highway and 67 highway in this province. So we want to make those investments for all of Manitoba, and that's what

our provincial budget this year and every year that we have been in government has attempted to do.

Now, I'm not saying we're perfect, because we are—we have other challenges and work to continue to do on behalf of the people of Manitoba. But we're making an effort to recognize that we don't pick favourites here. We make investments into the hospitals and the health-care system in Steinbach; we make it in Winkler; we make investments into the community of Springfield; we're making investments into the member for Pembina's (Mr. Dyck) constituency. So you have to know that this provincial government recognizes that we have a role to play in investing in all of the communities of our province, Mr. Speaker.

And, of course, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) has played a role in that with the work that he has done, not only on behalf of the people of the north, but also for other communities in this province, and we thank the member for Flin Flon for his years of service to the people of Manitoba.

* (14:50)

Mr. Speaker, there are many items in our provincial budget that I would like to mention, but I'd like to start first by thanking the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) for the flyer that he sent to my home telling all Manitobans that, of course, that their power bills are going to rise considerably. Well, it was news to me, and I have to—I was taken aback when I first received this. Looking at the picture inside this little pamphlet here of a Tory staffer in the building, and wondering—*[interjection]* Well, you know, it's a nice picture. You know, I don't degrade the picture or the individual that—but I'm wondering why they couldn't find another Manitoban, other than a Tory staffer, to have your picture taken to be included in your brochure for the—you know, that you would circulate around the province of Manitoba. Strange to me, but that's a Tory decision, and what do I know about their policies about what they think about including Manitobans, all Manitobans, into the brochures they send around.

Now they're telling Manitobans that, well, you know, you have to look at that number of theories—and they got the Manitoba Hydro logo on it. You know, they're already sizing up the drapes and the carpet for their office, and changing the furniture.

Mr. Speaker: Order. When members are using a document or any paper as an exhibit, that is not

allowed. Members can use papers or documents to make references for their speech, but when using it as an exhibit, that is totally against our rules, and all members should know that by now.

So I'm cautioning the honourable member not to use it as an exhibit, but you can use it as reference to your speech.

Mr. Reid: Just making reference to the document, if I've offended any members of the Assembly, I apologize.

Mr. Speaker: I—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I—that was for the information of all honourable members. I cautioned you, so I'm just giving you a warning, and I'm cautioning—and giving the information to all the members, because sometimes members will use a document to make references to their speech, but when it starts to be used as an exhibit, that is against our rules. But you can use the document to make reference for research of your speech. That is not against the rule. But, when you use it as an exhibit, that is when you have crossed the line. I'm just giving the information and making clarification for all members of the House, okay.

The honourable member for Transcona, please continue on.

Mr. Reid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate your advice and I'll try and be guided more closely by that practice.

Mr. Mohinder Saran, Acting Speaker, in the Chair

Mr. Acting Speaker, moving on, I want to talk about some of the initiatives our provincial government has taken with respect to our provincial budgets this year and in past years. And I know that the members opposite, perhaps, are a bit sensitive about Manitoba Hydro and their attempts to privatize it. And I can only warn Manitobans that looking at what the Conservatives have undertaken with respect to their ideas and their philosophy with respect to privatization, and I think back to the days when the Conservative government of Manitoba privatized the Manitoba Telephone System.

And I was here at the time and I remember the debate, and being involved in it, and I can remember the *Free Press* story very clearly about what was happening at that time and how the Conservatives were trying to enrich their friends. And the *Free*

Press story talking about all of the Jaguars and BMWs that were sold off the car lots of Winnipeg as a result of the new millionaires that the Tories created in the province of Manitoba when they sold the telephone system in the province of Manitoba.

So I caution Manitobans, Mr. Acting Speaker, if you're ever, ever contemplating, thinking, even for a heartbeat, about the Conservative Party of Manitoba, think back to what happened when they sold the Manitoba Telephone System, and what happened to your phone rates in this province, and what the potential will be if the Tories, God forbid, ever move into office again.

Because I know that the Manitoba Hydro system that we have built for all the people of Manitoba is very high on the hit list for privatization for the Conservative Party of this province. And that worries me, Mr. Acting Speaker, and it should worry all Manitobans, because we will lose jobs, we will lose control of the decisions and we will lose control of the investments for all of the people of Manitoba.

Plus the rates, the rates, if you just look to our neighbour to the east, where I have family building just across the border in Kenora, Ontario, where their hydro rates are double what they are in the province of Manitoba—more than double what they are in the province of Manitoba. So Manitobans need to be very cautious.

And I think back to, and this is what I think the Leader of the Opposition for—his role where he informed all Manitobans how proud he was to have been involved in the sale of the Manitoba Telephone System and special adviser to Premier Filmon at that particular day and time, Mr. Acting Speaker. And I also note that the Leader of the Official Opposition also graciously informed all Manitobans of the role he played in the Mike Harris government when the government of Ontario privatized the hydro system of Ontario, moving it to Hydro run—One, when the rates just skyrocketed out of sight, causing hardship for all of the families in Ontario with respect to the use of their electricity.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I also think—and think back to question period here just today, where the Leader of the Opposition was talking, well, why do we need the Riel Converter Station? You know, we—just a few years ago, we had an F5 tornado hit the province of Manitoba—[interjection]—in around Elie. Now, if that tornado had moved a bit further north and had taken out the Dorsey Converter Station, we wouldn't be sitting here with the lights on today. Think about

that, and I want every Manitoban to think about that. There is no redundancy built into the system of this province, and that's why we need the Riel Converter Station here in southern Manitoba, to ensure the security of electricity supply for all of our families in southern Manitoba. That's why we need the Riel Converter Station, and that's why we're making the investment through our publicly owned Crown corporation, Manitoba Hydro, to ensure that security of supply. And that's why I think the Conservative argument is wrong that we don't need to have that Riel Converter Station, and I think we need to have that to protect all of our families.

Just think of what it'd be like in the wintertime in the province here of Manitoba if a hydro converter at Dorsey failed and we had no backup system. Our only alternative to that would be to buy electricity in from other jurisdictions, should they have any surplus, and then you know what our rates would be in situations like that; you'd be playing multiple times more for electricity than what you're currently paying today.

So I worry about what the plans are for the future for Manitoba Hydro. And I say to all Manitobans, as long as I'm sitting in this Legislative Assembly I will work to protect and make sure that Manitoba Hydro remains in the hands and ownership—public ownership for the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to talk a bit about the—I know I only have a few minutes because other members want to speak here today.

I'm proud that our provincial government recognizes the role and investments of the small business tax—or the elimination of the small business tax in Manitoba just last December, because we know small business creates most of the new jobs in the province. We're proud of our provincial government that has eliminated the education support levy off our property tax bills in the province of Manitoba, again, reducing the tax that Manitobans pay, the education tax that Manitobans pay. And, of course, in this budget, in this provincial budget, our provincial government has increased the property tax credit for Manitobans from \$650 to \$700, and, of course, for seniors that amount will go up considerably more, Mr. Acting Speaker, recognizing that seniors—we have to take care of them as well.

We also have made investments in new police officers as we committed to do in our Throne Speeches of past years and in this current year. And,

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have 255 more police officers since 1999. Just this year alone, Winnipeg is going to receive funding for 66 new police officers, and in the last two years we have funded 50 new cadets—50 new police cadets. We've provided funding for the new police helicopter. We've had more Crown attorneys, some of them specialized into different types of crime. And, of course, we're making sure that those that break the law are held accountable.

We have made investments into the communities around our province, including my own community of Transcona. We've made investments into various streets, and we now fund 50 per cent of the residential street improvement program in the city of Winnipeg. And some of the streets of my community have received those investments over the course of the last few years, and I know that this year, with our investment of some \$238 million into infrastructure, we'll again add more improvements to the streets in our communities. And I know the people of my community are asking for those investments.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there's much more that I can talk about: the minimum wage and how proud we are of the minimum wage increases we have made every year. Every single year we have been in office we have increased the minimum wage. And that's a message that I'm taking to the youth of my community and telling them that the Conservative government—or party of this province is opposed to increasing the minimum wage every year, and it's only the NDP government that will raise that rate for our youth in this province, and others that have to eke out a living on minimum wage in this province. And I know we'll try and move that level up higher over the years.

