

Fourth Session - Fortieth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Official Report
(Hansard)

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Fortieth Legislature

| Member | Constituency | Political Affiliation |
|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| ALLAN, Nancy | St. Vital | NDP |
| ALLUM, James, Hon. | Fort Garry-Riverview | NDP |
| ALTEMEYER, Rob | Wolseley | NDP |
| ASHTON, Steve, Hon. | Thompson | NDP |
| BJORNSON, Peter, Hon. | Gimli | NDP |
| BLADY, Sharon, Hon. | Kirkfield Park | NDP |
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| BRIESE, Stuart | Agassiz | PC |
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| GRAYDON, Cliff | Emerson | PC |
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| MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon. | St. Johns | NDP |
| MALOWAY, Jim | Elmwood | NDP |
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| MARTIN, Shannon | Morris | PC |
| MELNICK, Christine | Riel | NDP |
| MITCHELSON, Bonnie | River East | PC |
| NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom | Interlake | NDP |
| OSWALD, Theresa | Seine River | NDP |
| PALLISTER, Brian | Fort Whyte | PC |
| PEDERSEN, Blaine | Midland | PC |
| PETTERSEN, Clarence | Flin Flon | NDP |
| PIWNIUK, Doyle | Arthur-Virden | PC |
| REID, Daryl, Hon. | Transcona | NDP |
| ROBINSON, Eric, Hon. | Kewatinook | NDP |
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| SARAN, Mohinder | The Maples | NDP |
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| SELBY, Erin | Southdale | NDP |
| SELINGER, Greg, Hon. | St. Boniface | NDP |
| SMOOK, Dennis | La Verendrye | PC |
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| SWAN, Andrew | Minto | NDP |
| WIEBE, Matt | Concordia | NDP |
| WIGHT, Melanie, Hon. | Burrows | NDP |
| WISHART, Ian | Portage la Prairie | PC |
| <i>Vacant</i> | The Pas | |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, November 28, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Good morning, everyone. Please be seated.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 8—The Conservation Officers Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): I move, seconded by the Attorney General (Mr. Allum), that Bill 8, The Conservation Officers Act; Loi sur les agents de conservation, be now read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, this bill changes the title of natural resource officer to conservation officer. As well, it codifies in law the enforcement powers of officers, particularly regarding public safety. It enables through regulation legislated officer qualifications and training and the protection of the public with a code of conduct and an outside complaints mechanism.

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

Any further introduction of bills?

PETITIONS

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

Grace Hospital Emergency Room Upgrade and Expansion

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

These are the reasons for this petition:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

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

And this is signed by L. Ransom, A. Ransom, K. Hammond and many others, Mr. Speaker.

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

Renewal and Improvements to PTH 5 and PTH 16 at Neepawa Intersection

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

The background for this petition is as follows:

Two major provincial trunk highways, Provincial Trunk Highway No. 5 and Provincial Trunk Highway PTH 16, intersect in Neepawa along a distance of 1.5 kilometres, resulting in high volumes of traffic.

The town of Neepawa is experiencing consistent growth as demonstrated by a reported 6.5 per cent increase in population between the 2006 census and the 2011 census, according to Statistics Canada.

Due to population and industry growth in the Neepawa area, the area where PTH 5 meets PTH 16 is experiencing increasing volumes of traffic flows.

The portion of highway where PTH 5 and PTH 16 join is frequently used by emergency medical services to transport patients to the Neepawa District Memorial Hospital and health centre.

Manufacturers, agricultural producers, area residents and many Manitobans rely on the area where PTH 5 and PTH 16 are a joint highway, yet this part of the highway is in need of significant repair.

There are serious safety concerns due to the poor condition of the 1.5-kilometre portion of joint highway in Neepawa.

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

To request that the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation recognize that the 1.5 kilometres of shared area of PTH 5 and PTH 16 running through the town of Neepawa is in unsafe condition and is therefore dangerous to the public, and as such, be urged to prioritize its renewal and consider making necessary improvements to reflect its current use.

This petition is signed by L. Canston, B. Karaz, G. Belisle and many, many other fine Manitobans.

Election Request

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

And the background to this petition is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

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

And this petition has been signed by D. Safruk, W. Daudrich and J. Nasekupow and many, many more fine Manitobans.

* (10:10)

Mr. Speaker: Committee reports?

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Conservation and Water Stewardship): I'm pleased to table the 2013-14 annual report of the Manitoba Conservation Districts program, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Any further tabling of reports?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Agreement with Cross Lake/Pimicikamak

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

Mr. Speaker, as mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, Manitoba is committed to furthering reconciliation with First Nations impacted by past hydro development.

We are building upon the December 15th, 2000, Northern Flood Agreement ministerial statement at which I stated that our government sees the Northern Flood Agreement as a modern-day treaty. The Northern Flood Agreement signed by the province, the federal government, Manitoba Hydro, Cross Lake and four other northern First Nations in 1977 was designed to address the impacts of northern hydro development on the communities.

Since that time, four of the five communities have signed comprehensive implementation agreements to address those issues more specifically. These four First Nations are Tataskweyak Cree Nation at Split Lake, York Factory First Nation at York Landing, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation at Nelson House and Norway House Cree Nation; Cross Lake chose not to continue—chose to continue working under the original Northern Flood Agreement.

Manitoba Hydro and the provincial government have now signed a process agreement with the leadership of Cross Lake-Pimicikamak Okimawin, creating a framework for discussions on implementation of the Northern Flood Agreement. The agreement will also provide a process to address some of the other issues raised by community leaders about the implementation of the Northern Flood Agreement and other issues. The agreement outlines the engagement process and guiding principles for these talks, along with the proposed timetable and a commitment to a reasonable funding process.

We are pleased that the federal government, who is also party to the Northern Flood Agreement, has approved the appointment of a new NFA arbitrator, Winnipeg lawyer Michael Werier, who is now in place. This restores another important avenue to help resolve claims arising under the Northern Flood Agreement.

Before—since signing the NFA in 1977, Manitoba Hydro and the Province have spent well over \$100 million on a range of compensation, mitigation and other programs for Cross Lake

citizens to address the impacts of hydroelectric development and meet their obligations under the agreement. These programs have included the construction of a—the \$28-million Kichi Sipi Bridge, the upgrades to Provincial Highway 373, the funding of domestic program, hot lunch program, shoreline cleanup program and many other projects. Separate agreements regarding past damages were signed with the Cross Lake fishers, Cross Lake trappers and with the Cross Lake Community Council.

The Cross Lake cadets, since its inception, have gained wide recognition across the country for the hundreds of young people who have joined and graduated from the corps. We are pleased to assist them on the construction—we were pleased to assist them on the construction of the cadet hall at Cross Lake.

The Province and Manitoba Hydro have agreed to work with community leadership on developing energy efficiency opportunities to benefit the people of Cross Lake. Despite hydro rates being equalized across the province nearly 15 years ago, many homes in the North are not energy efficient and need upgrading to reduce their electricity consumption and lower their energy bills. Existing Power Smart programs at Cross Lake will be extended to help address these challenges.

Cree spoken. Translation Unavailable.

In English, Mr. Speaker, I conclude, our government and Manitoba Hydro are committed to working with the leadership of Cross Lake and to build upon our relationship based on mutual respect, understanding, fairness and co-operation.

Thank you.

Mr. Ralph Eichler (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to rise today to address the statement from the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro concerning the people of Cross Lake and the impacts of Jenpeg generating station on those same people.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Cross Lake is located north of Nelson River where it crosses the lake. This area has for years been the centre of trading and cultural activities. Since September the Jenpeg generation station has been the subject of an occupation until an agreement was signed between Manitoba Hydro and the people of Cross Lake. It is important to note that any agreement is only the first step in continued discussions with the people of

Cross Lake and all Manitoba First Nations impacted by Manitoba Hydro developments.

On this side of the House we've been calling for caution and the proper review of hydro developments and for the NDP to respect the real owners of Manitoba Hydro, the people of Manitoba. That includes the people of Cross Lake.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for River Heights have leave to speak to the ministerial statement? *[Agreed]*

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, let me start by welcoming the signing of the agreement. I think it's potentially quite an important step forward and one that we should recognize here. It is a step forward after many, many previous attempts and, indeed, failures.

I was in Cross Lake a few weeks ago and had a lengthy discussion with the current chief, Cathy Merrick, of the problems that there have been, indeed, under this very government and the commitments that had not been met, particularly in and around 2002 when there were promises made at that time. So I would say with caution that it's going to be very important that we be very vigilant and make sure that this agreement is completed and addressed and meets the needs of the people of Cross Lake and, indeed, the people of Manitoba.

It was very apparent that one of the major concerns when I was in Cross Lake was the fact that there were extraordinarily high unemployment rates, and that part of what was addressed in the Northern Flood Agreement was a commitment to address those, that there had been, then, some commitments to address these in the early 2000s under this government but they had not been adequately met. And so clearly now as we move forward—and let's hope in a very positive way—it's important also to be vigilant and make sure that the commitments are actually met and that we're able to increase the employment and the employment opportunities for people in Cross Lake.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Any further ministerial statements?

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Seeing none, prior to oral questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the public gallery where we have this morning University of Manitoba Newcomers Program, we have 20 adult English language students under the direction of Wendy Erlanger, and this group is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Multiculturalism and Literacy (Ms. Marcelino).

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Manitoba Hydro-Bipole III Construction Costs and Rate Increases

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, the people of Cross Lake and the people of Manitoba are concerned about the escalating hydro costs in this province and, certainly, one of the reasons for those escalating costs is the bipole project, which the Premier said and his colleagues said when they campaigned for election last time in a massive media campaign, they said that, and I quote now, the fact is the bipole will not cost taxpayers a single cent. That's what they said.

The costs are actually quadrupled now over what they were estimated to be at that time, but, of course, the Premier continues to make the case that Manitobans won't be paying for any of this. Yet the CEO of Manitoba Hydro, Scott Thomson, disagrees and says that the actual costs will, of course, be borne by the ratepayers of Manitoba, the real owners of Manitoba Hydro, of course.

* (10:20)

So I have to ask the Premier: Who is right, Scott Thomson or he?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, in fact, the former CEO of Manitoba Hydro said the following: Ratepayers will pay for it over the life of the system and, of course, we'll have increased sales, so we'll probably come down at the end of the day to say export customers will probably pay for it. That was a statement made by former CEO Bob Brennan in 2007.

Our current CEO has said the following, Mr. Speaker. He has said exports are an important source of revenue for the corporation. Over the past decade, the revenue from exports exceeded the revenues

charged to domestic resident customers and has allowed us to keep domestic rates among the lowest in North America.

Mr. Speaker, the export sales bring down the cost of domestic rates for Manitobans and allow for important projects like this to be able to be paid for through export sales and keep Manitoba rates among the lowest in North America.

Mr. Pallister: When in doubt, the Premier quotes out-of-date facts that he claims support his argument, but a decade ago, the Bakken reserves weren't even beginning to be developed and the price of hydro was totally different than it is today. This government fails to adapt, and the Premier needs to revamp his talking points.

In Hansard, on April 13th just three years ago, Mr. Speaker, the Premier was quoted as saying, I always appreciate—in answer to a question about bipole—I always appreciate the opportunity to correct the record from the misinformation of the member opposite, my predecessor. He just gets his numbers wrong every single day. The cost of bipole is \$1.1 billion. That's what he said.

The cost of bipole is now \$4.6 billion, four times and rising. Manitobans are forking over millions of dollars in rate hikes, largely due to this boondoggle that this government is trying to persuade Manitobans makes sense when it makes no sense.