* (15:00)

We have made investments, Mr. Acting Speaker, into other areas. And I think back to the programs like Neighbourhoods Alive! and the role that we can play in ensuring that our youth are given activities to keep them away from involvement in other activities that are not preferable, and I'm proud of our government's investment into the Neighbourhoods Alive! program. And I do agree with my colleagues here in this Assembly who have mentioned that we have a greater role to play with respect with our involvement in the First Nations communities of the north, and I want to make sure that our government continues to play that role in that and I will support my colleagues in that regard.

Mr. Acting Speaker, seeing that other members of the Assembly want to add their comments with respect to the—our government's current provincial budget, I'm proud to support our provincial government and the budget we have brought forward this year, and I will be voting against the amendment brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) for the reasons I have mentioned just a few moments ago. Thank you.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Well, thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I'm eager to engage in the speech on the budget, I think my 20th or 21st budget that I've had the honour of speaking to in this Chamber, and they just seem to be getting better and better every year, and this one is one of the finest.

I want to begin by thanking all the pages who work for us here in the Chamber, and thank the Chamber staff, in particular, Rick Yarish on his recent promotion to the Deputy Clerk's position here. Mr. Acting Speaker, I had a chance to work with Rick on the Public Accounts Committee, and I've always enjoyed his guidance and his expertise and his patience as he works with us to try to make our Public Accounts system here in Manitoba more accountable.

I want to thank, of course, our staff in our caucus, who work with us, the interns that we have, and I think we are very blessed. I know the Conservatives, as well, would agree with me that we're very blessed every year to get such high quality young individuals working for us, helping us, Mr. Acting Speaker, with our many actions, many roles and responsibilities that we have as MLAs .

Mr. Acting Speaker, as we all know, a number of MLAs, colleagues, are retiring. From the opposition we have the member for Brandon West (Mr. Borotsik); we have the member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck)—excuse me—I know, a true gentleman who's going back to his community where, I believe, our government is building two new schools. So he can be proud of the work that he's done.

The member for Portage (Mr. Fauschou), who likes to rib me often about his Portage Terriers beating the Selkirk Steelers, Mr. Acting Speaker. Again, this year, they did. The member for Russell (Mr. Derkach), I enjoy working with the member for Russell on the Public Accounts Committee. He is the chair, I'm the vice-chair and he's done a great job leading us in that process. I commend him for all the work that he's done, trying to bring the Public

Accounts Committee—again, as I said—a bit more accountable.

Our good friend, the member for Lac du Bonnet, a neighbour of mine, Gerald Hawranik, who's already left the Chamber, he can be very proud of what he's accomplished. I know one of the things, he moved a motion, that I seconded it, to rename Highway 44 historical highway No. 1, and I know that has benefited that community—

An Honourable Member: Tourism.

Mr. Dewar: —tourism in that area.

And, of course, my own government colleagues: the member for Lord Roberts (Ms. McGifford), who was elected here in 1995. She was responsible for rebuilding the post-secondary education institution in this province, and very much should be very proud of that. My friend from Burrows and I often share a ride home. He's a true friend of the north. The member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) and I, of course, were elected the very same day.

We had a chance yesterday to listen to the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) and his quality speech that he gave here. We know him to be a friend of mine but, obviously, a very true friend of the north. I want to thank him for his input. Our—my colleague from St. Norbert, who was a great—is a great constituency MLA and did a very good job, as we all recall last year when our good friend Mr. Speaker was away.

And, of course, that leads me to Mr. Speaker, of course, a friend of mine for many years. Again, him and I elected on the same day, September the 11th in 1990. And he will leave us with a tremendous legacy of fairness in his role as Speaker. And I think all of you who leave this place knowing—you know for the—that, in fact, that you've all made a difference and you've all represented your constituents well, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I want to pay tribute to the more than 700—I think it's seven or eight hundred men and women that are currently out there fighting the flood, and I think we as Manitobans are incredibly grateful to them—incredibly grateful to the men and women who are out there working with the—fighting against this force of Mother Nature, Mr. Acting Speaker. And we know that—yet we don't know how this is all going to end up but we know that there's such widespread flooding throughout the province—I think at historical levels throughout the whole province.

We, of course, those of us who live in the Red River Valley and myself who represent the community of Selkirk and St. Andrews and St. Clements, we've had our fair share of high-water events over the years, Mr. Acting Speaker. And it seems at this point, though maybe too early to tell, but it seems at this point that we've missed the worst of it. People in our area know that we get damage in our area primarily from ice jamming, like 1997, for example, which the—which was, all members will realize or remember, was the flood of the century.

We had no significant flooding in Selkirk. The golf course flooded and that's a great shame, I must admit. The park flooded and the bridge was closed, but other than that it was, you know, there was not a great deal, fortunately, of property loss.

People remember in 2009 when we had that ice jam and the number of homes were damaged—a number of homes were destroyed, Mr. Acting Speaker, and so we'll see, we still haven't—of course, the Red River and the Assiniboine River have not crested yet, and we'll see when it happens, we'll see what that means to our community. But I do want to pay tribute to all the work that has been done.

People know that we broke ice this year—the over 30 kilometres. We reinstated the ice-coring program in the Selkirk area and we, of course, as members will know, we instituted a buy-out program a number of years—we've purchased, I think, 64 properties, I think, most of them in Breezy Point but a number in my area. And had we not purchased those properties, those properties would have flooded this year.

So, instead of, you know, every year rebuilding these properties and having to deal with the trauma—of these individuals having to deal with the trauma of being flooded, Mr. Acting Speaker. It was painful. I mean, there's no denying, who would want to see their home be bought up, but nevertheless it was a decision that we made in co-operation with the RMs of St. Andrews and St. Clements. And I think, when looking back, it was, in fact, the right decision. And this is in contrast to the 1990s when there was little done to prevent ice jams, to prevent flooding in our community.

I want to pay tribute to municipal leadership in our area: Mayor Larry Johannson from the City of Selkirk, Mayor Steve Strang from the RM of St. Clements, and Reeve Don Forfar from the RM of St. Andrews. And we realize that we have done

much but we're also committed, Mr. Acting Speaker, to do much more.

I want to talk about the budget. Now, we've had the budget debate. This—obviously, we're nearing the end of it and we see that the opposition members are reluctant to—quite reluctant to debate the budget. They have a little prepared text which they hand from individual to individual, and they, you know, they say, don't speak too long, don't go off script, don't say anything, you know, we know we want to privatize Hydro, you know, we know we want to cut half a billion dollars out of the budget, you know, we're going to vote against that new school we're building in Woodlands, you know, we're going to do all these things but don't—let's just make sure that we stick to our little script, that we don't get off script and cause any great deal of problems, Mr. Acting Speaker.

But I want to congratulate our Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) for bringing down this budget. I had the great pleasure of serving as her legislative assistant and I know that she's very hard-working and she's very committed to this task, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I think a task—a budget that we can all be proud of. We made a commitment to deal with this economic downturn. Well, you heard the opposition members saying today there was no recession. They were saying the other day there were no car thefts. There was nobody on welfare in the 1990s but, you know, we have the chance—*[interjection]* There was no thousand nurses being laid off—like there were a thousand nurses being laid off when they were in government.

*(15:10)

But, you know, I had the chance to join with the minister on many of her budget consultations in Brandon, and we were in St. Laurent, and we did a couple of them here in the city of Winnipeg. I joined the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) up in his community, and we were in Ste. Rose; we were in Thompson and Grand Rapids, Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe in Ste. Anne or Lorette, I'm not sure—Ste. Anne. So—and there are people there who, I came to these—to the majority of these budget consultations with the minister, and the people, they supported our five-year plan. You know, they believe that cutting taxes is a good thing. They believe making investments in important services are important.

They also, Mr. Acting Speaker, realize that it's important that we turn to balance over five years,

which we're doing. We're into the second year, and we're actually doing better than what we originally stated in part of our five-year plan.

As I said, you know, the budget is the most important document that is tabled in this House by any government, you know. It's—you have the Speech from the Throne which broadly outlines the government's intentions, and the budget really adds flesh to that. And—but again, regrettably, the Conservatives were reluctant to take part in the debate, Mr. Acting Speaker, and we'll see what they do, in like, they really kind of—they put them—they trapped themselves, I was saying—into a little box here, because either they vote in favour of our budget or they vote against our budget. We'll see. I'm quite confident, and we'll—I'm sure not letting out any secrets. It'll be our intention to vote against their resolution. But we don't know at the end of the day which way they're going to go on our budget. We'll have to wait and see, because if they, of course, support our budget, that means they support all the actions of our government.

It's going to be difficult for them to criticize any health-care expenditures or any actions that we take in terms of highways, because they supported it, Mr. Acting Speaker. But, of course, if they vote against it, we'll know that they vote against more police. I got a new police officer in the city of Selkirk, new—there'll be some new highways being—happen soon, a new hospital that's being—will start—be starting very shortly in Selkirk. You know, we have the new school in Woodlands—

An Honourable Member: The school in Winkler.

Mr. Dewar: Order, Mr. Chair. The brand-new school in Winkler. We don't want the member to vote against that new school in Winkler before he leaves. We want him to go out on a high note.

The new school in Woodlands, the member for Lakeside's (Mr. Eichler) going to vote against his own school there. It's regrettable, Mr. Acting Speaker. But you know, like the—what the other—when you list—the Conservative leader had a number of TV ads and one of them was, he said, there was nothing to celebrate. Well, clearly, you know, if there's nothing to celebrate, he hasn't come around my community, else he would never had—if he had visited my community, he would realize there's much to celebrate: the new school that's—was built in East Selkirk, the East Selkirk Middle School; the redevelopment of the Selkirk Mental Health Centre; the redevelopment of our waterfront; the Community

Central Building that's in Grand Marais; the new full service MPIC centre which will open in June. I can go on and on about the—all the great things that are going to happen in my community.

But, you know, I just want to actually quote someone who's probably—who knows the community well and one of the comments that this individual made, and I'll just start off, Mr. Acting Speaker. This was from the *Selkirk Journal* of May the 14th, 2007, and this person states: Never in the history of Selkirk has there been so much in terms—excuse me—so much funding in terms of capital projects—never in the history of Selkirk has there been so much funding in terms of capital projects, citing recent announcements of support for the Selkirk Mental Health Centre and a new hospital. Well, guess who said that? This was former mayor, David Bell.

Well now, Mr. Acting Speaker, David Bell is running against me for the Conservatives. So this—never before in the history of Selkirk says a Conservative Party—never before—never before—never before in the history. Well, this is the best endorsement we'll ever have. We could just take this endorsement to the bank. You know, we make sure that this endorsement will be put on every piece of literature we put out in the upcoming campaign. From my Conservative opponent saying that this community has never had a better—we've never had a better quote than from David Bell who is running against me.

Mr. Acting Speaker, you know, I could go on and on. I have much to say but I see that—I think what's important to note is that the Conservatives, of course, we know they can't be trusted with Hydro. They sold off the MTS, Manitoba Telephone System, when Saskatchewan maintains a public system—is one that reaps millions and millions of dollars annually and dividends from that corporation. They supply better Internet access to their residents than we get here, and, secondly, we know that the Tories are eager to begin with their spending review process, which is cutting half a billion dollars out of the budget in one year.

Mr. Acting Speaker, no other government in Canada—no other government in Canada—has said that they're able to do that, but this one said—or this opposition party said that they would do that in one year. Well, I mean members here have talked about what this means. You know, it means Connie Curran. It means fewer nurses. It means fewer doctors. It means health-care capital budget frozen. It means,

you know, no new school in Woodlands, and it probably means no new school in Winkler, no ER in Brandon—or, excuse me, Portage. The list can go on and on and on but, you know, unfortunately, I'll have to yield the floor to another one of my colleagues but I will just inform the House that it'd be my intention to vote against their amendment and in favour of this budget.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs): Mr. Acting Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to briefly address the provincial budget of 2011. I want to commend our Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) for listening to the people of Manitoba and putting together, I believe, the budget—a budget that addresses all the issues that are of concern to our fellow citizens in the province of Manitoba.

The budget also continues our commitments to northern Manitoba on a number of key initiatives crucial to improving opportunities in the way of life in northern Manitoba. As the person responsible for the East Side Road Authority, I'm also particularly proud of the progress that we're making in partnership with First Nations communities on the east side. Mr. Acting Speaker, you will note, too, that this government has made an initial investment of \$93 million on the development of an east-side road and \$75 million for 15 years, bringing the total to about \$1.2 billion over the course of the project.

Now, this is one of the most substantial arrangements that has ever been made with First Nations communities, and particularly on the east side which has gone largely unnoticed previously. And through working with the communities for a number of years now, and through the listening of this government to the plight of these communities, we're able to now put in place a package we feel is most appropriate.

And the reason why that we're concentrating on an east-side road is very simply that the reliability of our winter road system is becoming more questionable each and every year. We know that building a road on the east side makes all the sense in the world; it makes economic sense and it brings those communities that live on the east side much more in line with the remainder of Canada. We believe that an all-season road will serve east-side communities at the request of the communities that live there, with their input as well, and for the benefit of the communities on the east side.

So we believe that the benefits for these communities, accessibility to food supplies and economic opportunities that perhaps some other Canadians take for granted, will be there for those people that live in these communities as well. So I, therefore, want to thank the chief and councils from those communities for working with us on this challenging project which will take a number of years to complete.

We will also continue to lobby the federal government to get involved with this very important project that is currently funded completely by the Province of Manitoba. Now there's been a number of critics of this project. They continue to claim that the road is ripping apart the boreal forest on the east side, and I want to set the record straight.

I want to point out that this project is, in fact, two separate roads, Mr. Acting Speaker. Both of them will be built almost exclusively along existing winter roads that are currently there. There will not be a north-south route going through the heart of the boreal forest. The east-side, all-weather roads will instead run from the Island Lake communities west to Norway House and from Poplar River along the shore of Lake Winnipeg south to Hollow Water.

* (15:20)

As most Manitobans are aware, the north-south winter road route has failed a number of times in recent years, and last year the season ended early, leaving a number of vehicles stuck for the entire year. And in March of this year, those vehicles were finally towed away. This route will be closed and reforested starting this spring.

So, as we move forward, the new all-weather roads will improve safe and reliable transportation to some of the most isolated and impoverished communities in Canada. We're building a road that not only goes north as far as Poplar River and we're—or rather, only goes as far as north as Poplar River, and we're building an east-west link to connect the seven northeast-side First Nations communities. There will not be a solid north-south path for the bipole to follow as the opposition contends.

The year-round roads will follow existing winter roads. The first leg of the north-south link, Hollow Water to Berens River, 80 per cent will be following existing winter roads. The east-west link to Island Lake and the three other First Nations in the

north-central area, 90 per cent will follow the existing winter road right-of-ways that are already there.

To be completely clear, Mr. Acting Speaker, allow me to table a map of the two roads that we're talking about so that we completely understand the intent of the government and the intent of the First Nations communities. I think that after this there should be no question, because we haven't accused, on this side, of spoiling by building a—an all-season road down the boreal forest area.

At the same time, Pimachiowin Aki, the land that gives life, is moving forward. The area involved is 43,000 square acres—the largest intact boreal forest on the planet. The Manitoba First Nations communities of Poplar River and Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi, Bloodvein are a part of the Pimachiowin Aki initiative.