No expert in Manitoba Hydro recommended the west-side route. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, we're talking about billions of additional dollars of costs being incurred by this government unnecessarily in the interests of what? Producing a line that's 500 kilometres longer than necessary with the environmental and social impacts that entails and 25 per cent less effective at transmitting the hydro we need. It makes no sense; it's overt political manipulation.

Will the Premier, in the few remaining days he has the opportunity to do so, pull the plug on the bipole waste line?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, Manitobans deserve reliable, low-cost power in Manitoba. That is what they're getting. The—that is what they're getting.

The member—the Leader of the Opposition's plan to cancel the bipole would put the entire system at risk. It was in 1996—it was in 1996—when he was a member of the government that the two bipoles temporarily—existing bipoles through the Interlake

temporarily went out of service. What did he do about that? He ignored that issue. He was busy privatizing the telephone system.

The reliability of the system will put our—will allow us to ensure that we continue to have low-cost energy for residential customers, commercial customers and business customers. The reliability is the No. 1 issue.

And the escalating costs, Mr. Speaker, are primarily related to the converters. Converters are needed no matter where you build the 'pipole.'

The issue today is whether the Leader of the Opposition will build a bipole or will he cancel it. He said he will cancel it. That will put the entire system at risk again, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pallister: Well, the Premier's spent his credibility a long time ago, and the fact remains that the government of Manitoba is providing an unreliable, high-cost environment for all Manitobans, including Manitobans in Hydro. The east-side option was the consensus recommendation of the experts at Manitoba Hydro. That member, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger), overruled those recommendations in a letter he sent to Vic Schroeder, the chair.

So the fact is that the real costs to Manitobans have been—not been demonstrated or presented by the member opposite or his colleagues. In fact, they misrepresented them, when they claimed that the costs wouldn't be one cent, grossly.

Last year, 40 per cent of the rate hikes—and they were massive rate hikes, Mr. Speaker, that hurt Manitobans—40 per cent were due to the bipole waste line alone, and that's just the start. Many experts say those rates could double and even triple in coming years. Now, the government's plan to Americanize Manitoba Hydro means that Americans pay discount rates while Manitobans pay higher rates and take all the risks.

Will the Premier, in the few remaining days he has the opportunity to do so, will he pull the plug on the bipole line, and will he also admit that he misled the people of Manitoba in the last election on this issue in its entirety?

I'll table this now, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite puts many factual errors on the record.

Export sales have generated significant benefits for Manitoba ratepayers. The cost of hydro-electricity, home heating and auto insurance rates we have independently evaluated every year as a bundle, and they were the lowest in Canada. They are the lowest in Canada. That is a result of the fact that Crown corporations have provided good value for the people of Manitoba.

Primarily among those Crown corporations that have provided good value has been the business model of Manitoba Hydro building their electricity requirements ahead of their needs for domestic purposes, selling them into the export market. The profits from the export market have paid down the cost of the projects in Manitoba and kept the rates among the lowest in North America. It's like building your home and renting it out before you need it; that pays down the cost of the mortgage and allows you to have a lower cost access to your clean energy in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it's very clear that the member opposite does not understand the business model of Manitoba Hydro, and his desire to make sure that no hydro is ever exported from Manitoba would drive rates up very high. Full market rates for Manitobans would be the death knell of affordability for Manitoba Hydro in Manitoba.

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

NDP Cabinet Ministers Leadership Race

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, Mr. Speaker, the business model the government talks about ignores all the experts at Manitoba Hydro, and we had a lot more faith in those experts on doing the right thing for Manitoba Hydro than we ever will in that government.

The fact is that the average couple in Winnipeg pays \$3,200 more than the average couple in Regina in taxes, and so when the Premier speaks about his bungle, his bungle of low-priced options, he's talking about something that's about a fifth as important to Manitobans as what they get in tax return for their effort.

What choice do the poor NDP, remaining NDP members actually have in a leadership race, Mr. Speaker? They have a choice among blamers. The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) uses floods as photo ops, doesn't produce results for flood victims. When they protest, he threatens them with jail. The

member for St. Boniface (Mr. Selinger) learns that under his administration we have the worst results in education and he blames Gary Filmon for it; the kids weren't even born then. And the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald) suffers poll panic and she is the biggest spender with the worst results in health administration history.

Pity all these people. Pity these poor NDP members. They are three NDPs in a pod, Mr. Speaker. There is no choice.

I'd like the Premier to admit the fact that there is no option, that his party members have no choice when they select the next leader. He thinks it has to be him.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the only political party that had no choice for a leader last time is the members opposite. They had no choice whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, every year we publish The Manitoba Advantage for affordability. Manitoba remains in the top three for affordability across all different family types in Manitoba. No matter what their income, Manitobans have one of the most affordable places to live in Canada. Why is it affordable? Low electricity rates; low home heating costs; low auto insurance rates; good, strong consumer protection legislation in Manitoba; education taxes which have remained among the lowest in the country over the last decade; and a growing economy.

We have fueled, along with our partners in the private sector and our partners throughout Manitoba, one of the strongest economies in Canada, Mr. Speaker. Members opposite don't want to talk about that. In the top three for the economy over the last decade, forecasts coming out recently put us as high as No. 2 in the country.

We have a strong economic plan, building hydro for export and reliability, putting our infrastructure program in place, educating young people for the future. Those are the priorities of Manitobans, not the agenda of the member opposite, which is privatization and putting a damper on all the economic—

Mr. Speaker: The honourable First Minister's time has elapsed.

* (10:30)

NDP Leadership Convention Disclosure of Rules Request

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Now, well, his own Cabinet doesn't believe him, so why would we? Why would Manitobans, Mr. Speaker?

Three NDPs in a pod, they have no respect for the rules. The rules don't matter to them.

The MLA for Seine River broke every rule in the book, according to the Auditor General, on the air ambulance contract, didn't get value for money, wasted \$100 million on a photo opportunity, paid five times as much as Saskatchewan, broke the election laws during the last election. She doesn't care about the rules.

The MLA for St. Boniface takes three years to come clean on a Jets ticket, went to court to claim his own rules were wrong and that Manitobans shouldn't have a right to vote on the tax increase he proposed. They don't care about the rules, disallowed Manitobans from voting, for heaven's sake.

And the MLA for Thompson, the new leadership candidate, if he doesn't like the rules, he just makes new ones up.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is three peas in a pod—three peas in a pod—three NDPs in a pod. There is no choice for NDP members, and now they're even hiding the rules from each other.

Will the Premier commit to his own colleagues across the way, many of whom would like to see the rules for this imaginary leadership race, will he commit to them that at least, even though Manitobans won't see the rules, at least his own colleagues can see them?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition was a Cabinet minister when the largest vote-rigging scandal in the history of Manitoba was perpetrated on the citizens of Manitoba. I want to give him the opportunity today to get up and apologize for that vote-rigging scandal to the people of Manitoba. He never disclosed their activities then, he's never disclosed them since, and he's never apologized to the people of Manitoba for that vote-rigging scandal.

What is his commitment to the rules on a leadership race, on an election? He has no commitment. He hasn't even apologized for the mistakes of the past, Mr. Speaker. Shame on the Leader of the Opposition.

Former Cabinet Ministers Performance Record

Mr. Brian Pallister (Leader of the Official Opposition): Well, let's see, a \$300-million promise broken by this Premier just before the last election, the promise that he would not, what he called nonsense, in fact, the proposal that he would not raise the PST. He claimed he would not. That's a \$300-million vote-rigging scandal and he raises the \$3,000 alleged scandal from 20 years ago. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, where's the credibility in that guy? No wonder half his people want him gone.

Three NDPs in a pod, promises made, promises broken. The MLA for Thompson before the election preens for the cameras on a dike, promises everything to flood victims and, when they protest after, threatens them with jail.

The MLA for St. Boniface, pre-election promise to balance the books, Mr. Speaker. What happened to that promise? Massive deficits, more promises made, promises broken.

And the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald), Mr. Speaker, presided over the worst growth in wait times in the history of Manitoba health care and spent more than everyone else in getting those horrible results. The only job she created as Jobs minister was when she resigned, actually, one job was—or five by NDP math.

What choice do NDP members really have? They all promised not to raise the PST; they all voted for it. No real choice. A culture of blame, disrespect and deception, three NDPs in a pod. That's all, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, in—after that rant, I did not even detect a question. He lost his opportunity to detect a question.

We came here with a Throne Speech. The Throne Speech focused on infrastructure. One of the key items that we identified in the Throne Speech for infrastructure was to flow 7,500 cubic feet a second out of the north end of Lake Manitoba into Lake St. Martin where we will make the emergency channel permanent and flow an additional 7,500 cubic feet a second there to make sure all the communities in Lake St. Martin and Lake Manitoba are safe. That is our commitment.

We delivered on the floodway project for Winnipeg, taking it from one-in-99-year protection

to one-in-700-year protection. We brought the project in on time and below budget, Mr. Speaker.

We are now proceeding with major flood protection for the people in the Interlake, for the people in the Assiniboine valley, and what do the members opposite do? They say they will not support that project. They have no means to pay for it. They do not want to protect the people of Manitoba. They want to make idle rants with no questions at the end of it, Mr. Speaker.

Provincial Deficit Reduction Plan

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, this from a Premier whose own people say that his priorities are not the priorities of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, this new NDP Finance Minister says that he wants to eliminate the deficit by 2016-17. What he doesn't say is how he would do this when the Finance ministers who came before him failed so spectacularly on that account. The former Finance minister said that he would get that done by 2014, but instead we have a \$522-million deficit in this province because of the NDP.

I have repeatedly asked this new minister to reveal how he would succeed. He has declined to give a plan.

So I ask the minister again today, Manitobans deserve an answer, and I ask the new Finance Minister: How does an NDP government addicted to spending suddenly find half a million—half a billion dollars?

Hon. Greg Dewar (Minister of Finance): I thank the member for the question, Mr. Speaker. As I said publicly and in this House, our goal is to return to surplus by 2016-2017. We're doing it by managing our expenditures. We're finding efficiencies, but equally important, our goal is to grow the economy.

And I just want to correct the record. The other day I said we've got the third fastest growing economy in Canada. In fact, we have got the second fastest growing economy in Canada.

And we're not going to do what members opposite want us to do, that is, to cut \$550 million out of health care. We're not going to cut \$550 million out of education, and we're not going to kill our infrastructure program, Mr. Speaker, which is helping us grow our economy.

Mr. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, the goal of the Blue Bombers was to make the playoffs and that didn't happen either. You need more than a goal.

Mr. Speaker, the Finance Minister must recognize that this is a serious matter. When they get it wrong, Moody's Investors Service declines their outlook on Manitoba's economy and we all pay as a result.

The Finance Minister says he will eliminate the deficit by curbing spending, but I remind him that every core government of the NDP exceeded estimates every year since 2001. In fact, the cumulative core budget overspend for the NDP is \$3.4 billion, missed it by that margin.

Mr. Speaker, the takeaway—the takeaway—is that this government is immune to good financial practice. Spend more, get less.

Mr. Speaker, will the new Finance Minister identify one specific area in which he will reduce spending to get to \$522 million in savings?

Mr. Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I want to just remind the member opposite that this government balanced the budget 10 years in a row, and during that time we paid down debt, we protected core services.

As I said, our goal is to balance by 2016-2017. We're not going to do what they want us to do, and that is to cut \$550 million out of education, \$550 million out of health care.

I also want to remind the members that they made a commitment to return to balance in 2018-2019, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Friesen: Well, Mr. Speaker, that last response has economists everywhere scratching their heads, but the facts don't change. This new Finance Minister's staring down a \$522-million deficit and he has no plan.