Recently, I had the opportunity to talk with Ontario ministers about their support for this important project and the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation process which is well under way.

So, in addition, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have First Nations communities on the Ontario side—the Pikangikum First Nation, Poplar Hill, Deer Lake, Wabaseemoong or White Dog, and the Lac Seul First Nations communities on the Ontario side that are joining our initiative, the World Heritage Site initiative, and becoming members of the Pimachiowin Aki board.

We are confident that this will create jobs and opportunity for local First Nations communities, and that fund will help support community-building projects related to the site by tourist interpretive centres, support programs for community artisans, ecotourism initiatives, cultural education programs, culturally appropriate services—for example, traditional healing centres, which are badly needed in many of our communities.

It is vitally important that this project not be destroyed by the misinformation that is being raised by some on their false bipolar allegations. Their attempts to divide First Nations residents by false promises of jobs and economic development opportunities from an east-side transmission line are unfounded and they're insulting and Aboriginal people don't need that any longer.

Astounding as it may be to many of us in the south, many houses in the Island Lake region were built without either washrooms or even indoor

plumbing. This must end, and I want to congratulate the *Winnipeg Free Press*—I rarely do that—for focusing public attention on this basic human right. The federal government delivery of two hundred slop pails to Garden Hill this month is yet another disturbing sign of the neglect that these communities have faced for all too many years, and, as Manitobans, we should be outraged by what the federal government has done by the shipping of these slop pails to these communities.

Our government remains committed to working with Island Lake, the four First Nations in that region—Wasagamack, Red Sucker Lake, Garden Hill and St. Theresa Point—along with the federal government, and finally have these communities obtain basic water rights, water services. It is disturbing that nearly 10,000 residents in this area still don't have running water.

We have initiated a plan working with the First Nations and the federal government and the Mennonite Central Committee, as pointed out by the Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) in the budget speech that was delivered previously. And we have put together these people to train local workers to retrofit homes in these communities to modern standards.

The University College of the North is also moving forward in communities such as St. Theresa Point and Oxford House. And we will continue to lobby the federal government to raise funding levels for First Nation schools to the equivalent levels of provincial schools, something that is critical to improving graduation rates on reserve.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

And this is one of the three issues that we talked about at a provincial-territorial ministers meeting of Aboriginal Affairs ministers, along with the national Aboriginal organizations, this past Monday and Tuesday in Ottawa. And we are insisting that the federal government work with provinces and territories in addressing some of these insufficiencies and efficiencies that exist in many of our communities.

As the minister responsible, as well, for the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative, I'm pleased to note that this year we will be expanding to a number of new northern communities, including Churchill. This program has been a major success in the north, working directly with local partners to foster food self-sufficiency and promote traditional harvesting.

Nutrition North Canada, which replaced Food Mail, has ruled a number of fine communities ineligible for support. Attempts to have these communities added to the program have not succeeded to this point.

Our efforts to address the tragedy of missing and murdered Aboriginal women include: the current bus and billboard campaign, what if this was your daughter; a provincial summit on missing and murdered women next month, the upcoming Wiping Away the Tears II gathering, which is a meeting of victims' families. Amongst other activities are the areas that we're concentrating on to ensure that there's attention paid to these missing and murdered Aboriginal women here in the province of Manitoba.

Nationwide, we have almost 600 missing, murdered and Aboriginal women. In the province of British Columbia, I believe, 167; in the province of Manitoba, between 70 and 80 missing Aboriginal women and girls are still out there and the cases remain unsolved. And, Mr. Speaker, I would say that is unacceptable in this day and age. And I'm sure that the families want a government that is responsive, and we have been, I believe, to the degree that we are making it part of the process, to help make recommendations to this government to move forward to address these issues that they have lingering in their minds.

This week, I referenced earlier that provincial and territorial Aboriginal Affairs ministers of Canada met and we urged to promote federal support for a national Aboriginal women's summit, a third one, to address these issues and we're going to continue it, with our attempts to have the federal government support that.

Along with support for improvements to northern roads and airports, Budget 2011, again, promotes the importance of our northern Arctic seaport at Churchill.

Next month we are holding an Inuit Day here at the Manitoba Legislature to recognize the close links and ties between the Kivalliq Region of Nunavut and Manitoba, and the contributions that are often unrecognized by Canada of the Inuit people to the opening of the western world and, particularly, the fur trade. And many people don't often take the time to recognize the efforts of the Inuit people. In previous months, we have recognized the contributions of First Nations, of Métis people and now the other group, the Inuit people, are going to be recognized at a celebration here at the Manitoba

Legislature on the 5th of May. And I would say that the contributions of the Inuit people to the fur trade, and to the world that Canada knows today, has been substantial.

* (15:30)

The Wuskwatim-Hydro partnership is the first of the new partnerships we're engaged in with First Nations on hydro development in the north. While in Gillam very recently, I met with Chief Shirley Neepin and her council from Fox Lake to discuss local concerns and their negotiations on future hydro development. First Nations from the region, including Shamattawa, are directly involved in participating in future hydro development. And we welcome that change from the past, because long gone are the days where Aboriginal people stood idly by to see development and the exploitation of their traditional territories. We will no longer do that, because Aboriginal people have to be a full and participating partner in any development that is planned for the province of Manitoba. And we are required by the Supreme Court and section 35 considerations to provide and allow that to happen.

We have been pleased to assist the community of Shamattawa on a number of projects as well, including the successful renovation project last year that resulted in a rink opening at the arena for the first time since construction over 10 years ago.

The Hollow Water interpretive centre project is also under development, a project that will create jobs and tourism in that area. Hollow Water First Nation is working well on the East Side Road Authority on a number of—as are a number of other First Nations.

And the Berens River dialysis project is under way, the fourth such centre on reserve in Canada, all of which are in the province of Manitoba. And thanks to the leadership of the Minister of Health (Ms. Oswald), her and I were able to announce that. And previously, the Minister responsible for Mines and I were in Garden Hill to announce their dialysis treatment facility in their community, which prevents people having to move their families—their young families in some cases, or some elders being disconnected from the communities that they have lived in all of their lives, to move into an urban centre, like Winnipeg, to receive that much-needed service. Regrettably, we feel that that is unfortunate.

It is something that we're proud of. We're not proud of the fact that we have to build these dialysis treatment facilities, but indeed proud that we're accommodating the needs of First Nations people that live in these communities throughout the province of Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, as well, on the economic development initiatives that this government is involved in, the First Peoples Economic Growth Fund is making a difference on a number of communities, supporting projects across the province. Similarly, the new Métis Economic Fund is also moving forward. I've been pleased to work with Manitoba Métis Federation David Chartrand on this and other project, including the release of the provincial Métis Policy at the Legislature last fall, the first government to do such in Canada, and I was very proud to be a part of that.

The Northern Association of Community Councils under the leadership of Reg Meade of Wabowden continues to be a solid partner in a number of projects including the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative, and there has been some major progress and improvements in Northern Affairs communities across the north. I'm particularly pleased with the success of the Cross Lake Community Council and the Cross Lake Cadet program, the Cadet program under the leadership of Bob Smith. At Cross Lake, we'll be starting a new facility. The construction will be starting shortly, and I look forward to its opening.

The challenges of the north are well known. Our government is committed to working with northerners to make the changes they want. As we go forward towards the next election, we can point to this budget as a contrast to who is most responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people and to northern Manitoba.

Those are just some of the issues that we're dealing with, Mr. Speaker. Let me recap by just pointing out a few things. It was this government that brought about opportunities, and, no matter where you stand on the issue of gaming, we are allowing First Nations communities to—the opportunity of opening up casinos in Brokenhead, secondly; firstly, of course, it was the Aseneskak Casino in—at OCN, The Pas, Manitoba; and now the Southwest Casino that will be opening up in the Spruce Woods Provincial Park area. So we're very proud of those.