Clearly he has two choices: he either cuts spending or he raises revenues. Now, the new Finance Minister put on the record that he would not curb spending in education, health care or infrastructure, so where is it going to come from? He has no plan that he has offered to this House or to Manitobans.

So it's clear to everyone that without a plan this new Finance Minister will go the way of his predecessors, wasteful spending without results.

Or is his reluctance to offer any information in this context due to the fact that his real plan is to raise the PST?

Mr. Dewar: As I said, Mr. Speaker, the—well, the member's missing the third way, and that is to grow the economy, what we're doing.

As I said, we now have the second highest—fastest growing economy in the nation. Next year we're predicted to grow at 3 per cent. Our unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the nation.

You know, when the members opposite were in government, the only reason, the only way they were able to balance the books is by selling off the Crown corporation Manitoba Telephone System, Mr. Speaker. That is not our plan here.

Infrastructure Spending Government Record

Mr. Reg Helwer (Brandon West): Well, Mr. Speaker, they're good at moving the goalpost. That's one thing I'll give them credit for.

* (10:40)

But we've seen many, many promises broken by this NDP government, especially when it comes to infrastructure. Let's see if we can track some of them.

They promised a two-to-one ratio of spending from the gas tax. Did not happen. They promised that every dime of the increased vehicle registration fees would go to roads and highways. Again, not one dime. They broadened the PST. Again, made more infrastructure promises. Again, not one new dime.

Of course, the big one, Mr. Speaker, the big one: Every cent, every dime, every dollar from the PST increase was to be spent on core infrastructure. Another promise, another lie. Over \$2.2 billion underspent on infrastructure over five years. Quite the five-year plan, quite the five-year failure, quite the lie.

Mr. Speaker, the end of promised—they promised again and again. We know that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has elapsed.

Hon. Steve Ashton (Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I'm extremely happy to be talking about infrastructure today.

This morning we had the breakfast where we gave awards to the construction industry, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association. And let

me tell you, Mr. Speaker, it was a great pleasure to basically present to the industry the fact that we had a record season this year, more than \$700 million invested in core infrastructure in this province, and we're anticipating even more investments in our infrastructure next year.

And I wonder, Mr. Speaker—I know the member opposite's from Brandon—I'm wondering how he gets home to Brandon. Has he not seen what's happening on Highway 1, the tremendous work we're doing on Highway 1? Has he not seen the work we're doing on Victoria Avenue in Brandon? Has he not taken a drive to Saskatchewan?

By the way, for the Bombers, watch out for next year.

Mr. Helwer: It's hard to fit all the broken promises and lies into one question. There's the problem, Mr. Speaker.

You know, they promised that anything underexpended is going to be moved into the next year on infrastructure, but we know that's not possible. They know that's not possible under GAAP and PSAP. Unspent funds are returned to Treasury and the NDP continues to run a deficit. Yet another lie, Mr. Speaker. Manitobans have been paying more, much more, and getting much less under this minister.

Recently, the member from Seine River said that projects are 'prioritized' depending on who the Premier (Mr. Selinger) likes. Is that how the five-year plan works, changes every day?

Will the minister just admit that the infrastructure plan changes every day depending on who the Premier likes?

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, this government likes Brandon. The investments in Highway 1 all the way to Saskatchewan—in fact, I can promise the member opposite here, because of the investments by this government, supported by at least one of the Brandon MLAs, he'll actually even be able to get home to Brandon quicker because we're going to be raising the speed limit to 110 because we've upgraded Highway 1.

The member opposite should also know we like other areas of the province too. I look at southern Manitoba where we're now paving Highway 10 in terms of major work to Boissevain all the way up to Flin Flon. He can take Highway 6. Looking forward to driving home, Mr. Speaker, because actually it's

the end of construction season, so we've got now all that improved highway without the construction delays.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is we like all Manitobans. That's why we have historic investment in infrastructure throughout this province.

Mr. Helwer: Well, once again, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are paying more, much, much more, under this NDP and getting less. They lied about the PST increase, each and every one of them, at the door prior to the last election.

Now they pretend they have a plan, but we see it depends upon the whim of the Premier (Mr. Selinger). You know, even just last session the minister stated that he didn't know where they were going to be paving next. Is that because he was waiting for the Premier to decide who he would favourite next?

Will the minister just admit that the annual five-year plan is just the whim of the Premier, or perhaps the candidate for premier?

Mr. Ashton: You know, I think the member from Brandon West has got to get out a little bit more, Mr. Speaker, and if he's not going to pay attention to what's happening on Highway 1 on his drive home, I suggest he might want to take a trip with his seatmate, the member for Morris (Mr. Martin), and look at the work we've done on Highway 75. Might want to meet with the mayor from Morris, the reeve from Morris, and talk about the announcement that took place last Friday, the more than \$200 million that's going to bring us up to interstate standards in terms of flood protection.

Now, if that doesn't work, Mr. Speaker, I could take him on a tour around the Perimeter Highway where we're making major improvements on the southwest Perimeter right now.

In fact, I could take him on a tour pretty well anywhere in the province and you will see major construction, because this government is doing what members opposite never did. We're putting a major emphasis on infrastructure, core infrastructure throughout the province. It's historic, Mr. Speaker.

The real question is, when will members opposite get on board?

STARS Helicopter Service Contract Tendering Process

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): This NDP government was so anxious to have a shiny red prop for the last election that they didn't do their proper homework, then they rushed out and they didn't tender for a helicopter ambulance. Because of that, Manitoba taxpayers got hosed and they're forced to pay almost all of the \$15-million annual cost, excessively more than what the Saskatchewan taxpayers pay for the very same service. Classic example of pay more, get less, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to ask this new Minister of Health: Will she prop up the poor decision of her predecessor, or will she admit that her predecessor made a mistake by not tendering the contract and by not doing her homework?

Hon. Sharon Blady (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for the question.

Emergency care is one of the most crucial things that we can provide to Manitobans, crucial care that comes within that golden hour that we all know about, and in working with Manitobans to ensure that the best care came at the most crucial time, choices were made to ensure that there were no gaps in emergent services at a time that Manitobans needed it most.

We have been working continuously and diligently with all partners in emergent services to ensure that the best services were available at the best time, and we will continue to do so to make sure that every Manitoban gets the care that we each want for our families.

Mrs. Driedger: I'll remind the Minister of Health that we have the longest ER waits in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the former minister of Health, the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald), estimated that between 600 to 800 patient transports would occur annually with the ambulance helicopter; however, she refused to table the feasibility study on this. But based on the estimated 600 to 800 transports a year, she committed to a 10-year, \$159-million deal through the untendered contract.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health to tell us: Has there been 600 to 800 transports a year, as her predecessor adamantly guaranteed that there would be?

Ms. Blady: Again, I would like to thank the member for the question.

Mr. Speaker, air ambulance is front-line health care. We know how important this service is to families across Manitoba, especially in rural Manitoba, and, again, getting a highly skilled medical professional to the patient as quickly as possible can make all the difference, which is one of the reasons why we did invest in STARS, and the focus is on working with STARS, with the WRHA and communities across Manitoba to ensure that we are using this valuable resource the best way possible for patients.

Again, the flood experience of 2011 meant that we were placed under, again, tight circumstances with people's lives at risk. We contracted with STARS based on their experience in Alberta and Saskatchewan and our experience in both the—

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

Mrs. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, it was the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald), who now thinks she should be premier, that signed, sealed and delivered the untendered contract.

Mr. Speaker, it was jaw-dropping the other day to find out through the latest freedom of information that only 41 patients have been transported this year, not 600, not 800, 41 patients for a \$159-million contract. That's almost \$400,000 per transport.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Health: Does she agree that this untendered contract is a spectacular failure of incompetence by her renegade colleague and her NDP government?

*(10:50)

Ms. Blady: I'd like to thank the member again for the question.

We believe it is our responsibility to act prudently on behalf of Manitobans and to make sure that they have access to life-saving services.

The Health Department did spend months in negotiations with STARS developing the service purchase agreement. The contract is \$10 million annually and has the requirement to have a helicopter on standby 24-7 to serve Manitobans who require this service.

I don't know what the member opposite would like to say to the 41 people whose lives that service did save.

Manitoba Student Aid Program Loan Status Error Notifications

Mr. Wayne Ewasko (Lac du Bonnet): In April 2011 in Estimates, the member from Morris stated, Manitoba Student Aid inaccurately reported to the credit agency Equifax that 1,500 students had defaulted on their student loan payments when, in fact, they had paid their loans in full. The minister of Advanced Education admitted at the time that she was aware of the error and thanked a student for bringing it to their attention—a student, Mr. Speaker. This government was hoping that it was just going to go away.

I'd like to ask this Minister of Education: How many thousands of students' credit ratings has this dysfunctional government destroyed?

Hon. Peter Bjornson (Minister of Education and Advanced Learning): I know that there are approximately 27,000 students who have student loans right now. But what's different between those student loans today and those student loans as of last week is the fact that very soon they will be carrying zero interest on those student loans.

And as far as the credit ratings for those same students, those students are eligible for a rebate in their income taxes with the student rebate when they get jobs in Manitoba, when they call Manitoba home, and they'll be getting a head start by virtue of those rebates, all measures which members opposite voted against.

What were the credit ratings like for students who were getting tuition fee increases of 132 per cent when they were members of the government?

Mr. Ewasko: Mr. Speaker, I don't quite understand how a lower credit rating is a good head start for students of Manitoba.

This spend-more, get-less government knows nothing of accountability and continues to blame others. According to their own minister's words, they waited—they wanted the credit rating company to contact the students. This government didn't contact any of them. Now more students are coming forward after finding out that they can't borrow money at the financial institutions.

How can students trust this dysfunctional government?

Mr. Bjornson: When I was a student in university in the 1980s, I could not get a student loan because of

my car. We've eliminated that restriction now for students, and it's kind of counterintuitive that you would penalize people for owning a car, from rural Manitoba, who are going to drive back and forth to make money to go to school or to go home and see their families on weekends. But we've changed that.

We've also supported students with reinvesting in bursaries and scholarships, which they cut. We've also supported students by investing in education, period, from K to 12 but also in the post-secondary system, which they cut.

And I will stand by our record any day and I would ask the member opposite to ask students how they feel about their ability to get student loans today and what it means to have zero per cent interest on their student loans.

Mr. Ewasko: And I invite the minister to read Hansard from the spring. It was actually our idea to get rid of the car incentive. [*interjection*] So read it. Read it. You know it's right.

The Minister of Education continues to stand in this House and crow about the interest-free student loans, but Manitobans know they can't trust this tired and self-serving spenDP government. This announcement is nothing more than a cover-up and a vote-buying exercise.

Will the minister today admit that his predecessor the member of Southdale mismanaged the department and that he is vote buying and covering up so that they won't have to go to court yet again, or is it all of the above?

Mr. Bjornson: Well, it was their idea to cut funding to education in the 1990s. It was their idea to get rid of scholarships and bursaries in the 1990s. It was their idea to allow student tuitions to increase by over 130 per cent in the 1990s. If they did have one good idea, congratulations to you for that, but as far as the rest of education and their vision for education, look at the alternative throne speech that they presented.

We have seven pages of ideas for education. We've announced three of them already. We have more to announce. They had nothing in their alternative throne speech about education except the way up for students was to cut spending by 1 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Then they'll stand up and say we're not spending enough on education.

I'll stand by our ideas every single day to their one good idea, Mr. Speaker.

Zebra Mussel Infestation Legislation Timeline

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, on July 31st Manitoba Liberals called for an early September sitting of the Manitoba Legislature. We repeated this call on September 1st with evidence of widespread zebra mussel presence in Lake Winnipeg because we recognized that there was a need to act quickly with legislation to effectively prevent the spread of zebra mussels to any of Manitoba's other 100,000 lakes. Today's NDP did not act then.

Why did the Premier delay this extremely short legislative sitting to late November when it would be too late for the critical legislation to have been in place to have an impact this fall on preventing zebra mussel spread to other lakes?

Hon. Greg Selinger (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the zebra mussel issue is a very important issue. Action is already being taken. The member knows that.

There were treatments provided in the Lake Winnipeg area to reduce the incidence of zebra mussels. Additional measures are being put in place to reduce the risk of transporting zebra mussels into our jurisdiction. The minister has promised very tough regulations and legislation.

But the member needs to know action is being taken this summer, this fall and will continue to ensure that we reduce the risk of zebra mussels spreading in any of our lakes in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, today's NDP government failed to prevent zebra mussels from causing catastrophic problems in Lake Winnipeg, in spite of a lot of fanfare, I might add.

Today's NDP government knew this past August that their plan to eliminate zebra mussels in Lake Winnipeg had failed, and yet they did not call the legislative session early to put legislation in place to protect the other 100,000 lakes from infestation by zebra mussels this fall as people were moving their boats around.

Why was today's NDP government so slow to act when Liberals were calling for action months ago?

Mr. Selinger: Mr. Speaker, we have been acting.

In fact, we've trained canine units to detect zebra mussels and to perform these detection blitzes during peak periods. We've added more decontamination

units to our current ones to ensure zebra mussels are not transferred between lakes and boats. We've done education programs with people that are involved in boating, recreational as well as commercial in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, and we've used what we call potash treatments in the lake to reduce the incidence of zebra mussels.

Mr. Speaker, we've been taking action while the Liberals have been spouting rhetoric.

Mr. Gerrard: Monsieur le Président, le gouvernement NPD était en retard d'aborder la question des moules zébrées dans le lac Winnipeg. Il est clair que c'était très important d'agir rapidement pour prévenir l'infestation des moules zébrées dans beaucoup de nos autres lacs. Il était essentiel que le projet de loi a été adopté avant l'automne alors que les gens prenaient leurs bateaux de lac Winnipeg à d'autres endroits.

Pourquoi le gouvernement a-t-il attendu jusqu'à la fin du mois de novembre à introduire la législation nécessaire qui aurait pu et aurait dû être adoptée au début du mois de septembre?

Translation

Mr. Speaker, the NDP government was late in addressing the issue of zebra mussels in Lake Winnipeg. It's clear that it was very important to act quickly to prevent zebra mussel infestation in many of our other lakes. It was essential for the bill to be adopted before the fall sitting, while people were moving their boats from Lake Winnipeg to other locations.

Why did the government wait until the end of November to introduce the necessary legislation that could have and should have been adopted at the beginning of September?

Mr. Selinger: Monsieur le Président, nous avons pris l'action directe chaque—dans chaque période où il y a une risque d'une manifestation de zebra mussels dans nos lacs. Nous avons mis en place les unités pour la protection des bateaux. Nous avons pris les mesures d'éducation et de formation de nos utilisateurs du lac avec leurs bateaux commerciaux et pour les—la récréation aussi. Nous avons pris l'action chaque semaine que la saison était ouvert de mettre en place les mesures à réduire l'incidence de zebra mussels dans nos lacs.

Les Libéraux, ils ont fait la rhétorique. Nous avons pris l'action directe et on le—on est en train de le faire même plus chaque semaine en ordre de

protéger nos lacs des manifestations et des infestations des zebra mussels ici au Manitoba.

Translation

Mr. Speaker, we took direct action every time there was a risk of zebra mussels showing up in our lakes. We put in place the units for protecting the boats. We took measures to educate and train our lake users with their commercial vessels and for recreational craft, as well. We took action every week that the season was open to put measures in place for reducing the incidence of zebra mussels in our lakes.

The Liberals, they spouted rhetoric. We took direct action and we are taking even more each week in order to protect our lakes from the manifestation and infestation of zebra mussels here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Time for oral questions has expired.

* (11:00)

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

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

Bill Siemens

Mr. Cameron Friesen (Morden-Winkler): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the attention of this House to Mr. Bill Siemens, who was inducted into the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame this past spring. Bill is a distinguished Manitoban whose lifetime of leadership and service to his community and the agricultural industry represents the very best of Manitoba's vibrant prairie spirit.

Mr. Speaker, 1995 marked Bill's first foray into farming. That year, he purchased 80 acres near his boyhood home of Kronsthal and obtained a diploma in agriculture from U of M. Bill married MaryAnne, and together they raised two daughters, Bev and Kelly. Bill expanded his farming operations over the years and, in 1976, he incorporated the farm to the family-held corporation as W. J. Siemens Farming Co. Ltd.

Initiative, entrepreneurialism and hard work ensured prosperity on the farm in Rosetown under Bill's guidance. As a testament to Bill's emphasis on family, the Siemens farming company now spans three generations.

Bill's leadership in agriculture has had an impact across the country. He served as president of the World Association of Beet and Cane Growers, as

well as president of the Keystone Vegetable Producers Association.

Above all, Bill's values of family, community and service have earned him deep respect. Bill's community of involvement—record of involvement in the community includes serving with community economic development organizations and as board chair of Grandeur Housing in Winkler. Bill served as a key member of the Winkler Heritage and Horticultural Society, where he spearheaded the development of the Bethel Heritage Park.

Bill has been recognized with many awards, including the Governor General's commemorative medal in 1993 and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. He received an honorary membership of the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists in 1993 and, in 2011, Winkler honoured him with the Citizen of the Year Award.

I am pleased and honoured to congratulate Bill on his induction to the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame, and I wish him continued success and every happiness in the years to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate

Mr. Jim Rondeau (Assiniboia): Monsieur le Président, students at Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate in my constituency are excited about a major expansion and renovation of their school's welding shop thanks to the Manitoba government. Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate was built in 1970 as a technical vocational school and now serves roughly 1,200 to 1,300 students.

Since the merger of the two schools, Sturgeon and Silver Heights, Sturgeon heights offers students a wide range of courses from international baccalaureate program, French programming, band, graphic arts, hair styling. The school works very, very hard so that every student has a range of programs and can reach their full potential.

Our government is committed to ensuring that young people have the opportunities to learn and develop the skills they need to get a great job right here in Manitoba. Right now, for example, welders are in high demand across our province; industry is requiring these skilled people. It's also a very rewarding career for many young people. The Province will provide funding to completely renovate the school's current welding shop. They're building a new 2,700 square foot addition which

means the school will be able to accept more students into the popular welding program. These renovations will ensure our welding students are working in a state-of-art facility that meets industry standards.

This is key, since the students graduating from this program will leave high school with their level 1 of the Provincial Industrial Welding Apprenticeship Program, giving them a head start on the traditional apprenticeship system. It will also allow Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate to help connect even more people with labour-market demand and excellent jobs that we are creating with industry.

Collège Sturgeon Heights Collegiate strives to meet the needs of their students, and it's great news for every parent who wants their child to have the best possible chance in a rewarding career. The physical improvements to the school will help students gain better education in today's economy.

In closing, I would like to also acknowledge the choir and band programs that put on an excellent concert last night that I attended. The performance was very enjoyable and raised funds for juvenile diabetes. This is an excellent school. This is a school that's connecting the community and doing great work for their students and the community in general. I'd like to commend the students and staff of Collège Sturgeon Heights.

Residents of Pierson

Mr. Doyle Piwniuk (Arthur-Virden): It's my pleasure today to rise to commend the people of Pierson, Manitoba, in the RM of Edward.

On the weekend of June 28th, 2014, without warning or chance of preparation, Pierson experienced extreme rainfall, up to 12 inches onto an area that was still saturated from the flooding from the previous month. As a result, the residents of Pierson were marooned for over four days. Nearly every bridge in every direction was closed or totally destroyed.

The RM councillors, staff and a multitude of volunteers stepped up to pump water in order to keep sewer lines from backing up. They provided and prepared food for everyone in need and worked around the clock to attempt to keep their community safe and operable. The community was virtually consumed by overland flooding from Jackson Creek, Graham Creek, Gainsborough Creek and Antler Creek. Not only were people stranded, but livestock as well.

During the time, the residents of Pierson attempted to contact EMO, government officials, STARS air ambulance and the RCMP in desperate appeal to secure help and support, and to ensure that the emergency medical services would be available to their residents. On June 29th, 2014, the RM of Edward declared a state of emergency and asked the government to send out the army to help them sandbag. The Province denied their request.

Mr. Speaker, in total, 17 families were evacuated from their homes. Tragically, a number of them had no homes to return to after the water had dissipated. They had been destroyed by the flood. This may be prevented if the government took any action at all.

Pierson is a small community with a large oil and agriculture industry. It provides the Province with an abundance of tax—provincial tax revenue from these key Manitoba industries; however, when they needed help, the government turned a blind eye on the residents of Pierson.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and sincerely thank the people of Pierson for their courage and true leadership, something that was and remains clearly unreflective of this government. Thank you.

Support for Veterans

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): It was an honour to represent the Province at recent Remembrance Day ceremonies at two of our areas' legions. I was honoured to place a wreath at the earlier ceremony at Elmwood Legion No. 9 held at Elmwood Cemetery. This year marked the 100th anniversary of the beginning of World War I and the cold, brisk and sunny morning and the playing of the Last Post had a particularly poignant feel to it. It was great to see so many brave souls pay tribute to the many generations of men and women who sacrificed so much for our freedoms that we too often take for granted.

Prince Edward Legion No. 81 held their ceremonies at St. Alphonsus School for the second year in a row, and it was a full house once again, standing room only. President David Harper and Poppy Chairman Glenn Walker and their many volunteers helped to make Prince Edward Legion ceremonies a memorable one as well. It was great to see the 177 Air Canada Royal Canadian Air Cadets out for a second year.

One of Prince Edward's veterans attending the ceremonies was Jack Sinnott, bombardier in the artillery. Mr. Sinnott enlisted when he was 20 years

old in 1943 and began his service in the European theatre on the Juno Beach on D-Day, or, as he says, quote, his free trip of Europe.

Legions like Prince Edward and Elmwood do important fundraising and work hard to recruit new members while the federal government continues to fail in delivering crucial front-line care to veterans. Soldiers often come home with complex needs and sometimes that includes post-traumatic stress disorder.

We owe a tremendous debt to our veterans and military personnel and they deserve our unwavering support. Thank you to our veterans and military personnel. We are all grateful for your service.

Richard "Dick" Walker

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development): Volunteers form the backbone of any strong community. Those who are dedicated their time and energy towards the good whole community need to be recognized as the real life superheroes they are.

* (11:10)

This year, on September the 23rd—of September 23rd, Richard Walker passed away. Known to his friends, as a family, as Dick Walker, this man dedicated his life to volunteerism and to the community of Swan River. Throughout his life Mr. Walker served as a member and a president of the Swan River Rotary for over 20 years and the Swan River Agricultural Society for over 50 years. He also worked tirelessly as a volunteer for Ducks Unlimited for 30 years. Mr. Walker was town councillor in Swan River from 1972 to 1980 and after that continued to sit on the Swan River parks and recreation committee.