And I remember pre-1999, First Nations leaders knocking on the doors of members opposite and

getting no mileage in some of the aspirations that they've had. It was this government that was able to deliver on many of these initiatives that the First Nations had only dreams of trying to do. The project on the development of an all-weather road between the Hollow Water and the remainder of the province—and I tabled the map as to what it looks like, so we should kill that misconception right now about destroying the boreal forest, about building a north-south road connection. There's no such thing, Mr. Speaker, and we got to make that absolutely clear, that there are, in fact, two roads: Popular River to Hollow Water south and the east-west connection between the Island Lake communities, the north-central communities and Norway House, Norway House being the traditional transportation link of northern Manitoba. We should be very, very clear on that. And, as the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Ashton) has pointed out, the all—the winter road will be decommissioned after this winter road season. With that, I know there are other speakers from this side of the House that wish to address the budget.

But, in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I know that you will not be seeking re-election in October. I want to wish you the very best in all your future endeavours. I know you and I go back a long way, perhaps 30 years, 40 years or more, and our communication has—and our friendship has always been something that I cherished. And I wish you well in all you do, and I certainly wish you well in the health challenges that you had to face very recently.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the support of all members of this Chamber in Budget 2011, and I believe that our Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) ought to be commended for the tremendous job that she has done for the people of the province of Manitoba.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, budgets are about choices and, when the global downturn hit, we had a choice to make. One option would have been to raise taxes by half a billion dollars, or cut a half a billion dollars out of our Health, Education, public safety and Family Services budget, or some combination of the two, and, at the same time, stand by idly by watching thousands of Manitobans lose their jobs. That was exactly what the members opposite demanded we do.

Just 10 short months ago, and each and every member of the opposition stood up in this House and voted exactly for a plan to cut half a billion dollars

out of the budget. They were unanimous. They demanded that we gut the services Manitoba families value and, to be fair, they were only being consistent. Every single year since 1999, they have made their priorities clear. The members opposite are in it for people at the top and out of touch with the values and priorities of Manitoba families. They have been consistently negative with no positive solutions to contribute.

Now, it seems that they have finally realized how terribly out of touch they are with Manitoba families, and they are panicking. Suddenly, they are trying to pretend they are something different. Over the past week, we have seen the most unbelievable, and I emphasize the word "unbelievable," conversion or potential conversion. After a decade of voting against our balanced budgets, improvements in health care, education and public safety, as well as major investments in roads and infrastructure, the opposition now says, pay no attention to our record.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans will not be fooled. The opposition can run from their record, but they can't hide. Our government has hired 405 more doctors, including 111 more doctors in rural Manitoba; 2,500 more nurses, two and a half for every one fired by the opposition; five new MRI machines, including the MRI machines installed outside the city of Winnipeg in places like Brandon; the construction and modernization of over a hundred health-care facilities across our province, including a new birthing centre in south Winnipeg; a new maternity ward at the St. Boniface Hospital; a new 80-bed personal care home in south Winnipeg; a new dialysis units at Health Sciences Centre and in Russell, Peguis and Berens River; a new Access centre in northwest Winnipeg in St. James; and an expanded ER at Victoria Hospital. And to each of these things the members opposite have said, no, we shouldn't do it. They said no to 8,000 child-care spaces and 35 new child-care centres, 7,000 training spaces for youth and 4,000 new apprenticeships in the province of Manitoba.

*(15:40)

Our government has spent the last decade rebuilding universities after they were neglected so badly in the 1990s. Since 1999, enrolment is up by over one-third. University operating funding is up by over 80 per cent. And over the past decade we've seen over 800 million in new capital investments in our post-secondary institutions. From the new science and environment complex at the University

of Winnipeg, to the Health Studies Building at Brandon University and Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface, to the engineering building and the visionary Domino project at the University of Manitoba, to the ARTLab at the University of Manitoba, to the new student residence being built at the University of Manitoba, and even including a new stadium at the University of Manitoba.

We are literally rebuilding the post-secondary education system in Manitoba after the members opposite did their very best to destroy it through neglect. And the members opposite have opposed us every step of the way. No, no, no has been their response to every new initiative in this province.

On safety, we have hired and funded 219 new police officers throughout Manitoba, including 133 in Winnipeg. Their response, no to the funding for that. Forty-eight new prosecutors and 51 probation officers, and they said no to that as well. The new police helicopter, with 30 new police cadets, and 436 added spaces to Manitoba's correctional system, and their response to each of these investments: no, no and no.

On infrastructure, there's been a \$3-billion commitment on highway infrastructure, building thousands of kilometres of roads and hundreds of bridges; over 5,000 kilometres of redeveloped road in Manitoba. And including the \$700 million for the floodway expansion, and money for flood fighters and firefighters, and millions for water and waste-water upgrades in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba. And they said no to all of that too, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they may humiliate themselves by trying to pretend they support our budget today, our investments in families, jobs and economic recovery, but we know how different things would be today if they had won the last election. They don't promise to hire a single—they didn't promise to hire a single doctor or to train a single nurse. They made no commitments on skills training. We promised 4,000 apprenticeships as spaces, and we're delivering on those.

They proposed to build a beach, marina and lake in the Point Douglas neighbourhood, without even consulting the residents. Their vision for infrastructure was to redirect highway dollars from the north of Manitoba to the south of Manitoba. And who can't forget the Leader of the Opposition's famous promise on the Jets? The only reason people are even talking about the possibility of Manitoba

regaining an NHL team today is because the world-class MTS Centre, we helped build that with Mark Chipman and True North. The members opposite said no to the MTS Centre. Manitobans will never forget that.

Mr. Speaker, we rejected the opposition's demands to cut a half a billion dollars out of public spending. We chose to put families first by protecting jobs and services. Our five-year plan was built based on stimulating the economy in the short term, protecting services and setting out a schedule return to surplus by the year 2014. And we're on track to do that by being \$88 million ahead of schedule in the 2010-2011 budget.

Over the past year we have led the country with the lowest unemployment rate of any province. Public services are strong. Manitoba small businesses are the most optimistic in Canada, and we are on schedule to return to surplus by 2014 and, as I've said, even ahead of schedule. Our plan is working. But the global economy remains fragile. Now is not the time to put at risk our positive momentum. That's why this year we are sticking to the plan.

Mr. Speaker, Budget 2011 builds on Manitoba's success with a balanced approach that puts families first. Our budget puts money back into the pockets of Manitoba families with an increase to the basic personal exemption of a thousand dollars over the next four years. By 2014, this move will have removed 22,000 Manitobans from the provincial income 'trax' rolls. And we have offered more property tax relief for seniors, going from \$800 to \$1,100, and a more generous Primary Caregiver Tax Credit, and a new Children's Arts and Cultural Activity Tax Credit. Again, members opposite have rejected all of these alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, our budget of '11-12 invests in health care so that every Manitoban who wants a family doctor will have access to one by 2015.

It helps families with young children by funding thousands more child-care spaces, 2,100 more child-care spaces, 26 new child-care centres and 400 new nursery school places in the province of Manitoba.

And it helps seniors and their families by hiring more personal care home staff and making a commitment to over \$200 million in investments in

personal care homes, not to mention, we will continue to improve Canada's finest home-care program with more money for home-care workers and more money for critical care when people need rehabilitation. What did the members opposite do? They tried to privatize home care in Manitoba, and they couldn't even make that work.

We continue by investing in education and training. We are ensuring Manitoba emerges out of the recession with an even stronger economy than before. Budget 2011 makes it easier for Manitobans to attend university by freezing tuition fees to the rate of inflation, and, at the same time, it makes our universities even better with a major multi-year funding commitment of 5 per cent a year increase in core funding for the next three years. It creates hundreds of opportunities for new apprentices, and it builds new schools, new gyms and daycares with the largest capital funding increase for public schools in Manitoba's history.