As an avid outdoor sportsperson and enthusiast, Mr. Walker pushed for the construction of the Richardson wellness centre which provides programming like swimming classes and aquafit sessions for all year round. Mr. Walker was also the visionary and the driving force behind the establishment of the Duck Mountain Forest Centre. He lobbied local businesses and government in support of an education centre for—to offer five hiking trails and information about the Duck Mountain Provincial Forest for those who love to explore the beautiful province of Manitoba.

For the work this man has done for the Swan Valley, he was well respected by all. He was

honoured by the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal in 2012 for his significant contribution to the community. This spring, our First Minister presented Mr. Walker with the Volunteer Service Award for his exceptional work as a volunteer. Yet, even with all those inspiring contributions, Mr. Walker remained humbled in characteristics and the greatest tradition to our community leaders.

My condolences go out to Mr. Walker's family, his wife, Yvonne, his sons, Bob, Gordon and their families.

When we lose someone as great as Mr. Dick Walker, I believe the best way we can honour their memory is to try and do our best to 'eliminate' their strengths. We will remember Mr. Dick for his passion, his energy and commitment to our community for a long time.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to moving on to orders of the day, I'd like to inform the House that we were advised by Legislative Counsel this morning that they had inadvertently put the name of a different minister on notice for bringing forward Bill 10, which you would see in your Order Paper today. Instead of filing the bill on notice in the name of the honourable Minister of Municipal Government (Mr. Caldwell), the bill was put on notice in the name of the honourable Minister of Tourism, Culture, Heritage and Sport and Consumer Protection. We will correct this and ensure that the name of the correct minister is listed on Monday's Order Paper. That's for the information of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THRONE SPEECH

(Sixth Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Now we'll proceed to orders of the day, government business, and to resume the adjourned debate on the motion proposed by the honourable member for Wolseley (Mr. Altemeyer) and the amendment thereto, standing in the name of the Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, who has 17 minutes remaining.

Hon. Eric Robison (Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs): Yesterday I was—I believe I left off on talking about some of the horrific experiences that were experienced by children that were adopted out under what we commonly refer to as the '60s scoop. And many of these children who are now adults were taken away to foreign environments

away from their communities, away from their reserves, and I believe that we have to do whatever we can possible to help these people—these survivors, I'll say—of the horrific experiences that they underwent. And a lot of them are experiencing post-traumatic stress disorders as well, and, like residential school students, we must make every effort to work with these people.

With that in mind, I am going to be convening a working group that I'm going to be participating in, as well, with a group of about four of these people and find ways that there would be a road forward and there be a better tomorrow for a lot of these people that have experienced negative experiences in the past of being physically, spiritually, psychologically, sexually abused in the environments that some of them went through.

Not all stories, like the residential school system, are bad. Some had positive experiences, of course, but I believe, for the most part, a lot of them lost a sense of who they were as Aboriginal people.

I'd like to note that this week, as well, our government introduced legislation, and I'd like to thank my colleague the Minister of Culture for sponsoring that legislation that allows the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and their records be stored at the University of Manitoba while protecting the identity and privacy of survivors. Certainly myself, whatever story I'm going to tell, the Indian residential school adjudicators and the people that are there in order for us to fulfill that gap that's still missing in our lives because a lot of us are still holding a bit of hurt on some of the experiences that we endured, and we haven't told everything. We keep some things deeply hidden, and, regrettably, a lot of people have died not to tell their entire stories of the negative experiences that they endured while in the care of these residential schools. So we are very happy about the TRC's efforts in maintaining that.

Coleen Rajotte, a noted reporter and storyteller, producer of films, and Chief Francine Meeches, whom I regard to be a tremendous leader from the Swan Lake First Nation, represented the views and the things that they heard to the final hearing in Alberta a few months ago of the outcome of the '60s scoop round table that we sponsored here in the city of Winnipeg. And, of course, we have the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report expected to come out next June. And we had this faith that there'll be some valid recommendations and I hope that, unlike

reports of the past, that there is a forward movement on many of the recommendations that'll be made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Truly, it's a past that was huge in its scope and its mandate. They held several national events in different cities across Canada, heard from many Aboriginal people that attended residential schools but, in addition, also heard from people that endured the negative experiences of being adopted out. Not only that, but residential schools, in some cases, also sponsored experimental activities on nutrition of Aboriginal people, and that happened in the '40s in the community that I was born at, in Norway House, and that came out by some research that—done by Professor Ian Mosby, and I recall speaking on that issue when the information was first made public.

Also, as I said, a lot of our young men who were young at that time were used, or some of these facilities, these residential schools were used as recruitment centres to train many of the young Indian people at that time, the young Indian men, to be soldiers, to serve this country during wartime because a lot of them were in the schools when the wars broke out, World War I and World War II and Korea.

But what is important to say, Mr. Speaker, is that over a century while the residential schools lasted, they expect the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to complete its work in a period of five and—it was the effort of this government and colleagues on this side of the House that we made our best efforts in ensuring that at least it be extended by another year. I believe that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission should continue for another—at the very least another 10 years.

* (11:20)

And, at some point, I believe we should have an all-party resolution coming from this House to say that to the federal government. How can you eliminate over a century of hurt and assimilation if—efforts towards a people and expect to correct that wrong in a period of five, six years? So I would expect that all members will be of a common and decent mind to do that from this Chamber.

I was pleased that our government is working with First Nations on a new First Nations safety officer program and I want to thank my colleague the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General (Mr. Allum). This is going to be providing police services on reserves and this is really a—we have no other way

of putting it, but an abandonment of responsibility by the federal government on an issue, and it was largely because of interventions made by First Nations leaders in the province of Manitoba that our government decided to take over the program to the best of our ability.

In the meantime, the federal government will still continue funding it to a large degree, but the funding itself has to be increased by the federal government as well because in order for the band constables—and we'll call them peace officers because that's really what they are. They—this ending of a more than 30-year Band Constable Program by the federal government has left First Nations lacking a very essential and basic program, and they have helped law enforcement people, whether it's RCMP, the RCMP or other law agencies, to keep the peace in many of our communities.

So I'm happy that our government can play a small role in ensuring that this program continues, and if anybody's ever been on a reserve and they've—if they've talked with these guys, you can see how underfunded they are. They don't have the proper equipment that other law enforcement agencies have, and it's regrettable that they don't have the basic—in one case, one community I recall, they didn't even have the appropriate flashlights. They didn't have the appropriate vehicle to get around to patrol the community. So a lot of work has to be done in that regard, and I want to see that the federal government lives up to its responsibility in that respect.

I was also going to mention that we're continuing our retrofit initiative in the Island Lake communities, which consist of Wasagamack, St. Theresa Point, Garden Hill and Red Sucker Lake, which has seen over 300 homes obtain indoor water services for the first time. Now, that's really unfortunate, as well, that in the year 2014 that some of our fellow Canadians still don't have basic running water in their homes, and we have to be as vigilant as ever, whether we're a provincial government, a First Nations government or a federal government, that we try and correct these wrongs that continue to exist. We are doing our best, obviously, through training efforts in those communities that I mentioned, and as I said, we are going to be continuing this very successful retrofit project.

We're also going to be expanding the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative, which already has had 1,000 gardens and 80 communities partnering with the Province, and later this year we'll be expanding

support in reducing food costs in a number of northern communities which have been ignored by the federal Nutrition North Canada program.

Also, we'll continue to work with the community of Churchill on a number of projects to increase economic development through the Port of Churchill, Canada's only northern seaport, with the Kivalliq Region, particularly, of Nunavut and the Hudson Bay regional roundtable. This took some effort. We proposed, along with the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation (Mr. Ashton) and our discussions with Mayor Mike Spence, that we invite the mayors of the towns of Gillam, Churchill, the First Nations communities of Fox Lake and Tadoule Lake, that they work with us in re-establishing a partnership with the communities in the Kivalliq district of the territory of Nunavut, communities like Arviat, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake and other communities that I may not have mentioned.

But the idea is that Churchill continues to play its role as being the hub and also the gateway to the Arctic. So we have made every effort to continue doing that work with those communities.

And we believe the Port of Churchill has many uses, and we talked about this at the AMM conference that was held this week at the—in Winnipeg, and we're very happy about the enthusiasm being displayed. Ministers on this side, including the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation and I, are in regular contact with the ministers of the Nunavut government, ministers like Tom Sammurtook and George Kuksuk. We communicate with these people on a regular basis to ensure that the momentum is not lost. And the Kivalliq and the Norman—or northern Manitoba—mayors and the chiefs, and the mayors from the hamlets of the Kivalliq district, their next meeting will be in Winnipeg in the month of April, I believe, and we are going to be, again, talking and promoting the idea further about the relationship.

It makes natural sense that in northern Manitoba, Churchill and, certainly before that, York Factory in centuries gone by and in our history as Manitoba, that this was the initial place of trade and commerce. And we believe that that has to be, again, worked upon, and we must value our neighbours in the territory of Nunavut, that we continue our two-way relationship, our 'crade' and joint opportunities.

And we have some business opportunities with the territory of Nunavut. They would like to, obviously, obtain power, the technology that we have

here in Manitoba with hydroelectricity, because they are embarking upon mining activities as well in Nunavut, such as we are, led by our Minister responsible for Mineral Resources, and he's done a great job in expanding northern Manitoba in that respect. So the territory of Nunavut is also exploring these opportunities, and they will need our technology, and that, of course—that technology is our electricity and the capacity to perhaps run a line from Churchill to the Kivalliq district communities where they require this hydroelectricity.

So northerners are providing services and training in the North that were once lacking. And in the last—since 1999, we have made northern Manitoba feel a part of the province of Manitoba. We have held preliminary discussions with leaders from northern communities. We are going to be embarking upon some discussions with people that are involved in the boreal forest initiative, to have that designated as a world heritage location. We're going to be involving them in jointly developing a northern Manitoba vision, a northern vision, Mr. Speaker, that includes the communities of Thompson, Leaf Rapids and these other communities that ordinarily have never been solicited for their advice. So it expands our Northern Development Strategy, which we introduced some time ago.

* (11:30)

So our northern opportunities initiative is giving hope, I believe, for communities that lacked a voice in past development. And we look forward to many more partnerships with northerners in the years ahead. And, certainly, Mr. Speaker, you have travelled with me in the past to some northern communities and you know the potential that exists there. Northern Manitoba is simply not hydro; it's simply not that. There is much more to northern Manitoba than just that. There are many opportunities—

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

Mr. Cliff Cullen (Spruce Woods): I thank you for the opportunity to speak on the 2014 Speech from the Throne, as presented by today's NDP.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting time in Manitoba politics, and I certainly welcome the opportunity to represent the great people of Spruce Woods in south-central, southwestern Manitoba. And I'm going to give my presentation this morning as—

and some of the feedback that I'm hearing from my constituents in that area of the province.

And, you know, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, they are aware that there is a Throne Speech on and we are debating it, but I think they're more focused on what's going on within the government today. And I think they're interested in what's happened with the government, and sort of that would appear to be a dysfunctional government at this point in time. And obviously that raises concerns with many Manitobans in terms of the ability of the current NDP government to keep their eye on the ball in terms of governing the province of Manitoba and, at the same time, dealing with the apparent conflicts within the party.

Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

And certainly there's disagreements over there in terms of the leadership, and they probably are focused on that sort of a—the leadership review that is currently under way.

We do have a lot of issues in Manitoba, and clearly I want to pick up on some of the comments of my colleague from Arthur-Virden in terms of the flooding situation that we experienced this past summer.

Clearly, we had a major flood in 2011 that we haven't really recovered from. There certainly is a lot of issues around the 2011 flood that have to be addressed. Certainly, if people have ongoing disaster financial assistance claims being processed, we're hoping the government will move forward to get those issues addressed. Certainly I don't think the government recognizes that a lot of those situations still haven't been addressed from 2011. Clearly, now that we had a situation again with the excess moisture in 2014 that impacted a huge part of western Manitoba—and, again, we hadn't really addressed all the issues from 2011 flood, so it really made things more complicated this year.

And certainly when we had a—the opportunity to tour that part of the province during the summer, there certainly is a lot of damage there; a lot of crop did not get in and a lot of crop that was put in was damaged after the heavy rains. And that certainly has an impact on the economy of the region, and certainly impacts a lot of individual producers quite dramatically.

And especially those producers that live along—the Assiniboine valley, we know there is legislation in place that is supposed to compensate

producers south of the Shellmouth when they're impacted by artificial flooding. And, unfortunately, those producers have not been compensated from 2011, 2012, and again this year in 2014. So it is unfortunate. I know the government likes to hide behind the legislation that they introduced, and it is very unfortunate producers have not been compensated for a number of years from the artificial flooding in that region.

And I've talked to some producers this year who have been impacted year after year after year, and it obviously will have a—has a very detrimental impact on their bottom line financially. And a lot of these producers are now facing very difficult decisions in terms of whether they're going to go ahead and continue to farm, and makes it very difficult. And they have very difficult decisions to make, whether they're going to continue to farm or what they're going to do.

Now, there was an interesting article just a couple of days ago in the Free Press. Jim Collinson, a well-known environmental person who's spent some time at UNESCO, did a lot of work with UNESCO and certainly well-versed on the impacts of climate and those sort of issues. And his article in the Free Press certainly dealt with the flooding that happened this year and in previous years, and certainly the impacts on the Assiniboine valley basin. And his point was in regard to the formation of the Assiniboine valley initiative, the basin initiative where we're trying to get the—all the people that are involved in the basin together to have a look at how we better manage water in the Assiniboine basin. And he makes some very good points in his article, you know, relative to discussions with other jurisdictions, and it's something that we really haven't had, is a really good discussion with other jurisdictions and it's very important for us as Manitobans because we're at the bottom or that particular basin.

I had an opportunity to attend a conference in New Brunswick this summer and I was asked to present on the flooding in Manitoba, and a lot of legislators across the province had heard about the flooding in Manitoba but maybe weren't aware of the impacts of flooding to the average Manitobans and how it impacted them. And I don't think they understood the waterways and how all the waterways from, you know, Saskatchewan and Alberta, North Dakota, Minnesota impact what happens in Manitoba. And it was a good opportunity to have a discussion, and at that time I raised the issue of the

Red River—sorry, Assiniboine valley basin initiative, so we could get all the players at the table and, hopefully, have a bigger plan in terms of how we manage water into the future.

And it seemed to be pretty well received and it was nice to—I know our MP, Larry Maguire, also was pushing this initiative as well, and it was good to see the meeting finally take place in Regina. I know the Province finally came to the table after years of kicking and screaming and not wanting to have a dialogue with our neighbours, but at least they're finally at the table now, and, hopefully, they will spend some time and spend some due diligence in terms of looking at that particular initiative. And, hopefully, they will move forward with some positive water management strategies for all of us in Manitoba.

There's certainly a lot of issues that we can talk about in this particular Throne Speech. I do want to follow up on some comments made by the minister of northern and Aboriginal affairs in terms of the opportunities in northern Manitoba. Clearly, as the mining and Mineral Resources critic, I think we do have tremendous opportunities in Manitoba in terms of our—developing our resources. And it really is the onus of the government to move the marker down the field in terms of developing our resources in Manitoba because it's critical that the government of the day be involved at the table in terms of negotiating with the First Nations communities and the duty to consult. And it's important that we engage in that consultation and that discussion so that there's opportunities for First Nations and the business community to develop into the future, and this is really—the onus is on the provincial government to facilitate this. Clearly, we've seen the exploration dollars in Manitoba drop off over the last few years, and, unfortunately, that is a signal that we are not competitive with other jurisdictions, and there is only limited resources, financial resources, available for exploration. There's only limited resources available for capital investment in mining and, quite frankly, that money, that investment money will go where it's wanted and, unfortunately, it appears that that is not the case in Manitoba.

We are sending the signal that Manitoba is not open for business. If you look at the Fraser Institute report, which has a survey of mining companies all around the world, we have dropped from No. 1 in the world in terms of attractive jurisdiction to do business. We have dropped down to No. 27 in the last few years. So, clearly, that is a signal to us, and

it should be a red flag to us in Manitoba as legislators that we are not an attractive place to do business and it's up to the government of the day to turn that trend around.

* (11:40)

And, clearly, when we discuss northern—with northern Manitobans opportunities, they certainly believe there's opportunities there. If you look at the rankings, we are rated 10–10th in the world in terms of the mineral resource. So the resource is certainly there. It's a matter of us allowing for development to happen and attracting that investment into the province to benefit not just northern Manitobans but, indeed, all Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we have a look at what's happening in Saskatchewan, clearly the government of Saskatchewan is interested in growing the economy there, and certainly mining is one piece of that equation. So they are doing everything they can to attract investment into their province to develop the economy. And they believe that if they can get the business there to grow the economy, then revenue will flow back into the province to allow for those social programs that many people come to expect and want to have.

And, clearly, the government does not have to be the driver on all kinds of those sorts of financial situations. We can actually have the—engage the business community to help drive the economy in Manitoba. And I think that's the philosophical difference that we see here in Manitoba. We have an NDP government that believes they have to be the economic driver in Manitoba and rely on taxpayers to fund their programs to generate jobs and generate wealth within the—in the province. We firmly believe that there's other alternatives to growing the economy here in Manitoba, and we believe it's the role of government to help foster development and growth and grow the economy here in Manitoba. So it's pretty clear that there's difference of opinion in terms of how we grow the economy.

A couple other points I want to make that I'm hearing from my constituents. I think at this kind of a—it's a very critical time, certainly, in Manitoba history as we—we're getting closer and closer to election and, you know, people are certainly concerned about the government's mismanagement of our financial affairs. Clearly, we're going further and further in debt with each year and each day. We look at Saskatchewan who are trying to get themselves out of debt, quite frankly, and they're paying less in

terms of interest payments on that debt. We are going the absolute opposite way. We are incurring more and more debt. As a result, we're having to pay more and more money to service that debt. We're at about \$870 million now on an annual basis and we're paying to service the debt of the province.

And I think it should be another wake-up call to government when we had Moody's bond rating agency come to us and say we're going the wrong way, and they've actually downgraded our rating in Manitoba. Now, clearly, this particular rating is going to impact Manitobans and it's going to impact our finances because, at the end of the day, we're going to have to pay more money in terms of our interest payments because of that downgrading in the rating. And, clearly, interest rates, as low as they are, they are not going to stay this low forever, and changes will come probably sooner than later. So it's something that we as Manitobans have to keep an eye on. Certainly, those who have mortgages keep an eye on the interest rates, and, certainly, we, as a province, with this much debt—over \$30 billion of debt—we should have a really close eye being paid to what type of interest rates we're going to have to pay to service that debt. And, unfortunately, the money that's paid in interest charges are not available for other social programs, such as health care, such as education and such as infrastructure which is certainly important to many Manitobans.

And we know we're investing more and more money into health care each and every year. Unfortunately, we're not seeing the results for that. And we know the NDP can spend money, but they don't seem to have their eye on the results at the end of the day. So what we're finding is we're spending more but we're getting less in terms of results. And we can compare ourselves to other jurisdictions; we know our rankings are very poor in terms of a lot of wait times.

Clearly, in rural Manitoba and certainly in western Manitoba, we have a chronic shortage of doctors, which is forcing the closure of emergency rooms. Emergency rooms are being used on a rotational basis. We have ambulance garages which have been forced to close, and it certainly makes life difficult in terms of health care to rural Manitobans.

Additionally, we've seen results in the education where various scores and tests are used, but we are consistently ranking lowest in—across Canada in terms of those store—in terms of those scores. But, again, you know, we're spending more in education,

but the results aren't there. And, clearly, that's alarming to Manitobans and that's the kind of feedback that I'm getting from people in my area as well.

You know, the Throne Speech is really an opportunity for the government to lay out a vision for Manitobans and what could be done better here in the province of Manitoba. It seems to me it's unfortunate this particular Throne Speech was really a lot of reannouncements in here with a couple of new words thrown in there. It was unfortunate that the government didn't have an opportunity to display a—you know, a better perception of what Manitoba could look like.

And I think, you know, as opposition, we've thrown out some ideas, and, hopefully, Manitobans will have a look at some of the ideas that we've put on the table. And we certainly, as we get closer to an election, hope that we will have the opportunity to engage in Manitobans, have a discussion about how we see the future of the province develop and some of the—I think some of the opportunities that we have here. Certainly, I know, I have three young children and they—I want them to stay and work in Manitoba and, hopefully, raise a family here in Manitoba, but we have to—as government, we have to make sure that we have the framework laid out to make sure that they have the opportunity to stay here, invest in our province and invest their time here in our province.

Clearly, we know—we look at taxation rates, we are not competitive with other jurisdictions like Saskatchewan. I know a family of two pays \$3,200 more taxes in Winnipeg than they would in Regina, and, certainly, that is an issue that we have to address. And I think moving forward we have to make sure that we are competitive with other jurisdictions, and, clearly, even the—especially the border towns, looking at the provincial sales tax, it is a complicating factor for those businesses located near the borders. They have to be competitive somehow with their neighbours, and we as government have to make sure that we have the eye on the ball to make sure that they stay competitive with their neighbours.

So, with those few words, I just wanted to make sure that I had the opportunity to express some of the concerns that I'm hearing from my residents in my area, and I certainly thank them for the opportunity that they have given me to represent them and I will continue to work hard to represent them and do what

I can to assist them in whatever they need. Unfortunately, I don't see this particular Speech from the Throne moving us in a positive way, so we will certainly be waiting to see next week how people, all members, vote on, certainly, our non-confidence motion and, certainly, on the motion of the government as well.

So, with that, I thank you very much for the opportunity.

Hon. James Allum (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I appreciate the—my opportunity to get up and speak to the Throne Speech and to give my unqualified support for a—for the Throne Speech. And I have to tell you that I'm proud to be part of a government that still ranks as among, if not the only, progressive government in Canada.

I want to thank the member for Spruce Woods (Mr. Cullen) for his brevity. I have both of my daughters in the gallery today and I was hoping to be able to buy them some lunch some time later, and so I can commit to two things: one, I'll be shorter than usual, and, secondly, I intend to be on my best behaviour today; otherwise I'll hear it when I get home. But, Hilary and Sarah, I'm so glad that you're here today. Thank you for joining us.

Like all members of the House, of course, I want to begin by thanking the—my constituents, the good people of Fort Garry-Riverview for giving me the great opportunity and the great privilege to represent them here in this House. To come to work in this great building every day is an extraordinary privilege, which I don't take for granted at all. To work with my great colleagues day in, day out, to fight on behalf of Manitobans for a more just society is a great honour, and I can give my own personal commitment to keep working with all members on this side of the House to keep furthering the cause of Manitobans so that every Manitoban has the opportunity to live a good, healthy and productive life.

* (11:50)

Now, the Throne Speech sets out very clearly and very appropriately that our government is about investing in education and infrastructure to grow the economy, create good jobs and provide more opportunities for young people, and we do that through a number of various measures that are outlined in the Throne Speech. Of course, we start by making sure that our education system is fine-tuned for the new economy of the 21st century. Every

parent wants their child to have a clear path to a good job. Every parent wants their child to have a productive life. Every parent wants to make sure that their children are prepared for the world they're about to inherit. Every parent wants their children to go on and live good lives, and that's no different for me as a parent, and I know I share that across all members of this House, that we speak and work here for the benefit of future generations yet to come.