Mr. Speaker, better infrastructure, roads, bridges, transit, community centres, hospitals and schools improves the quality of life for Manitobans in every community and it lays the foundation for future growth. Budget 2011 increases municipal infrastructure and transit grants to the equivalent of one percentage point of the provincial sales tax, and it ensures this funding will grow along with our economy by committing one point of future provincial sales tax to infrastructure. Beyond that major commitment, our budget introduces the next stage of our plan to renew the province's highways after we have already built, renewed and repaired over 5,000 kilometres of roadways in this province.

It hires more police officers and more prosecutors to fight crime and protect communities, and it invests in Manitoba's parks and campgrounds and new efforts to clean up Lake Winnipeg.

Budget 2011 takes a balanced approach. For the 12th consecutive year, we will not increase major business and personal income taxes. As a matter of fact, for the 12th consecutive year, we reduced taxes for both business and families in Manitoba and individuals, and we do it in such a way that our deficit is—to GDP is the third lowest among all provinces in Canada, and our debt-servicing costs are six cents on the dollar versus over 13 cents when the members opposite were in office, less than half of what was required in 1999. And we are on track to return to surplus by the year 2014. In fact, we are

beating our targets set out in the 2010 budget and are ahead of our projections.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we continue to strengthen and protect the services and infrastructure that Manitobans value. By focusing on the priorities of Manitoba families, Budget 2011 keeps Manitobans on the right track and moving forward. This budget is a worthy budget, a budget that moves Manitoba forward, a budget that expands our economy. Next year, our economy will be \$56 billion. That's more than a billion dollars every single week, and the members opposite would put that all at risk with their reckless, irresponsible approach on how they will develop our Crown corporations, such as Manitoba Hydro, with their reckless and irresponsible approach by trying to cut a half a billion dollars out of the budget in the middle of a recession.

Mr. Speaker, the members of the opposition live in a bubble. They don't even recognize that there was a global recession. They don't even recognize issues like climate change. They don't even know what the word "poverty" means. They ignored it during their entire time in office.

* (15:50)

And, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to moving Manitoba forward on key issues like unemployment, education, health care, infrastructure, keeping neighbourhoods safe and rebuilding neighbourhoods, building clean energy in Manitoba, responding to the Kyoto challenge and climate change, responding to flood proofing in Manitoba, responding to issues such as FASD, responding to such issues as the need for daycare spaces so the families can work, we have supported all those initiatives. The members opposite have voted against them every single year that we've been in office.

The result is the Manitoba economy is the strongest it's been in the last decade, and the members opposite still want to drive us—drag us back to the 1990s, back to a time when every Manitoban was divided up against other Manitobans. They played wedge politics every single day that they were in office. It was divide one Manitoban against another, look after their wealthy friends, reject all other Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, our budget is for all Manitobans. I hope they'll endorse it today.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to follow my colleagues and speak on this budget, but before I do that, I want to recognize the pages and the staff here in the Chamber who make our jobs easier. Sometimes we don't make their job very easier because they're here to serve us, and I want to thank each of them for the work that they do.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank you for your guidance here in the House and wish you well as you move on to other adventures. We do cause you some challenges, but you treat all of us fairly and I commend you for that.

I also want to recognize and offer my best wishes to others who have made—indicated that they are going to be leaving this House. But as we—I also, Mr. Speaker, as—want to recognize my own family, particularly my husband, who has always been very supportive of me as—especially during this time of preparing a budget, and to the people in the Swan River constituency, who recognize that their—my time is longer here in the city than sometimes it is at home.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by talking about this budget and saying how pleased I was to be able to deliver a budget that reflects what the people of Manitoba have said to us. It's a budget that keeps Manitoba on track and it keeps Manitoba moving forward, and it's a plan that's working and it—because—it's working because it focuses on the priorities of Manitobans. It's a very balanced approach that we're taking here and it's about steady growth and positive results.

Mr. Speaker, last year the five-year plan that we introduced was an economic plan to continue the investments of front-line services, to promote economic growth, to manage government spending and restore balance and maintain affordability. And I'm very proud that, even though the members opposite that don't think there was a recession—in fact, today they thought there was no recession. The other day they said there was no car thieves in Manitoba. I think there was no crime, you know, no bullying. I'm sure the Minister of Conservation (Mr. Blaikie) will soon hear them say that there aren't any beavers in Manitoba either.

There's all of these things that were—that are—weren't a problem, don't exist, Mr. Speaker, but—

An Honourable Member: That's called illusion.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, it's called an illusion and the members opposite would like to paint an illusion here. But, Mr. Speaker, our government has had a decade of balanced budgets that have put Manitoba in a strong economic and sound fiscal position. That's what we have done in our time in office, and when the downturn hit, we really had a choice to make. We had to decide—we could've taken the advice of the members opposite and we could've balanced in one year or we could have listened to Manitobans, which we chose to do.

Mr. Speaker, we made a decision that we would not cut front-line services, we would not cut funding to education and public safety and we would not take a risk on derailing the economy. This is what the opposition would have done, and that's what they were asking us to do when they put forward an amendment last year to take out \$500 million out of the budget. We didn't listen to them; we continued to invest and that's why Manitoba's economy is doing quite well and outperforming other jurisdictions.

When you look at the steady recovery, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's forecast to growth—Manitoba is forecast to grow 2.7 per cent in '11 and '12, matching the national average, tied for the fourth strongest. Our job creation rate is strongest in eight years. There's strong growth, and stronger growth continues. Our manufacturing sales have bounced back. We have strong gains in foreign exports. Our housing starts are up by 41.1 per cent. That's a huge increase. And we've had the highest number of housing starts in 23 years, which 5,888 units started.

Capital investment, Mr. Speaker, grew by 10.4 per cent in 2010, the fourth highest among provinces when you look at the nation. I'm very proud of our population growth and the impact our increased population has had in stimulating the economy.

The members opposite have never shown their support for immigration in this province. And I want to commend our ministers of Labour, both the present and previous ministers of Labour, who have worked very hard to make sure that Manitoba is the place to be, and that is why we've had the highest growth since 1945, Mr. Speaker. Well, there's significant growth.

Manitoba's fastest average—has the highest average amongst provinces over the past five years for economic growth. And, when you look at this province, you see a lot of activity, people looking at Manitoba as a place to invest, a place to raise their

family, a place to get their education. Mr. Speaker, when you look at our province, and the members opposite can talk about taxes, but you have to look at cost of living; you have to look at taxes; you have to look at all of those things. And Manitoba is among the most affordable places to raise a family, and we're very proud of that.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan in their 2011 budget, Saskatchewan ranked Manitoba in the top two most affordable provinces. Saskatchewan recognizes the value of Manitoba and the steps we are taking. I wish members of the opposite—opposition would once in awhile recognize and praise Manitoba and Manitobans for what they do for this province.

But, you know, of all of these things, and the members opposite don't like to hear about it, but I want to quote from *Maclean's* magazine, "The Manitoba miracle" article: By many measures, Manitoba has emerged as a shining star of Canada's recession and subsequent recovery, Mr. Speaker.

For the member that didn't hear it, I will repeat it again. By many measures, Manitoba has emerged as a shining star of Canada's recession and subsequent recovery. These other people—and members opposite should recognize this as well. But, Mr. Speaker, as you look at what the members opposite were suggesting, we rejected their call to make those cuts in the—nine months ago. Nine months ago they were asking for cuts. They wanted to cut public service and they wanted to put thousands of people back on the street instead of keeping them employed. We took a much different approach, and that's why Manitoba's economy is thriving.

* (16:00)

But, you know what, Mr. Speaker, somewhere in those past nine months, the members opposite have had a conversion. The members opposite are now saying they like some of those things. They like some of the investments in health care. They like some of the investments in police services. They talk about the things they like in this budget.

Well, I can't understand the members opposite when they talk about the things that they now support, which they voted against in the last budget: more 'polices' officers, increasing 'flexibila' funding for post-secondary education, capital investment in health care, recreations and schools, investments in child care. There are all a lot of investments and steps that we have taken, but the members opposite

have chosen instead to speak against it, and now they're recognizing what they're doing—recognizing that what we're doing is good, and they're trying to find a way to vote for it.