That's why our government has made such enormous investments in education over the years. That's why we continue to lead this country in terms of investments in both the K-to-12 system and in the post-secondary system. It's why we continue to make sure that access to our post-secondary system is among the most affordable in Canada. It's why we continue to ensure that there are no wrong doors for our students, why there are no dead ends for our students, and that's why we continue to ensure that our education system remains among the very best in this country.

We're also committed to good jobs and a stronger economy. We set out a \$5.5-billion plan—over the next several years to invest in our infrastructure, which makes sure that we not only have the best roads, the best bridges, the best flood protection but, in addition to that, it creates jobs. We have among the lowest unemployment rate in this country. People are working in Manitoba, and joblessness is misery, as you—as I've said many, many times before. People are working and they're investing in our economy; they're investing in our service industry. We're making sure that people are going to work every single day. The opposition is the party of unemployment; we're the party of employment.

But, in addition to that, and as the new Minister for MPI, not only does this \$5.5-billion commitment over the next several years improve our infrastructure, create good jobs and continue to develop and grow the economy of Manitoba, but I can say as the Minister of MPI that better investments create better roads. It saves lives and has the happy consequence of keeping our auto insurance rates among the lowest in Canada.

Now, there are many other aspects of the Throne Speech that are worth mentioning. We continue to protect front-line services, especially in our health care and especially in education and especially making sure that all Manitobans have access to

services they need in order to ensure their families have a good life.

We also want to reduce the cost of government. We know always that we can be more effective and more efficient, but I don't need to remind you that just yesterday the Canada West Foundation came out and said that we have among the second best performing economy in Canada.

And why is that? Because we invest in infrastructure, because we protect front-line service, and because we invest in hydro—it's crystal clear in that report. That's why we have the second best performing economy in Canada and that's why we'll continue to have the second best performing economy in Canada.

Now, those are the speech—the highlights from the Throne Speech, why I'm so pleased, so proud, to support it. But I have to tell you there's one thing that unites this side of the House from shoulder to shoulder to shoulder to shoulder, is that none of us ever want to see the Leader of the Opposition or his members in government and take a building economy and turn it into a demolition economy.

My friend from Kirkfield Park, the Minister of Health (Ms. Blady), said yesterday that we should call the Tory so-called alternative throne speech the Tory 'halternative' Throne Speech because it puts the brakes on the economic development in this—here in Manitoba. It unplugs our investment in hydro and it stops the growth of this great and wonderful province.

Now, I have to tell you that as I read through the so-called PC 'halternative' throne speech, I found parts of it to be completely unacceptable and some of it to be utterly egregious in its language and in its commitments. And I want to point out just one piece, because it really—I found it really tells me what kind of opposition we're really dealing with in Manitoba. And it says here that—it talks about: As citizens in a province that leads the country in Aboriginal population, we will not be successful unless young Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can both find success and achieve their potential.

I'm glad to hear them say that. I think all of us agree with that particular sentiment. But then they go on to say their action: We will work in partnership with the federal government to ensure that Canada makes the necessary funding investments to provide educational resources to First Nation communities

at an equivalent level to those enjoyed by non-Aboriginal communities.

Well, they're going to wait 'til they're elected before the Leader of the Opposition picks up the phone, calls the Prime Minister and demands that that happen right now? Pick up the phone; don't wait. Don't wait, get on with the job of making sure that Manitobans of all kinds, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, are treated equally. Don't wait 'til you think you're going to be in government before you make that call. Do it right now and make sure that our Aboriginal citizens and our Aboriginal youth are given the same opportunities as every young person across this province. I found that particularly insulting.

But, while he's on the phone with the Prime Minister, and I know it'll go something like this: Hello, hello, Steve. It's me, Brian. And the answer will be, Brian who? But, while he's on the phone, I invite him to take up a few other things with the federal government while he's there because there are a number of cases in which the federal government is failing Manitoba. One great example is legal aid. It used to be the feds and the provinces split legal-aid funding 50-50. Well, that's no longer the case. In fact, the federal—in fact, the provincial government is now carrying 77 per cent of the load of legal aid. The federal government pays a mere 14 per cent of legal aid, while the Law Foundation of Manitoba makes up the rest. Why don't they pick up the phone and call the Prime Minister and say, do your job on legal aid? But they don't do it.

And then I had the great privilege the other day of introducing the First Nations safety officer program. Certainly, I want to give entire credit to my friend from Minto who had done such enormous amount of work. As you know, the federal government notified the Province—unilaterally, I might add, without warning—but just unilaterally that they're going to terminate the Band Constable Program effective March 31st, 2015.

So they do it with no warning. They're responsible for the administration and oversight of this very important program, and then what happens? They just decide to abandon it. They do cut a cheque and say, here, use this money, but otherwise they take no responsibility for their constitutional obligations, leaving us here in Manitoba holding the bag.

Well, we don't sit idly by on this side of the House, even if we have to backfill resources, even if

we have to make sure that we're doing not only our job, but the federal government's job. We continue to do that, and so I'm very proud of the First Nation safety officer program. It's a collective product of the conscience of this side of the House to continue to work with Aboriginal citizens to make sure that their communities are safe, secure and sustainable.

* (12:00)

But, while the Leader of the Opposition's on the phone with the Prime Minister, and after he's gone through equalized funding for students on First Nations for education, while he's talked about legal aid, while he's talked about the Band Constable Program, I hope he will also remind the federal government and the Prime Minister that they have an obligation to continue the Drug Treatment Court here in Manitoba.

The Drug Treatment Court has an 84 per cent success rate. It means that people who are suffering from addictions aren't just thrust into the justice system where they don't belong in the first place, but they get a chance through the Drug Treatment Court to have an alternative life where they can get the programs and supports they need to live the kind of life that every Manitoban wants.

We're still waiting on word for what the feds are going to do with the Drug Treatment Court. I invite the Leader of the Opposition to pick up the phone, call the Prime Minister. We're doing it all the time. Why doesn't he get up and do something to stand up for Manitoba and support this province as he should be.

So I want to say that it's a huge privilege for me to be—to represent the people of Fort Garry-Riverview. It's a great honour to sit in this Chamber amongst my colleagues. It's a great honour to be Attorney General and Justice Minister in this province. I take none of it for granted. I feel entitled in no way, but I can tell you if these folks on the other side of the House think we're going to lie down, we're going to just not put up a fight going forward, I have two words for them. Guess again. We're not doing it. We're going to battle you right to the very end.

Thank you.

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): I hope the new Minister of Justice (Mr. Allum) didn't disappoint his daughters. I thought he would be a little higher level in terms of his comments. That was a little bit disappointing there.

And, to correct the record, too, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member just seems to think that the unemployment rate of 5.3 is something new in Manitoba. That's what they inherited in 1999. When they came to government in 1999, the unemployment rate was ranging between 5.1 and 5.3. So that is nothing new. That is what they inherited as a government, and they should go back and have a better look at that because they don't seem to realize that they inherited something that was quite good at the time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to say I do appreciate the privilege I have to be in this Chamber and to stand up for all Manitobans, and I do try my best to honour my constituents who come to me with issues and to honour all Manitobans that bring issues to me and speak on their concerns. Certainly, as the Health critic, I am tending now to get an awful lot of calls, and there are an incredibly number of very serious health issues occurring right now in Manitoba. I wish I had time to put more of them on the record this session, but because this session is so short, it is really hard to bring a lot of those issues forward. But I guarantee you those issues will be coming forward as soon as we're able to make some of them much more public in the weeks ahead.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would start by saying that I do want to welcome everybody back, Mr. Speaker himself, the table officers, the Hansard staff, all our colleagues, the pages that are here, and I do hope that they have a great experience here in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

I would also like to thank my constituents for their ongoing support and faith in me, and I am profoundly grateful for the support that I do get from the people in my community. I do want to thank my family as well for allowing me to be able to do my job and to give me the kind of time I need to do it. And also I'd like to thank my constituency staff and my own political association in Charleswood for giving me the kind of support that I need to do this job as well, because without them it would be very, very difficult to focus on the kind of issues that I am in the position of having to focus on here in the Legislature.

It is really too bad, though, Mr. Speaker, that there is only two weeks here for this session, because there are so many issues that we should be debating right now and there is so little time that we have been given to do that. But, of course, that was the

Premier's (Mr. Selinger) intention when he called us back, and to have a two-week session because he's wanting to do other things. As we can see, he doesn't want to be held accountable for their bad record and he's too focused on scrambling to save his job to instead be doing the job that he should be doing as Premier of this province.

It's too bad, really, Mr. Speaker, because there are so many big issues here and, really, the person in that chair should be putting their full attention to tackling some of these issues, and, in fact, that is not what's happening at all. In fact, we certainly saw at the AMM the other night that the speech he gave in front of a room of municipal leaders was definitely a campaign speech, and he had indicated that he was going to leave that stuff alone. He was going to leave that stuff alone while he was doing his job as Premier and not mix the two together. Well, he mixed it that night, and that was very obvious to everybody in the whole room.

Mr. Speaker, I also would say it's very awkward sitting here in this Manitoba Legislature right now and watching this internecine warfare that is going on across the way. It is really quite interesting to watch the dynamics too. I find it kind of strange that the members, the renegade rebels aren't, you know, allowed to go in their caucus room, and yet—and they've got all these rules that are—push them away from everything, and yet their own caucus seems to have the gall to retweet some of their tweets about, you know, their visits to their constituencies, and it seems like the NDP caucus is taking advantage, you know, where they can of these renegade members, including using them on advertising as if there was nothing going on. So it's really interesting to see the Premier with his picture next to the member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald) or Southdale and other members. So the NDP caucus is using those renegade members when it suits their purpose, but it is sure not treating them with any respect. They can't even get into their own caucus room. They can't attend meetings. They can't make any decisions, so it is really awkward.

It's awkward in here, too, because not a lot of colleagues that are not on the rebel side seem to be talking to them very much. They do seem to be treated in an ostracized way, and so the dynamic just is not good in here. I can't imagine it's very good within the NDP caucus and party, and from all of that, that cannot be good for Manitobans, not even close.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the renegade rebels did come forward, they came forward with what sounded like very legitimate concerns, and I know it takes a lot of guts to do that when you have your beliefs and you feel strongly about them. It does take courage to stand up for those beliefs knowing that you're going to be treated differently, and they stood up and they put a lot of very, very interesting comments on the record. In fact, comments that if, you know, people really drilled down into them, would see that there are some serious, serious issues that that NDP government and caucus are dealing with.

The minister of Finance who is now no longer the minister of Finance but a backbencher for Fort Rouge, said, and I quote: In recent weeks and months it has become clear to us that the Premier is increasingly been—being driven by his desire to hold on to his leadership rather than by the best interests of Manitobans. End quote.

That was a statement made by one of the most legitimate, esteemed members of the NDP caucus and party, and she, I'm sure, never made those statements lightly. She made those statements with a sincere belief in what she was saying.

* (12:10)

And then we have the member for Minto (Mr. Swan), who was the former minister of Justice, saying, and I quote: Our concern is that the Premier has become more concerned about remaining leader than necessarily doing things in the best interest of the province. End quote.