But they made an amendment. Mr. Speaker, what is the amendment that they have put forward? First of all, they have announced that they would vote for our budget if we would accept their amendment on spending review. What does spending review mean? I can tell you what it means. It means, from the '90s, things like Connie Curran. It means, from the '90s, this is cuts to health care, cuts to education, cuts to police services. That's what the members opposite mean.

They talk as if they want—care about people, that they want to keep those front-line services. But, if you're talking, that is just cute language for cuts, Mr. Speaker. We know exactly what they mean, and it will mean that Manitoba families, patients, nurses and doctors will—who have experienced the cuts of the '90s know exactly what their spending review means. They know that, if they had the opportunity to put this spending review in place, we would see fewer doctors, that all of the work that we have done to increase the numbers and nurses and doctors in this province would be gone, because of their proposed spending review.

I have to remind you that in 19—in 2008 the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) said health-care spending should be limited to the rate of economic growth, and he hasn't changed his mind since. He hasn't said that he's changed his mind. So you know what that means, Mr. Speaker? If that's what he believes in, funding the health expenditure at the rate of the growth of the economy, it means \$756 million will be—would be cut out of the health-care budget. That's what his plan would be.

This is equivalent to removing 9,400 nurses or 2,000 doctors. So we have to remember, when the Leader of the Opposition talks about spending review process, he is being reckless and the people of Manitoba would suffer if he ever had a chance to implement that—those changes.

I have to say as well, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition talks about the spending review on Manitoba Hydro, and I can—I'll tell you, when I listen to him on spending reviews on Manitoba Hydro, this means, and when I listen to everything that he says on hydro or on bipole, and puts false numbers on the record, like \$11,000 for every family in this child—this province, it means that

the agenda of the Conservatives across the way is that they will not build bipole, they will not build converters, and they will mothball the hydro dams like they did in the '90s. They will do nothing. They will make—they will drive Manitoba Hydro into the ground to the point where it loses value and then they can sell it off to their friends just like they sold the Manitoba Telephone System.

You can just—I know for sure that that is the intention. I know members opposite—I know that members opposite could say all kinds of things. Today they talked about, oh, you have no sales to Saskatchewan; oh, you have no sales to the United States. They are forgetting the real purpose of this. We need this hydro line for reliability of a supply for Manitobans.

They knew about this from 1990, Mr. Speaker. They knew that we needed a reliability, another line for Manitobans. They knew we needed another converter station. What did they do? Nothing. They did absolutely nothing. They killed the deals that were there. They ignored the advice to build another hydro line, and now they think, oh, yes, we're going to save Manitobans \$3.8 billion. That's what their ad says: \$3.8 billion. That means they're cancelling everything and on their way to privatizing Manitoba Hydro. That is where these people are going.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to you that I'm very proud of the budget that we have put forward, and I'm very proud that we have been able to keep investing in Manitoba's economy, keeping investing in the stimulus, \$1.8 billion in stimulus that the members all voted against. They voted against it and then the next day they're standing up and they're asking for a project in their constituency. They're asking for a road. They're asking for a hospital. They're asking for a school but they vote against all of those projects. They voted against every one of those investments, whether it be in highway investment, hospital investment, they have voted against everything. That's how they would balance the budget in one year by—they would be cutting all of those things out of the budget.

So, Mr. Speaker, this budget is about working for the Manitoba economy, pulling Manitoba out of the recession. We will continue to work with the Manitoba people, and in this budget that the members opposite are speaking against, we're putting money back into the pockets of Manitobans. We're putting money back into the pockets of Manitobans with tax cuts, credits for children's activities, tax

credits for seniors and for caregivers, some very important people.

And I want to talk about those caregivers, Mr. Speaker, those people who are looking after children and also looking after parents, people who are working so hard that—and offering their services so that other—their parents or loved ones do not have to go into a personal care home. Those people have gone unrecognized. We brought in a tax credit for them last year and we have brought in an enhancement to that tax credit and I can tell you, as the Premier (Mr. Selinger) said, that's a very well-received tax credit because there are so many people that are helping their loved ones by keeping them at home.

Mr. Speaker, as well, the members opposite were the ones who drove the doctors out of the province, and the member—members opposite, in the '90s, cut the number of doctor spaces at the university of [inaudible]. What a crying shame. What a shame that they would not recognize how important the doctors were, that they would never—they could not recognize that we needed more doctors in this province so they slashed a number of seats. We have increased that number and we are training far more doctors. And now we have made a commitment that every Manitoban who wants a family doctor will be able to have a family doctor by 2015. All of these things along with nurse practitioners, more doctors, quick clinics, all of those and the mobile services, the unit that will be out—all of those will make a difference in the quality of life.

And I'm really proud of this government for the work—our government—for the work that we have done to bring services closer to people in rural Manitoba. The cancer care unit in Brandon is going to make a significant difference for the people in southwestern Manitoba. It's going to make a difference for the people in my constituency. I hope the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Maguire) would stand up and recognize how important that is because it brings services closer to people.

I'm very pleased that we were able to announce cataract surgery in Swan River as well. By having people—a service closer to home, it reduces their costs, Mr. Speaker, and it makes better quality of life. Extending dialysis into all of those communities in—that we have since we've taken office, all of those things are making a difference to the quality of life and I'm very proud that our government has not only been able to keep taxes at the level that they were,

we were able to make investments in stimulus, but we've been also and able to make investments in all of those health-care issues.

* (16:10)

We—and, of course, in keeping universities affordable, Mr. Speaker, is another very important issue for our young people. Stable funding for universities is also something that's very important in this budget.

So I think that the members opposite, I know why they want to vote for this budget. I know why they want to vote for it, because it's a very good budget. It's recognizing—it keeps Manitoba affordable, Mr. Speaker. It works on the priorities that Manitobans have identified. It focuses on families when it's very balanced and steady, and this five-year plan that we have is what people recognize as being very valuable.

So the members opposite would like to vote for it, but inside of them, you know, it just doesn't work for them. So that's why they try to use some code words, like what was—how they do spending review. Spending review, that's one of the things that they want to do, Mr. Speaker. They say that so they would like to—but you can't have it both ways. You can't have it both ways as the members opposite would like to do. They would like to say that they are supporting all of these things—

An Honourable Member: They did say that.

Ms. Wowchuk: They say they do. Nine months ago, Mr. Speaker, they didn't. Nine months ago, they were slashing \$500 million. They were voting against it. But, now, they are starting to recognize that there is some value in those things, but, at the same time, they want to do cuts.

Mr. Speaker, that's not the way you can do it, and what the members opposite is reckless and it is an attempt to slash spending and take us back to where we were in the '90s, where people will be back out on the street and we will not have the lowest unemployment rate that we have. We will not have that lowest unemployment rate. We will have more people going elsewhere to seek employment. And those are the challenges that we face because of what members opposite are trying to do with this amendment that they put forward.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans know it; Manitobans remember. Manitoba was—remember the '90s when we did see these cuts. Not all of them remember, but

many Manitobans do remember and that's why Manitobans now support a financially and social-socially responsible way to come back to balance. And I say to members: I talk to people. I visited across the province when we were doing budget consultations. Manitobans said: It's okay to run a deficit. It's okay to run a deficit for a few years if it means you're going to keep front-line services going. That's what we have done. We have kept those front-line services going, but we continue to work with the business community. We continue to hear what the public is saying with regard to reducing red tape. We continue to work on innovation as we have—as has been suggested by the business and research community. We are streamlining processes for Manitobans so that it will be easier for them to access funding. Particularly this year, we've gotten to non-profit organizations to help them reduce some of their red tape. Clearly, we have listened to Manitobans, and this balanced approach that we are taking is working, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to—I just want to talk a bit about where we are with regard to our expenditures, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite, well, want to talk about debt management. And I've heard the member opposite say that we are spending more money; our biggest department is debt financing.

Well, I want to member—remind the members opposite of what happened and where we were in 1999. In actual dollars on summary debt servicing, our summary debt-servicing costs are down 20 per cent from over a billion dollars that the opposition paid in 1999, and it is—ours this year is to—for \$807 million. A good part of that is stimulus money, as I said, the stimulus money that members opposite want to see in their constituency, but, somehow, they must imagine that they don't have to pay for it.

Well, if you're making investments, Mr. Speaker, you have to pay for that. I would remember—remind the members also that when you look at what our plan was and what we have said we have—we put the five-year plan in place and, in fact, we are ahead of the plan. We are ahead of where we thought we would be. And we anticipated that we would have—in 2010, we budgeted for \$545 million as a deficit, as a shortfall. We came ahead of that. We reduced it by \$78 million.

Mr. Speaker, it—our deficit was \$467 million. Now we are projecting a lower deficit than ever. So the members opposite don't want to imply that we are

spending more money than we should, but they won't look back at the old record. I heard the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. McFadyen) say this afternoon that he didn't want us to talk about the Gary Filmon years. I can't—I don't blame him. He didn't want us to talk about the Gary Filmon years because then we would have to talk about the privatization of Manitoba telephone; we'd have to talk about firing the nurses; we'd have to talk about Connie Curran; and we'd have to talk about the deficit that was a billion dollars—a billion dollars in 1999.

So they didn't want to—they don't want to talk about that, but they don't want to either talk about the fact that our net debt to GDP ratio, is projected to be 26.2 in this budget, Mr. Speaker, and that's down from 32.9 per cent in 1999. That's the fourth lowest across all of the provinces. Our debt to—our deficit to GDP ratio is projected to be .8 per cent this year, the third lowest amongst the province. Our debt-servicing costs are forecast to be 6 cents on the dollar, and this is down from 14 cents of a dollar of revenue under the previous administration.

Mr. Speaker, the—I'm very—when we got into this situation, we began to talk about how we could cut government expenses, and certainly we have looked at that very carefully, and we have been able to make some changes in how we control some wage costs. We've been able to control some costs as of MLA's salaries. So members opposite would like to say that we're just—I've heard them say we've just spent more than we should have, but the members opposite will also not recognize, and I want them to be aware, that in 2011 this budget commits \$438 million in a payment towards our debt-related—debts. And \$395 million is going towards the pension-related payments.

We have to remember when—that we—when members opposite were in government, and other governments as well, there was no money budgeted. Money was not put in place for pensions, and that was sitting there as an outstanding net. We have taken the steps to address those issues, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as you look across the total budget, and you look at what we have done in this budget, as I said, it focuses very much on what people have told us. And we have decided, and clearly we're supported by the public, that when we say we won't risk everything we've built on over our years in office, everything Manitobans have built, just with some short-sighted cuts. We will not make those cuts and those cuts aren't in this budget. When we were

doing the budget, we chose to put families first and to say no to cuts to take apart all of our public service. We said no to that, and I'm proud that we were able to do that because if we stay on a smart path and continue to invest, we will be on track to be on—in surplus by 2014.

* (16:20)

Mr. Speaker, we've balanced 10 budgets in a row—we've balanced. And in fact, we had more money in the stabilization fund than the members opposite had even after they sold the Manitoba Telephone System. We were able to put away sufficient money during those better years so that when we can now use some of the money through the—through this recession time. And we are using some of that money to pay down the deficit.

But we balanced—*[interjection]*—to pay the part of the deficit that we have this year. The members opposite—Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated to you, we made a choice that we would run a deficit for four years and—five years—and then come back into balance, and we are on our debt—we are paying 6 cents on the dollar versus 13 cents on the dollar as the members opposite were paying.

Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, may think that putting this kind of a plan together is kind of a laughing matter. Well, I can tell you very clearly that when we made the decision to put this five-year plan together, we did it—not do it lightheartedly. We did it so that we would ensure that we could continue to move Manitoba forward, we could continue to make the investments in infrastructure that members wanted so much, that we could continue to invest in education and apprenticeship training so our young people would be ready for all those jobs that are coming in this province. And I say to you that we are—as we look, we are taking—our government has taken significant steps to reduce the debt and to address unfunded pension liabilities and we are taking all of those steps at the same time as we are making investments in Manitoba. So we're addressing the shortfalls. We're addressing the debt and we are paying unfunded—the pension liability and we are investing in Manitoba.

Child care, Mr. Speaker, an unprecedented amount of child care. We're investing in health care—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Seeing no further speakers, I shall put the question.

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

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the amendment, say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the amendment, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Formal Vote

Mrs. Mavis Taillieu (Official Opposition House Leader): Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

Division

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

Yeas

Borotsik, Briese, Cullen, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurschou, Goertzen, Graydon, Maguire, McFadyen, Mitchelson, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Nays

Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Blaikie, Braun, Brick, Caldwell, Chomiak, Dewar, Gerrard, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Marcelino, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wowchuk.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 18, Nays 35.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Okay. The question before the House is the proposed motion on the honourable Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: No? All those in favour of the motion, say aye.

Some Honourable Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed to the motion, say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Ayes have it.

Formal Vote

Mrs. Taillieu: Recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

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

Order. The question before the House is the proposed motion on the honourable Minister of Finance (Ms. Wowchuk) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Yeas

Allan, Altemeyer, Ashton, Bjornson, Blady, Blaikie, Braun, Brick, Caldwell, Chomiak, Dewar, Howard, Irvin-Ross, Jennissen, Jha, Korzeniowski, Lemieux, Mackintosh, Marcelino, Martindale, McGifford, Melnick, Nevakshonoff, Oswald, Reid, Robinson, Rondeau, Saran, Selby, Selinger, Struthers, Swan, Wiebe, Wowchuk.

Nays

Borotsik, Briese, Cullen, Derkach, Driedger, Dyck, Eichler, Faurschou, Gerrard, Goertzen, Graydon, Maguire, McFadyen, Mitchelson, Pedersen, Rowat, Schuler, Stefanson, Taillieu.

Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk): Yeas 34, Nays 19.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Hon. Jennifer Howard (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you'd canvass the House to see if it is the will to call it 5 o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 5 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

Okay. The hour now being 5 p.m. this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1–10 a.m. on Tuesday morning. That's 10 a.m. on Tuesday morning.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 21, 2011

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Introduction of Bills		Manitoba Hydro McFadyen; Wowchuk	925
Bill 22—The Securities Amendment Act Wowchuk	921	Social Assistance Budget Mitchelson; Mackintosh	927
Petitions		Outstanding Warrants Goertzen; Swan	928
PTH 16 and PTH 5 North—Traffic Signals Briese	921	Highway 6 Eichler; Ashton	929
Auto Theft—Court Order Breaches Goertzen	921	Antipsychotic Drugs Gerrard; Oswald	930
Convicted Auto Thieves—Denial of MPI Benefits Pedersen	922	Members' Statements St. James Jimmies Boys Basketball Team Korzeniowski	932
Bipole III—Cost to Manitoba Families Dyck	922	Organ Donations McFadyen	932
Tabling of Reports		Victoria General Hospital 100th Anniversary Irvin-Ross	933
Education, Departmental Expenditure Estimates, Annual Report, 2011-2012 Allan	922	Earth Day Maguire	933
Advanced Education and Literacy, Departmental Expenditure Estimates, Annual Report, 2011-2012 Selby	922	National Day of Remembrance and Action on Mass Atrocities Allan	934
Ministerial Statements		ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS	
Flooding and Ice Jams Update		Budget Debate (Eighth Day of Debate)	
Ashton	922	Reid	935
Briese	923	Dewar	939
Gerrard	923	Robinson	942
Oral Questions		Selinger	945
Budget		Wowchuk	948
McFadyen; Wowchuk	923		
Stefanson; Wowchuk	926		

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

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