Another very serious comment made by a front-bench Cabinet minister and, you know, a member held in high regard in the party, knowing the risk that he was taking to come out and make those statements but feeling he had no choice but to make them. Mr. Speaker, they, I think, came forward and made their comments because they know that there is some rot going on within that caucus and that rot has become very obvious to people within their party too, who are also standing up and speaking against how this Premier is behaving.

We also heard from the member for Southdale (Ms. Selby), who said: Manitobans are angry; they feel the Premier broke their trust and he hasn't been able to mend that.

Those are serious charges, Mr. Speaker, against a premier of a province from a former—a now former Health minister.

The member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), who stood by his Premier (Mr. Selinger) last year and took a beating on the PST issues, stood and also said that the Premier wasn't so much interested in my advice as he was in validation. That member, when he was the Finance minister, stood—I don't know how many times—and defended the PST hike and then went on to say a number of other things about being made to support that and that perhaps Cabinet wasn't totally in favour of the Premier moving forward and raising the PST, and yet every one of them supported it, stood in here and adamantly supported it and voted for it, and we never heard any of this backlash until now.

The member for Seine River (Ms. Oswald) certainly had some interesting comments too. And one of them was trust and integrity, and she said: Sometimes doing the right thing isn't the easy path. Being truthful and holding on to your integrity is something my parents raised me to do and I honour them today with that.

That is a very, very compelling strong statement, and I'm sure the member believed it. I wonder if she is still going to believe it and follow through with her feelings on that and stand and support the non-confidence motion that is coming forward on Monday.

I don't know how you could say something like this and then go ahead and support the government's Throne Speech, support the Premier that she so strongly spoke against, and then basically ignore her comments about the integrity her parents gave her and raised her that way, and she honoured them with that statement. She said: I honour them today.

How can she possibly then turn around and support a Premier who wrote the Throne Speech? I doubt he got much support or advice or even asked for it from anybody else because that's just not how it's done. So I don't know how she can make those statements, and I will be watching to see what that behaviour is going to be because I will be very disappointed to find out that she would say this and then turn around and do something quite the opposite.

You get to know a number of your colleagues here from the other side, and when you become the critic for a minister, you tend to have a strong relationship. Sometimes it's a love-hate relationship, but you have a connection more than you do with many others. You also have a certain amount of respect at some level for each other, and I am going

to be watching very carefully to see whether that respect that I had for some things is going to show that it was worth giving.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many issues that we do need to address, and I wish we had more time because there are serious issues within this system that certainly need to be addressed. I will just take the next couple of minutes to say it's too bad that everything is so distracted by this internecine warfare that is going on, because I really believe that some of these issues are not getting the attention they're due.

And so I will speak today to our non-confidence motion, and I would urge the rebel dissenters to join us in that and stick with the integrity they've talked about and stand with us and do what really they should be doing if they really believe in the words that they have put forward. I think they need to settle their internal turmoil, and they need to focus on the challenges of Manitobans.

We have heard now that we're dead last in so many categories, whether it's mining, whether it's education, whether it's family services, whether it's violence against women and kids. We're the highest taxed west of Quebec. We have the worst ER shortages in Canada, not just, you know, the Grace Hospital being the worst in Manitoba, it's the worst in Canada. And those are serious, serious failures in what we are seeing.

We're the only province in Canada not to have a stroke unit. What does that mean? Because of geography and because of this government, we are the only province where we can't treat stroke patients as well as they're being treated in other provinces. How many stroke patients might be able to recover better and lead a better life and have a better quality of life if we had a stroke unit here?

I am really troubled by one of the statements in particular made by the member for Seine River, and that was that this Premier plays favourites when he makes his decisions, and that's why they all stood against him. If he is doing that and he did not agree to a stroke unit because he was playing up to another member within his Cabinet, do we not have a stroke unit here because the minister of Health at the time was not being listened to by this Premier? That is a serious allegation made by the member for Seine River, that favouritism was played. How many self-health challenges do we see in the system today because this Premier might not have been happy with his Health minister and therefore ignored what she was bringing to the Cabinet table that might have

been in the best interests of Manitoba patients? That is an extremely serious allegation that could mean patient safety, danger in health care might have been allowed to continue because of some of the behaviour by the Premier (Mr. Selinger) of this province. That is something I have extreme serious concern about.

There are so many issues and I wish we had more time to address them. Certainly, what happened with STARS and the decisions that were made at the time are showing that absolute incompetence was perpetuated by this government when they made decisions on the STARS contract—didn't tender it—and now we see 41 transports in Manitoba when there's supposed to be 800 a year. That has got to be probably one of the biggest financial messes that any minister of a government has perpetuated in this province, and that needs to be addressed.

Unfortunately, we don't have a government that wants to sit here, be accountable to these questions, be accountable to Manitobans for their poor performance. Instead, we are just on a downhill slide in Manitoba, and, Mr. Speaker, because of that, I cannot stand here and support their—or their Throne Speech. It doesn't deserve supporting, and I would urge—and I know there's more than five or six members on that side. In fact, there's a lot of them that don't clap at all for the answers that are being given to that side, and I think there's a lot more than five or nine dissenters on that side. I hope that all of them have the courage to do the right thing and stand up for their constituents and stand up for the people of Manitoba and support this non-confidence motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (12:20)

Ms. Jennifer Howard (Fort Rouge): It's my pleasure to rise today and to talk a little bit about the Throne Speech that was presented in this House a few days ago. I want to, of course, start off by thanking the constituents of Fort Rouge who sent me here and who I continue to serve and to speak to and have had many occasions to speak to over the last year, and just the other night, actually, I got to meet with residents in the Mayfair-Osborne area, met with them in their new community centre which, working with the City of Winnipeg, our government was able to build and provide. It's a beautiful new space. There's a gym and an area where kids gather every afternoon from 4:30 to 8. They can come and play and talk to each other, and it's a good, safe place for them to be.

But the other night I was there meeting with a group of residents who are trying to get their residents' association going again, and these are folks that live in my constituency, many of whom have had many challenges in their lives. Some of the people there spoke about challenges getting good employment, challenges that they faced with Child and Family Services being involved in their lives, and the way that they've overcome some of those challenges by working together. And the kind of dreams that they had in that room were for things that are not, perhaps, that elaborate, but simple programs that we can work with them to put in place, things like a community kitchen, sports programs that are low-cost or no cost for their kids, a place for seniors who live in the area to come and gather, and it's that kind of community spirit and community gathering and community decision-making about what people want to see in their lives that, I think, brought many of us to this place, that caused many of us to want to seek elected office.

And, when I look through this Throne Speech, I see in it many pieces of vision that are built on the foundations that have been laid by this government since our time in office. And one place I want to start is talking about education. You'll notice that education is prominently featured in the Throne Speech, and every year that we have been in government we've been able to provide stable funding to the education system at or above the rate of economic growth. Even in times of economic difficulty we continue those investments in education because we believe that investing in education isn't only important for future economic growth, but it's vital to the futures of our kids and the kids of all the families and Manitobans.

And, when I do have the opportunity to travel around the province and talk to various citizens about their priorities—it doesn't matter where you go—education is top of the list, probably even more so in rural and northern communities because they know that having access to education in their communities for their children is something that's going to help those kids decide to stay in those communities, but it also draws new people to those communities.

So, when I look through this Throne Speech and see some of the achievements that have been made by making post-secondary education more accessible to the people of Manitoba, that means that in the past decade we've seen enrolment up in colleges and universities, some by as much as 50 per cent. We've also seen the number of people in apprenticeships

triple, and that is a tremendous success, I think, Mr. Speaker. Of course, we know that we need even more people to go into the skilled trades, and when I've had the opportunity to talk to people who have chosen that path, I think we still have work to do, making sure that that's a viable option in high school, that high school students hear about and know about. And so I was delighted to see in this Throne Speech commitment to do more things like making sure that you can, when you go to high school, have your last year of high school also be the first year of your apprenticeship. We know that is showing success in high schools where that kind of program is offered. It's keeping young people engaged in high school. It's helping them complete high school because they know that when they graduate grade 12, they're also going to be on the path to the next part of their education, and they're going to be able to earn money while they're on that path to the next part of their education.

And in this Throne Speech we see that there's a commitment to make it easier for young people to get on a path to a good career. Whether they go to university or college, enrol in the trades, we're going to give them a head start in high school, but we're also—one of the commitments I noted in this Throne Speech was a commitment to a student advocate who will ensure that it's easier for people to transfer credits between institutions.

All of us, maybe we can think back to when we were 17 or 18 and trying to plan the rest of our lives, I think very few of us knew exactly where we were going, and sometimes you start out on one path and you find out, no, actually I want to do something different. So, having a position like this student advocate to help people never lose out, even if you don't get on the right road at the first try, you're still going to be able to transfer those credits; you're still going to be able to move forward. There's not going to be—I think it said in the Throne Speech—no dead ends and no wrong doors, and I think that's a tremendous vision for the future of this province.

I also was delighted to see a commitment to interest-free student loans. When I think about what first got me really involved in political activism, it was my time as a student at Brandon University. I was the first in my family to go to university, and for my family that was a challenging financial thing to be able to have the money that I could go to university, and I've benefited from a lot of programs that helped me out. But, when I was going to school it was common, every year the board of governors

would meet, set the tuition increase for the next year. It was commonplace, so that tuition increase was above 10 per cent, 15 per cent in some years. And so that moved me to get involved with the students' union because I saw friends of mine who were able to take fewer and fewer courses, had to take on more jobs so they could continue on their education, and some of whom had to leave university because they simply couldn't afford to keep going.

And so we have made a commitment to make sure that post-secondary education is accessible to people, that it doesn't matter whether or not you have the money. What matters is whether or not you have the desire and the drive. And we're more concerned with who you are when you graduate university and less concerned with keeping people out because maybe they can't afford to go. And that, I think, is something that is changing the lives of so many Manitobans.

We know that we still have a lot of work to do in making sure that all of our kids can succeed. We've seen increases in the high school graduation rates, but I don't think any of us are satisfied with where we are yet.

Another feature of the Throne Speech, and I was happy to see the announcement yesterday at Harrow School for a new expanded child care centre. I know those spaces are much needed in that community, but you look at what we've been able to accomplish in our time in government: over 14,000 newly funded child-care spaces, over 100 new and expanded child-care centres and a child-care program that's recognized as the most affordable in Canada outside of Quebec. We know that the first three years of a child's life are crucial for early childhood development, and that's why former ministers who put in place curriculum into early childhood care centres—that's been very important. I know from my own life, my son comes home every day having learnt something new, usually something useful. Right now we're very focused on brushing our teeth, which we have tried to encourage, but I know that that gets reinforced when he goes to daycare. And we also know that he's learning there the skills of meeting new people, of sharing, all of those things that we need to know throughout our whole life.

The commitment that this government has made to early childhood development, we will see the benefits of that for generations and generations. We know that as those kids grow up, who've had the advantage of those kinds of interventions in their

early years, they're going to make better parents and we know that their kids are going to be better off. So I'm thrilled that that kind of investment, that kind of commitment continues in this Throne Speech.

The other part of the Throne Speech that I think is extremely important, certainly to my constituents, that I hear about is the ongoing commitment to improvements in health care, and this is something, I think, that you have to maintain your focus on all the time. You never reach the end of wanting to improve health care, make sure it's accessible, make sure it's of high quality. And, when we look in past years, I know one of the things we've talked about a lot in this House is past decisions that were made to stop

training doctors and nurses, and what that really led to, in my view, is lost generations of doctors and nurses who today would be in our hospitals and personal care homes and clinics in leadership positions, but because those people never had the advantage of—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Fort Rouge (Ms. Howard) will have 20 minutes remaining.

The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, November 28, 2014

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